



# How to design an eco-friendly kitchen

Whether you're building a new kitchen or renovating an old one, there are lots of ways to be more sustainable, and it's easier than you think.

Building and renovating plays a huge role in the world's carbon footprint. So, the more sustainable choices you're able to make when designing your kitchen, the better it will be for the planet. There's not a one-size-fits all approach when it comes to creating an eco-friendly kitchen – you might decide to make smaller choices such as using recycled materials or opting for non-toxic paint, or, you can go all out and ensure all of the elements of your kitchen are sustainable.

Here are some steps you can take to design an eco-friendly kitchen.

## Reface cabinetry

By refacing kitchen cabinets you're doing exactly what it says on the tin – the body of the cupboards are kept in place, and you just replace the 'face' of them, the cabinet doors and handles, to match the design of your new kitchen. Not only can you reduce waste by refacing cabinets, but it's also a great way to save money as you'll pay a fraction of the cost to achieve what appears to be a brand-new set of cabinets.

## Choose sustainable materials

When selecting materials for your countertops, cabinets, tiles and furniture there are few things to consider:

- What is the material made from and how renewable is it?
- How far does it need to travel to get to you?
- Is the material fit for purpose, and will it last a long time?
- And can this material be reused, recycled or repurposed down the track?

For countertops you could consider wood, which has relatively little environmental impact and is easily cleaned with soap and water, or quartz, which has much less impact than mining for granite and doesn't require toxic sealants. It will also last a lifetime without cracking or chipping.

For cabinets, solid timber, plywood or bamboo are all positive options. A great bonus is that solid timber doors can be repainted and repaired, unlike laminate or vinyl-wrapped doors. They're a great choice for durability and

longevity in an eco-friendly kitchen.

## Avoid VOCs

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are a group of carbon-based chemicals that easily evaporate at room temperature. Many common household materials and products, such as paint, flooring and furnishings, give off VOCs. Formaldehyde, a known human carcinogen, is particularly common in adhesives and resins, making them bad for both your health and the environment.

Keep your kitchen healthy by painting walls and cabinetry in low or zero VOC paints. Choose flooring that's low in VOCs, such as cork, linoleum, reclaimed hardwood or bamboo. For splashbacks, opt for eco-friendly tiles such as recycled glass.

## Choose energy efficient windows and doors

According to government figures, 40% of all the energy consumed in Australian homes is used for cooling and heating. So any solution that minimises the need for cooling or heating can substantially lower energy consumption, and your bills! Choose high-quality, efficient windows and doors that will help minimise heat transfer between the inside of your home and the outdoors. There are various types of glass available so make sure you do your research and choose the best for your kitchen.

## Consider a timeless design

Being eco-friendly is all about creating projects that minimise our impact on the environment. The ultimate sustainable kitchen is one that features a long-lasting, timeless design. While following trends can be tempting, if your kitchen needs to be rebuilt in five year's time then it is not following eco-friendly principles. Think about the layout and the materials that you select and how they will look 20 years from now.

## Check your appliances

Energy-efficient dishwashers, ovens, rangehoods, microwaves, and refrigerators are other great ways to reduce your environmental footprint as you spruce up your new kitchen. And it's a good idea to check their functions and settings to ensure you're using them to their full advantage. For instance, NEFF has various product features that aid an eco-friendly kitchen:

- [NeffLight](#) – Our NEFFLight oven lighting feature uses a specially designed prism located in the oven door to evenly distribute light, making sure you get a good view of anything cooking, even the muffin in the very back corner. This means you don't have to open the oven during the cooking process which preserves energy.
- [EasyClean](#) – For a quick clean that is also easy on the environment, NEFF ovens' EasyClean function makes cleaning a breeze. This self-cleaning method is great for a lightly soiled oven and uses a mixture of water and washing liquid to loosen the food residue.

- Eco50 dishwasher programme – This programme is designed to be particularly environmentally friendly. Dishes are cleaned at the lower temperature of 50 degrees and uses less water and heat.
- [CircoTherm](#) – With CircoTherm you can cook, roast and bake on all levels of the oven simultaneously, meaning you can create a three course meal all in one go, saving a huge amount of energy during the cooking process.

### **About NEFF**

NEFF is a German-engineered kitchen appliance brand, with a product range that includes ovens, cooktops, rangehoods, coffee machines and dishwashers designed to make life in the kitchen a daily pleasure. For people who love to cook, NEFF gives you the tools to create meaningful connections, express your creativity and make memories. Because real life happens in the kitchen.

Learn more about NEFF [here](#).