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HARDWARE

New hardware can modernize and update a kitchen quickly and inexpensively. Think about mixing metals – stainless with copper or brass with chrome. The choices are endless. Add a whimsical touch with color or a glamorous touch with glass and crystals. Take inexpensive wood knobs and paint in a fun accent color. From natural stone, to polished metals, from whimsical to historic, nothing sets the tone and mood of a kitchen like exciting and unique hardware – the jewelry of your kitchen.

COUNTERTOPS

Nothing improves the function and the resale value of a kitchen more than the right countertops. Today there are many more choices than the laminates and tile counters of 30 years ago. Consider granites, stainless steel, wood or concrete as

tops for durability, style and resale. While not a do-it-yourself project, new countertops add incredible practicality to an old kitchen and can make a tired kitchen look fresh and new. Remember, you can mix materials – perhaps granite for the perimeter and a wood or stainless top for the island or peninsula. Prices have dropped on these top materials recently, so now is a great time to upgrade while adding style and durability.

LIGHTING

Bring your cooking out of the dark ages, and replace outdated lighting now! Think of lighting your kitchen in layers. First think about general lighting. Add recessed can lights to replace an outdated fluorescent center light fixture. Next add task lighting by including lights mounted under wall cabinets for great light shining right on the countertop – Xenon and L.E.D.

fixtures are the current best choices. Finally add accent lighting with a pendant light at the sink and bar area or an island light to give a punch of style and character as well as light to accentuate one particular area in the room.

BACKSPASH

A new backsplash can give your kitchen great personality. Mosaics, in stone or glass, are popular and provide great style. Even a traditional tile, in an exciting color, can give your kitchen a much-needed splash of color. Try incorporating a more expensive tile in just one focal area, such as over the cook top, to keep the budget low and the drama high. And don't be afraid to mix styles and patterns of tile to create your own unique design to suit your budget.

Today, with a little effort and even a small budget you can add big value and excitement to any kitchen space. **CS**

Would you like to have your design dilemma considered for an upcoming issue? Just send an e-mail to designerguy@haskellinteriors.com.

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