# Making the Most of Awkward Kitchen Spaces with Bespoke Cabinetry

Every kitchen has its quirks. A corner that seems too tight for standard units, a sloping ceiling that leaves a gap above the wall cabinets, or a narrow run between appliances where nothing off the shelf fits. These spaces are often left empty or filled with a makeshift shelf that does not quite serve its purpose. The result is lost storage and a kitchen that never feels quite finished.

Bespoke cabinetry is one of the most effective ways to turn these awkward areas into genuinely useful storage. Instead of adapting a room to fit standard furniture, the furniture is made to suit the room. This approach works especially well in older properties, extensions with unusual angles, or open-plan layouts where the kitchen meets a dining or living area and the line of cabinets must flow around architectural features.

## What bespoke cabinetry means in practice

Custom cabinetry is not the same as choosing a different door style from a catalogue. It means that every cabinet is designed and built to specific dimensions for a particular space. A joiner or kitchen specialist measures the room, notes the position of windows, doors, pipes and sockets, and then designs units that fit exactly. This can include tapered cabinets that follow a sloping ceiling, shallow drawers beside a chimney breast, or pull-out larders that tuck into a gap less than 600 millimetres wide.

The key difference from modular furniture is the degree of control. With bespoke work, you decide the internal layout of each cabinet. A tall cupboard that might have had two fixed shelves can become a set of pull-out baskets for vegetables, a drawer for small appliances, and a shelf for cookbooks at exactly the right height. Every millimetre of depth and height can be used.

## How it solves the most common awkward spaces

### Difficult corners

Corner cabinets are notorious for wasted space. Standard units often rely on a carousel or a lazy Susan that still leaves a gap at the back. Bespoke corner storage can be designed as a series of deep pull-out drawers on full-extension runners, so that nothing disappears into the dark corners. Alternatively, a diagonal drawer bank can fill a corner completely, with each drawer becoming progressively narrower as it reaches the corner point. This turns a problem area into one of the most accessible spots in the kitchen.



**Narrow gaps and chimney breasts**

A gap between a built-in oven and a wall, or beside a chimney breast, is often too narrow for a standard base unit, which is typically 300 millimetres deep. A custom pull-out unit just 200 millimetres wide can hold oils, spices, chopping boards or baking trays. Similarly, a narrow tall cupboard beside a fridge housing can store brooms, ironing boards or a step stool, using vertical space that would otherwise be dead.

### Sloping ceilings and roof windows

Kitchens in attics or loft conversions present a particular challenge. A run of standard wall units would leave a large triangular gap at the top. Bespoke cabinetry can follow the roof pitch, with tapered doors and custom-sized shelves that use every inch. The lowest point of the slope can house deep drawers for pans, while the higher part holds open shelving for decorative items or everyday tableware. The result feels intentional rather than improvised.

## The role of internal fittings

The real value of bespoke cabinetry often lies not in the cabinet box itself but in what goes inside it. Standard kitchens offer a limited range of internal organisers, and many are designed for generic 600-millimetre units. A custom cabinet can be fitted with drawer organisers that match the exact sizes of your utensils, cutlery, and gadgets. Pull-out units can be compartmentalised for waste sorting, with separate bins for general waste, recycling, and food waste, all hidden behind a single door.

Appliance housing is another area where custom work shines. A standard housing unit might leave an awkward gap above a built-in microwave or coffee machine. Bespoke housing can be made to the exact height of the appliance, with a shallow drawer above for pods, filters, or cups. This avoids the dust-catching void that often appears in standard installations.

## What it means for the reader

If you are planning a kitchen renovation and have already found that standard units leave you with wasted space or compromised storage, bespoke cabinetry offers a practical way forward. It does require a different planning process. Instead of choosing units from a range and fitting them into the room, you start with the room itself and design the storage around it. This often means working with a specialist who can take detailed measurements and understands joinery and kitchen ergonomics.

The result is a kitchen that stores everything you need in a logical place, without awkward gaps or wasted corners. It can also improve the daily routine: a well-placed pull-out unit for pans next to the hob, or a tall cupboard for pantry storage beside the fridge, makes cooking and clearing up faster and less frustrating.



Many homeowners in Derbyshire have found that a bespoke approach solves the sort of layout problems that modular kitchens cannot address. For those considering this route, Cressbrook Construction offers fully managed bespoke kitchen design, sourcing, refurbishment and installation across Derbyshire. Their experience with period properties and modern extensions means they are used to working around chimney breasts, uneven walls, and tight corners.

## Trade-offs to consider

Bespoke cabinetry is not always the right choice for every kitchen. The design and build process takes longer than ordering stock units, and the cost is typically higher because each piece is made individually. The lead time can be several weeks longer than a modular kitchen. However, for awkward spaces where standard units would require filler panels, cut-down doors, or wasted sections, the extra time and investment often pay back in usable storage and a cleaner finish.

Another consideration is future flexibility. A bespoke cabinet is fixed in position and size. If you later rearrange the room, the cabinet may not fit elsewhere. For most people, a kitchen is a

long-term installation, so this is rarely a problem, but it is worth noting if you expect to move or change the layout within a few years.

## Practical steps if you are considering it

Start by making a list of the awkward spaces in your current kitchen. Measure the areas that feel wasted: the gap beside the fridge, the corner that is hard to reach, the space above the wall units. Then think about what you want to store there. This will guide the design when you speak to a specialist.

Ask about the internal fittings available. A good bespoke kitchen company will offer a range of drawer organisers, pull-out units, and pantry storage options. Check that the cabinet construction is solid and that the runners and hinges are from reputable manufacturers, as these are the parts that see daily use.

If you are working with a contractor or a kitchen designer, make sure they understand the importance of internal storage, not just the look of the doors. A beautiful kitchen that is frustrating to use will never feel right, no matter how good the materials are.



Bespoke cabinetry is not a luxury reserved for large, open-plan kitchens with endless budgets. It is a practical tool for making the most of whatever space you have. By designing storage that fits the room rather than forcing the room to fit standard units, you can turn awkward corners, narrow gaps, and sloping ceilings into some of the most useful storage in your home. And because the work is done by skilled joiners who measure and build for each specific location, the finish is seamless, with no filler strips or unsightly gaps.

For those in Derbyshire looking to solve a difficult kitchen layout, Cressbrook Construction can provide the expertise and craftsmanship needed to turn a challenging space into a kitchen that works exactly as it should.