

PROPERTY PROJECT

Basement kitchen diner

The Davidsons created an open-plan kitchen and dining room in their basement



WHO LIVES THERE?
Alison and Rob Davidson

WHERE IS IT?
Crouch End, north London

WHAT THEY DID
Knocked through the basement kitchen and bedroom, transforming the space into a large kitchen-diner area

Our four-storey Victorian terraced house had previously been converted into four flats, and work on the kitchen was part of our renovation project to turn the property back into a family home. This was our chance to create a large kitchen with lots of light and plenty of storage out of the dark basement bedroom and kitchen. I chose a beautiful, stylish kitchen from a local company. While the work was being done, we managed in the living room with a microwave, kettle and a two-ring burner, and washing up was done in the bathroom. But it was definitely well worth the upheaval as my new kitchen is just as I imagined, and it's very easy to keep clean.



Alison Davidson

THE PROJECT BRIEF

- The wall between the old basement bedroom and kitchen was knocked down and the ceiling supported by RSJs. The basement was then tanked to make it waterproof, new electrics, plumbing and underfloor heating were put in, and the room was replastered.
- A hole large enough to house the ovens was knocked into the chimney breast and supported by a beam, then the chimney breast was hidden behind a run of tall units.
- The floor had to be levelled with a concrete screed before it could be tiled, as areas had been dug up to remove flooring and channel in pipework.
- Sleek, white flat-fronted units and a central island were fitted, complemented by composite stone worktops, stainless-steel appliances and a modern extractor.



'Good light is essential in a basement kitchen - light wells and sun tubes can be very effective'

Hugo Tugman, founder, Architect Your Home

Clean and bright

Light units, worktops and flooring create a modern look. Hacker Activ Antique White laminate units with M200 inset handles, from £299 for a 60cm base unit, Siemens induction hob EH9S501E, £1,117.80, Elica Platinum pendant extractor, £1,215.60, all Funktional Kitchens. French polished limestone floor tiles, £59.80 per sq m, Checkalow. Bräm hand-woven baskets, £5.86 each, Ikea. Mirrored glass panels, from £30.11 for a 45 x 30cm panel, MirrorWorld. Glass filter coffee maker, £61.65, Russell Hobbs. Four-slice toaster CPT180U, £44, John Lewis



BASEMENT KITCHENS

How to get the look

- Consider knocking smaller rooms into one large kitchen. If you remove a load-bearing wall, an RSJ will need to be fitted above the opening.
- Moving a staircase is costly, so try to retain the existing position. If the staircase leads directly into the room, replace it for one with open treads to increase light to the space.
- Maximise natural light by making existing windows larger, and add patio doors that open on to the garden.
- Glossy surfaces will bounce light round the room, making it seem brighter. White units, shiny steel appliances and tiled floors with a slight sheen will all help to lift the room.
- You'll need a combination of background and task lighting. Supplement downlights with a pendant lamp over the dining table or island unit, and lighting under wall units.



Clever planning

Streamlined integrated ovens are set into a bank of units which also hides the large fridge freezer. Siemens HB86E560B combination oven, £745.20, Siemens HB750550B oven, £654.35, Siemens K128VA40GB integrated fridge freezer, £749.80, all Funktional Kitchens



Into the groove

Pre-cut grooves in the hard-wearing composite worktop allow dishes to drain without the need for a separate drying rack. Quarella composite stone Bianco Saraiba polished worktop, £414 per sq m, Blancosubline white sink with BM5300 tap, £171.50, all Funktional Kitchens

WHAT THEY DID WELL...

Maximise hidden storage space

Full-height, floor-to-ceiling units along the back wall ensure that every inch of space is put to good use. Internally, cupboards in different sizes ensure that there's even a home for the ironing board and vacuum cleaner.

Hidden assets

To keep the area looking smart and streamlined, an integrated fridge freezer and dishwasher are hidden behind a run of doors. The island unit also includes concealed drawers and cupboards on one side.

White and bright

An old doorway and tiny window were replaced with French doors leading out to the garden, which allow more light into the room. Recessed spotlights, white units and reflective surfaces enhance the bright, spacious feel.

Colour accents

To prevent the all-white room looking too clinical, the Davidsons added blinds in a striking green leaf print. Alison also painted the large canvas on the wall behind the dining table, which provides a dramatic focal point to the area.

Warm and inviting

Limestone flooring is hard-wearing and durable, but cool underfoot. Underfloor heating gets round this problem, so the kitchen is warm even on the coldest mornings.



Extra seating

The island is a sociable space where Alison can talk to friends while she cooks. Sebastian bar stools, from £34.26 each, Ikea. Blinds in Virginia Creeper in Sweet Pea, from £78 for W60 x 80cm drop, Clarissa Hulse at Eclectics. Samsung LE19R86WDX/XEU 19in LCD digital TV, £199, John Lewis. Revive radiator, £120 for H45 x W90.4cm, Mr Central Heating

Getting started...

- *Kitchens: A Design Source Book* by Vinny Lee, £25 (Ryland Peters & Small), has great ideas on planning and decorating a kitchen.
- *Architect Your Home* (0800 849 8505, www.architect-yourhome.com) helps you make the most of your basement space with advice from an architect.
- Find an experienced local builder at the Federation of Master Builders (020 7242 7583, www.findabuilder.co.uk).
- Basements are prone to damp and flooding. You may need to ask a specialist company to tank it before the kitchen can be installed.



Dining style

A dark grey feature wall makes a dramatic backdrop. Feature wall in Night Jewels 1 vinyl matt emulsion, £17.99 per 2.5ltr, walls in Pure Brilliant White vinyl matt emulsion, £13.99 per 2.5ltr, both Dulux. Dining table, find similar at Of Special Interest. Malbec chairs, £149 per pair, Marks & Spencer. Blinds (below) in Virginia Creeper in Sweet Pea, from £78 for W60 x 80cm drop, Clarissa Hulse at Eclectics