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Improve Your Kitchen Storage
Michigan State University Extension Service
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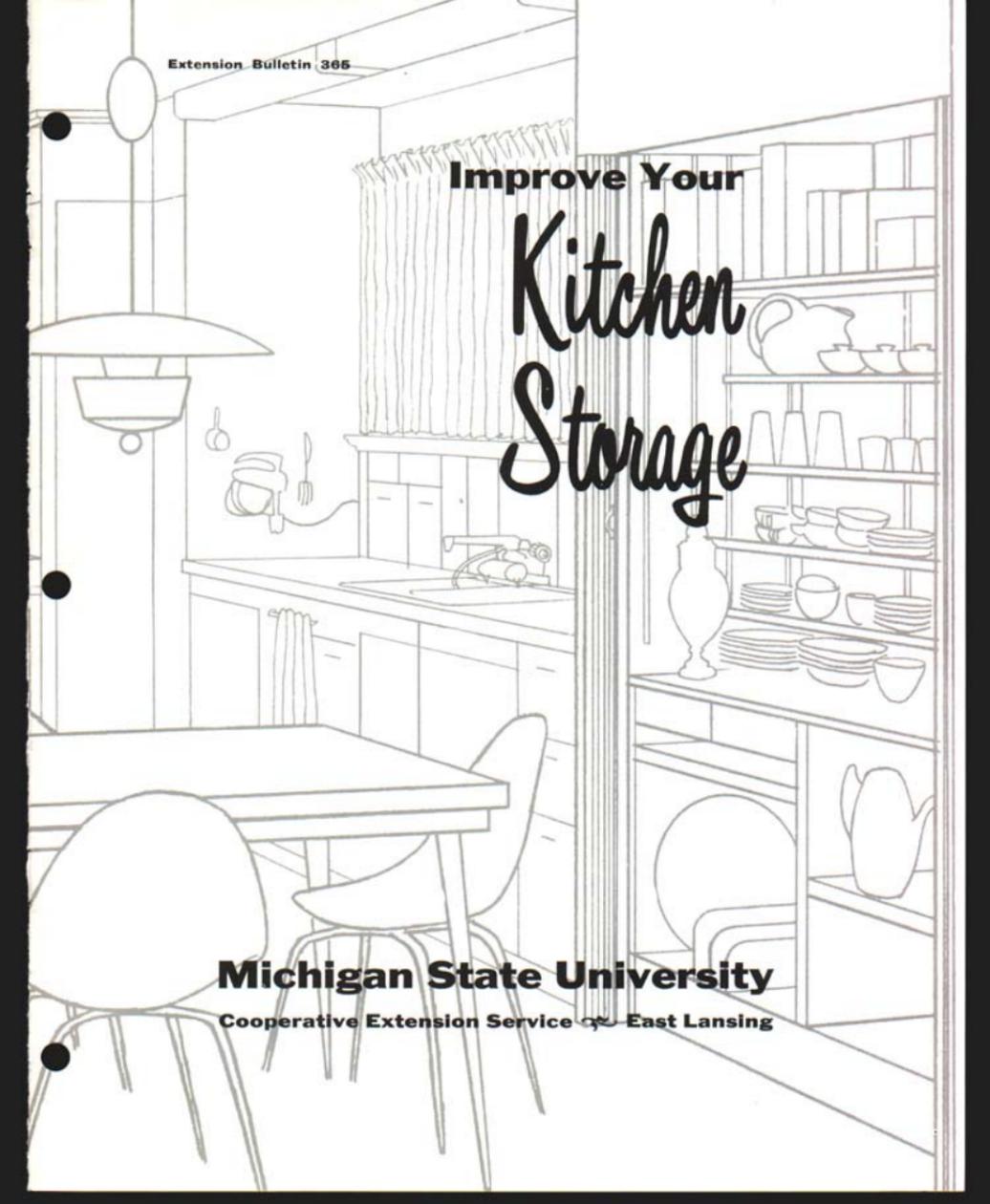
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Improve Your

Kitchen Storage

Michigan State University

Cooperative Extension Service of East Lansing



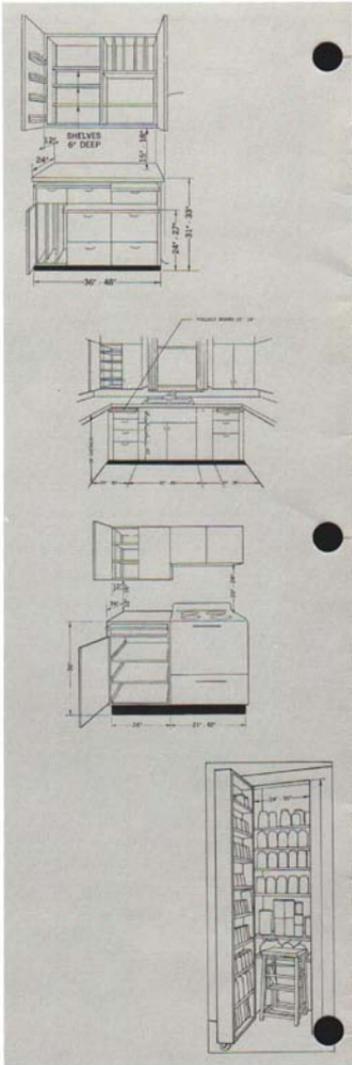
Improve Your Kitchen Storage

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Home Management*

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Good Kitchen Storage

saves hours
in your
day



Lucky is the homemaker who can plan her own kitchen — “tailor made” to her own needs. But no matter what you are doing — building a new house, looking for a new ready-built house, remodeling your old kitchen, or just dreaming of the future — a few principles can guide you toward a modern, efficient, organized kitchen.

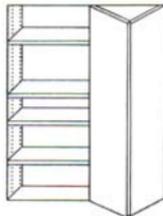
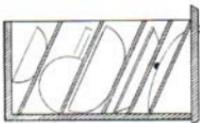
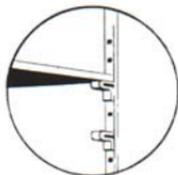
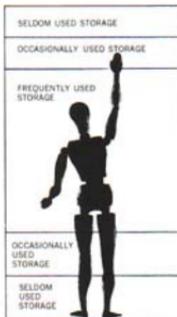
A place for everything and everything in its place — this is the time-honored basic principle of storage. To the modern homemaker it is a key to running an efficient household. Nowhere in the home is it more

important than in the kitchen. There, the processes of planning and preparing meals involve a variety of tasks and problems. Where kitchen storage space and work space are neatly integrated, the kitchen can truly become the nerve center of an efficient household.

Here are some general guides to good kitchen storage. Following in individual sections are suggestions for the special storage problems of your kitchen “centers.”

SOME GUIDES

1. Store supplies and utensils at the point of use and within easy reach. At your mixing center, store mixing equipment, staple foods, refrigerated foods, baking pans, and all the other things used for preparing food for baking. *This is storage at the point of use.* The same rule applies to all work centers.
2. Arrange cupboards so that all articles are easy to see, easy to reach, and easy to grasp. One row deep on a shelf and one stack deep in a drawer provides for this. However, when like articles such as cups, are placed in front of each other on a shelf, you can see, reach, and grasp them easily.
3. Avoid clutter on shelves and in drawers by eliminating unnecessary utensils and tools.
4. Store heavy articles, heavy pans or stacks of dinner plates, on shelves that are easiest to reach. This reduces lifting or stooping when moving articles in and out of cupboards. Pull-out shelves in base cabinets and adjustable shelves in wall cabinets provide easy-to-reach flexible storage which is easy to change as family needs change. Vertical storage spaces in high and low areas are efficient and satisfying.
5. Adequate counter space usually provides enough storage above and below the counter for the supplies and equipment used in that work center. Be sure not to reduce too much of the upper cabinet space by windows or other openings over work surfaces. If you plan it right, your kitchen can have both plenty of natural light and plenty of storage space.



6. Be safety conscious. Large cabinet doors can cause accidents. Doors cut in half and hinged on the inside to fold center out are much safer. Usually wall cabinet doors are more efficient when thirty-six inches or less in height, and when open do not extend further than the edge of the work surface.

The **mixing center**: this is the place where staple food supplies and the equipment for mixing food are stored. It has a close relationship to the refrigerator which stores foods used in the mixing process. The opening side of the refrigerator is placed next to the counter. If you do much baking, plan the mixing center near the oven also.

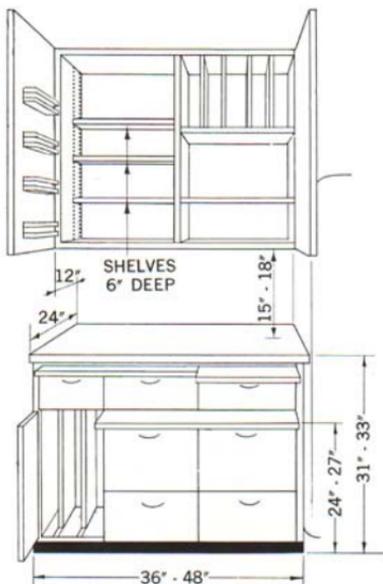
FOR CONVENIENCE:

1. Store articles at a height where the labels are easy to read.
2. Store mixing bowls individually; use vertical pan files. In this way you can remove the one you want without taking down a stack of pans or a nest of bowls.
3. Store articles one row deep on shelves so you can grasp each without moving another. Most staples go on a shelf 6 inches in depth. Spices need a shelf 2 or 3 inches in depth. Common ways to provide narrow shelves are to put one row in the cupboard and another on the door, or provide step shelves within the cupboard.

Mixing Center

4. Locate the most frequently used items in the upper part of the base cabinet, the lower part of wall cabinet, and the wall space immediately above the work surface. Put less used items in the low drawers to save stooping, and on upper shelves to save stretching.
5. Keep the work counter clear. Store cans and packages of supplies in drawers or on shelves.

There are many devices to help you develop good storage in the mixing center: spice racks, door shelves, metal liners for drawers, metal drawers (on which you can screw a wood front to match your cabinets), special hinges that do not show, drawer rollers for heavy drawers, half shelves, peg board, hardware for lazy susans, devices for wall can openers, divided drawers, knife racks and adjustable shelves.



Sink Center

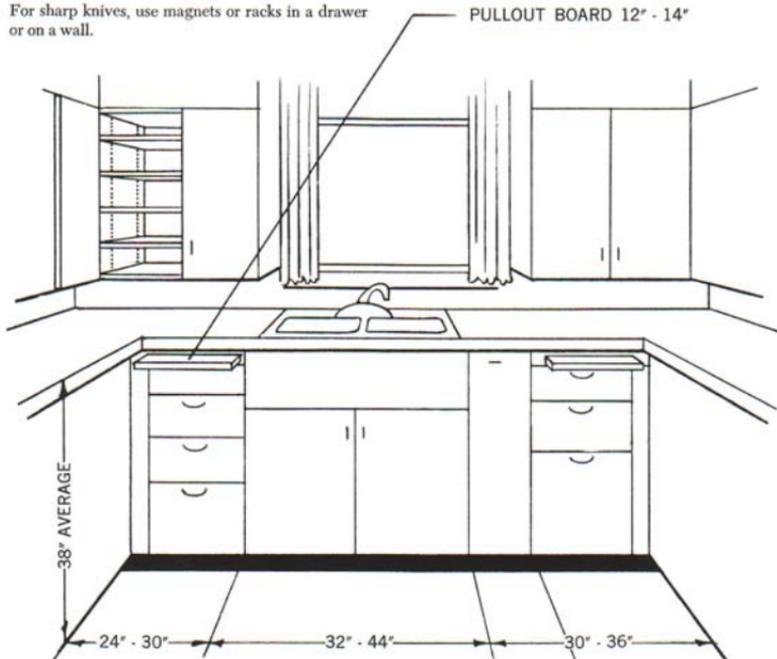
More time is spent at the sink than at any other center in the kitchen. Work here moves most efficiently from right to left for right handed people. This places the dish cupboard at the left. The same principle holds for both hand and mechanical dishwashing. The dishwasher is placed at the left of the sink bowl for the flow of work to proceed from right to left.

Plan storage to place articles where they are used first.

Make the best use of space —

Follow these rules:

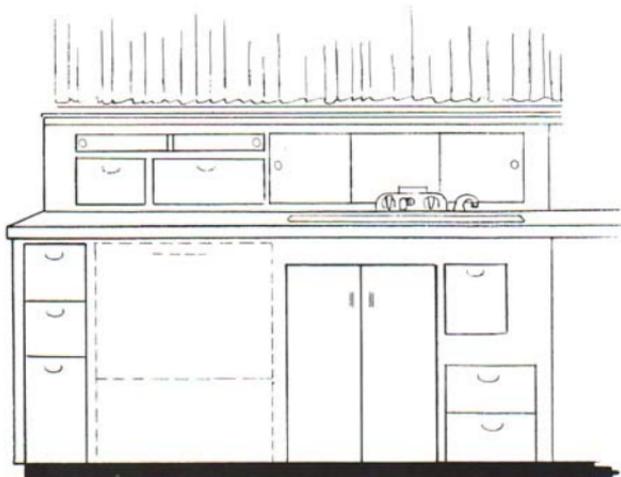
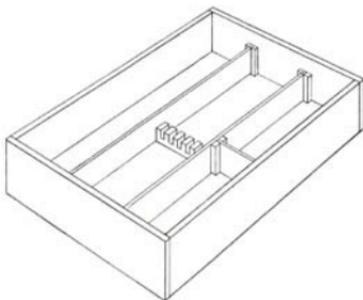
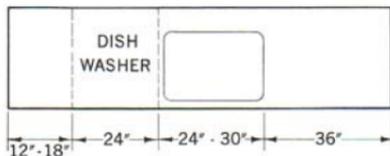
1. Use adjustable shelves for dishes.
2. Use enough shelves to allow storing your dishes one kind in a stack. (You may need 5 or 6 shelves to make good use of the space in the dish cupboard. Allow an inch of clearance above the dishes for easy removal.)
3. Store articles one layer deep in drawers.
4. Partition shallow drawers for flat silver and small equipment.
5. For sharp knives, use magnets or racks in a drawer or on a wall.
6. In the lower cabinet, use easy-to-pull shelves or drawers that bring the equipment out where you can see and reach it.
7. Provide a ventilated drawer or bin to store a small supply of fruits and vegetables that do not require refrigeration.
8. Make use of the space under the sink by using pull out towel bars, door racks to hold supplies, and removable shelves to fit available space. Because of the variations in plumbing installations, you will need to use ingenuity to make best use of this space.
9. Kitchen linens are usually best stored in the sink area to the left.



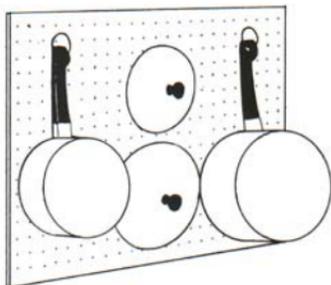
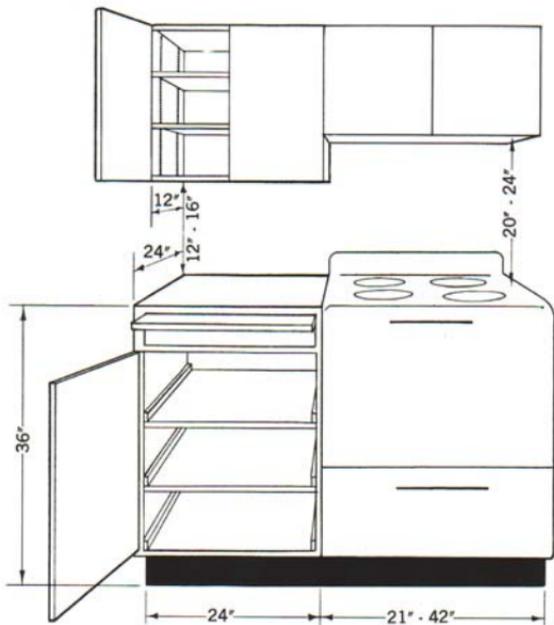
Storage

Sink center storage measurements:

- Depth of shelves in dish cupboard, 12 inches.
- Shallow cupboard above sink, 6 inches deep.
- Depth of silver drawer, 4 inches outside measure.
- Partitions in silver drawer, 3 inches apart and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches high.
- Depth of drawer for small equipment, 5 inches outside measure.
- Depth of drawer for towels, sacks, or aprons, 5, 6, or 7 inches.
- Vegetable drawers, 6 to 11 inches high and 10 to 13 inches across front.



Cooking and



Those dishes, utensils, and supplies used first at the range should be stored near the range. The base cabinet can have shelves or drawers for skillets and griddles, pots and pans, and a place for trays and large platters. Shelves that pull out, or drawers on rollers are convenient for heavy utensils.

A pull-out board is useful for carving meats, to make additional serving space, or to use on top of the counter for setting out hot pans or fruit jars.

The cabinet over the serving area can hold dishes for hot foods, seasonings, tea and the tea-pot, coffee if you make coffee at the range, and other supplies and equipment used in cooking and serving hot foods.

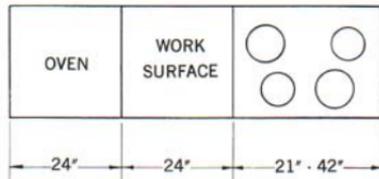
Service Center

Cooking and serving center storage measurements:

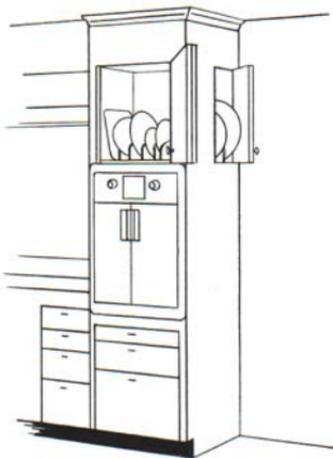
- Distance between range and cabinet above, 18 to 24 inches for electric range; not less than 24 inches for gas range.
- Distance between serving counter and cabinet, 12 to 16 inches.
- Depth of cabinet over range, 8 to 12 inches.
- Depth of cabinet over serving area, 12 inches.
- Drawer for small utensils, 5 inches outside measure.
- Number of pull-out shelves in base cabinet, 2 or 3.
Space them to allow 1 inch of clearance between utensil and shelf above.

Wall oven

Valuable storage above and below the wall oven can be utilized. Pull-out shelves below and file storage above usually give you the most efficient use of space.



STORAGE ABOVE BUILT-IN OVEN



Eating Area Storage



Many families eat all of their meals in the kitchen because of the ease of serving and clearing up afterwards.

Provide storage in or near your dining area for electrical equipment used at the table, table linens, and other items for table use. Dishes may be stored here if

you wish to have them in the area of "first use."

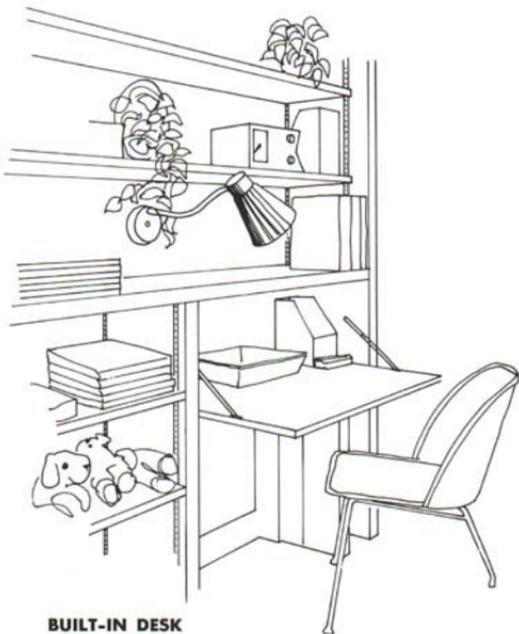
For the average height person, place the highest shelf in a floor-to-ceiling dish cupboard 72 inches from the floor.

Adjustable shelves make for efficient storage.

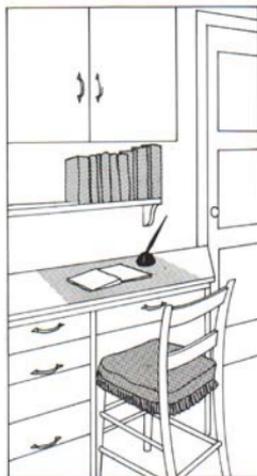
Planning Center Storage

Some family business goes on in every kitchen. Plan a place where you can keep grocery slips, household bills, recipe books, paper and pencils, telephone and

other business items. It may be a drawer, a shelf, a movable table, or a small desk with a drawer for filing folders.



SEPARATE DESK



Additional Kitchen Storage

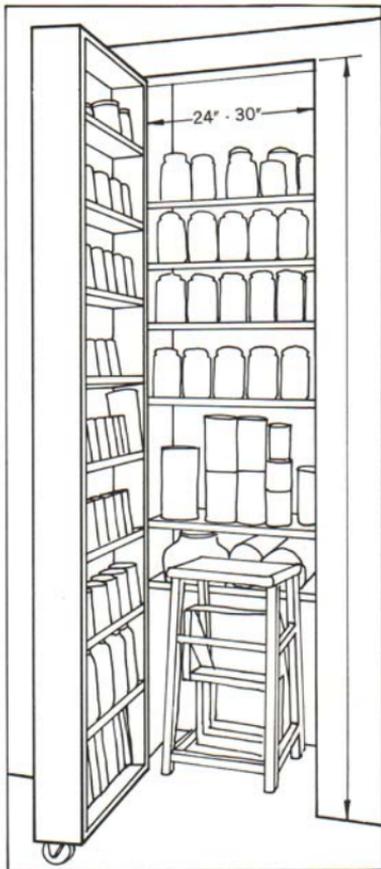
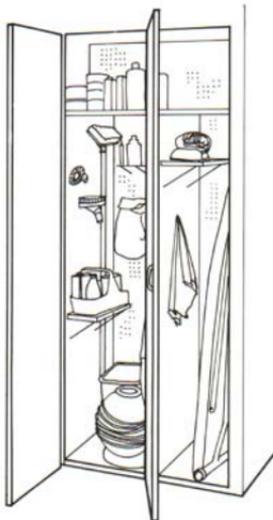
Cleaning closet

The best location for the cleaning closet is close to the living room where you use the heaviest equipment most often. Sometimes when there is room and the kitchen and living room are close together the cleaning closet can be located in the kitchen. The size of the closet is determined by what is to be stored and the available space. A depth of 16 to 24 inches will house the usual cleaning equipment and supplies. However if you do not have this depth, it is good management to use any space available to store things at the point of use. Refer to *Improve Your Household Storage, Bulletin 360*, for illustrations.

The home store

If your kitchen is large enough to store the canned or packaged food you buy in quantity, a home store closet is a valuable addition to kitchen storage.

Two possibilities are a 5 to 6 inch depth shallow closet or a deeper closet with shelves both on the door and at the back.



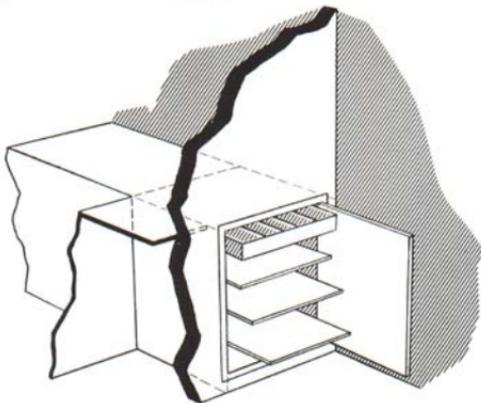
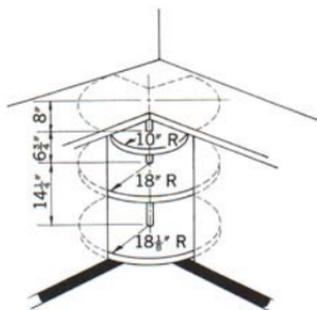
Making Use of a Corner

There are several ways to make use of the corner in a base cabinet.

"Lazy Susan" or revolving shelf corners are good only when they work well and when it is easy to reach the shelves. They need to turn on bearings and provision must be made to keep articles from sliding off the shelves and for cleaning under them.

Shelves can also be built on the door that swings back into the corner. Sometimes the corner area is best used for drawer or shelf space in an adjoining room.

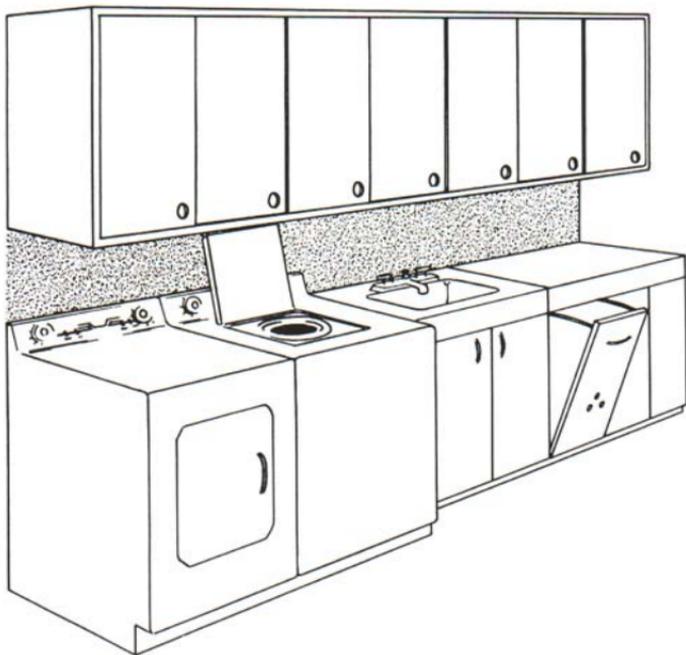
There are water heaters manufactured to fit this space. These are excellent auxiliary tanks for families who need an additional source of supply for the sink and the dishwasher.



Laundry Storage

Wherever the laundry is, storage space needs to be provided for laundry supplies at the point of use. Ironing equipment, soiled clothes, and clean clothes need-

ing attention should have storage space close to laundry center. Refer to *Improve Your Household Storage*, Bulletin 360, for illustration and further information.



OTHER HOUSEHOLD BULLETINS

E-349 - Controlling moisture in Your Home
E-360 - Improve Your Household Storage
CE-8 - Lighting Your Home

Some Final Principles

- Discard useless equipment.
- Store frequently used items within easy reach and at the point of use or where first used.
- Space shelves to fit articles to be stored.
- Add vertical partitions for storage of trays, platters, lids, baking pans, frying pans.
- Add partitions to cutlery and silver drawers.
- Provide racks for storage of knives, spices, extracts.
- Add half shelves, racks, and hooks.
- Use pegboard or racks for hanging equipment.
- Use adjustable shelves in wall cabinets, pull-out shelves in base cabinet.

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