



Commercial Kitchen Layout & Efficiencies

The proper arrangement of a culinary workspace can influence the effectiveness of front of house operations. Optimize your kitchen area to maximize safety, production and profits.



Foodservice Considerations

Budget

When establishing a financial plan, calculate costs to have a realistic range of your final budget:

- ◆ Permits & Plans
- ◆ Construction
- ◆ Materials
- ◆ Labor
- ◆ Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment
- ◆ Smallwares
- ◆ Opening Inventory

Space

Assess available square footage and room shape to determine an ideal layout of equipment and workstations. Take note of:

- ◆ Windows
- ◆ Doorways
- ◆ Gas Lines
- ◆ Electrical Outlets
- ◆ Plumbing
- ◆ Drains
- ◆ Ventilation
- ◆ Fire Risers
- ◆ Restrooms
- ◆ If existing, building structures

Menu

Develop a list of items you intend to make and meticulously outline each step from delivery to cooking to plating, documenting the required necessities.

Keep in Mind ▶

The required square footage of a commercial kitchen depends on the number of seats and the type of establishment. As a general rule of thumb, a banquet hall can have as little as 10 square feet of kitchen per person, restaurants average about 15 square feet and fine dining may require up to 25 square feet per person.

Layouts

Arrange your equipment and supplies in a way that allows meal creation to flow seamlessly.

Assembly Line

- ◆ Designed for serving similar dishes to large quantities of people at a fast pace
- ◆ Setup is organized in order of use

Zone Style

Segmented into defined sections

- ◆ Dry & Refrigerated Storage
- ◆ Preparation
- ◆ Cooking
- ◆ Warewashing
- ◆ BOH to FOH Transfer

Centralized

Depending on available space, a centralized layout can improve productivity by minimizing movement of kitchen staff

- ◆ Works best in a sizable square space
- ◆ Features all grills, ranges and ovens in the middle, with other stations situated along outer walls
- ◆ An alternative is to consolidate and concentrate the prep area and place production lines along the perimeter

Keep in Mind >

Cleaning & Washing Station

- ◆ All establishments should include a 3-compartment sink
 - ◆ Wash
 - ◆ Rinse
 - ◆ Sanitize
- ◆ Take into account the estimated turnover rate on your busiest day and what/how many resources you will need to consistently have clean dishware and preparation containers

Storage

- ◆ Construct adequate shelving for items like disposables, cleaning solutions, toiletries, latex gloves and other fundamentals such as dry goods.
- ◆ Cleaning supplies must never be kept above food, equipment, cutlery, tableware or disposables. To avoid contamination store chemicals low on shelves that are located away from the kitchen.
- ◆ It is essential to understand all local and state health codes as minimum linear footage requirements may apply to the storage of dry goods.
- ◆ Refrigeration requirements will depend on the amount and frequency of deliveries necessary to maintain sufficient provisions for service.



Design

Closed Kitchen

- ◆ No risk of diners witnessing occasional mishaps or messes
- ◆ Some chefs are more comfortable behind the scenes, rather than center stage
- ◆ Less pressure on employees to uphold a pristine environment
- ◆ Limits exposure of strong scents

Open Kitchen

- ◆ Adds energy and entertainment to dining out
- ◆ Chefs offer a one-of-a-kind performance and get to showcase their artistry
- ◆ Creates an inclusive atmosphere
- ◆ Provides an enhanced sensory experience

Keep in Mind ▶

A partial open kitchen offers guests some visual access without creating a sense of overexposure for chefs and their team.



Kitchen Equipment

Energy Conservation

High-efficiency heating and cooling equipment uses less energy to operate. Other benefits – the units are quieter and reduce indoor humidity.

Learn more at <https://www.energystar.gov/>

- ◆ Explore energy saving features; although the up-front cost is more expensive, choosing otherwise can result in higher utility bills over time.
- ◆ Isolate refrigeration from cooking to minimize temperature regulation concerns, while maintaining enough proximity for optimal execution.
- ◆ Position fixtures in a way to maximize ventilation through the exhaust hood.

Purchasing Options

New

Pros:

- ◆ No overhead expenses, agreements or contracts
- ◆ More control of what you get, not limited to leasing company's options
- ◆ Comes with warranty

Cons:

- ◆ Most expensive option
- ◆ Value drops once it leaves showroom

Used

Pros:

- ◆ Lower cost with room for price negotiation
- ◆ Best if only gently used

Cons:

- ◆ Could be outdated, worn and less efficient
- ◆ May already need repairs, consider a professional inspection before purchase

Leasing

Pros:

- ◆ Ideal for equipment with a short lifespan such as ice machines, dishwashers and coffee makers
- ◆ Possibility of exchanging equipment at the end of the lease for latest or different models
- ◆ Typically includes installation and service contract

Cons:

- ◆ Do not own the equipment therefore cannot keep or sell
- ◆ Long/short-term agreements typically include fees and interests which can lead to higher costs

A background image of a kitchen with stainless steel countertops, a gas stove, and various kitchen utensils like a metal cup holding spoons and a spatula.

Play It Safe

Cross-Contamination

Meat, poultry and produce must be prepared separately to avoid foodborne illnesses. Hold regular training sessions with staff to teach safe practices and reinforce the importance of proper protocols.

Cross-Contact

Designate cooking and storage areas and use color-coded utensils and smallwares to craft allergen-free meals. If space is limited, place a clean barrier such as a baking sheet between food and workspace surfaces to eliminate particles left behind from tainting other food.

Read More <https://www.foodallergy.org/life-with-food-allergies/living-well-everyday/avoiding-cross-contact>

Health Regulations

Each state has specific mandated health regulations based on establishment type. Ensure that your front and back of house are up to code with the FDA and State food requirements.

◆ FDA Regulations

<https://www.fda.gov/Food/default.htm>

◆ State Food Codes

<https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/FoodCode/ucm122814.htm>

◆ Local Food Codes

<https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/FoodCode/ucm122814.htm>

Information provided may not pertain to all kitchens and is subject to local health department rules and regulations.