

1966

## EC66-2200 Easy to Use Kitchens

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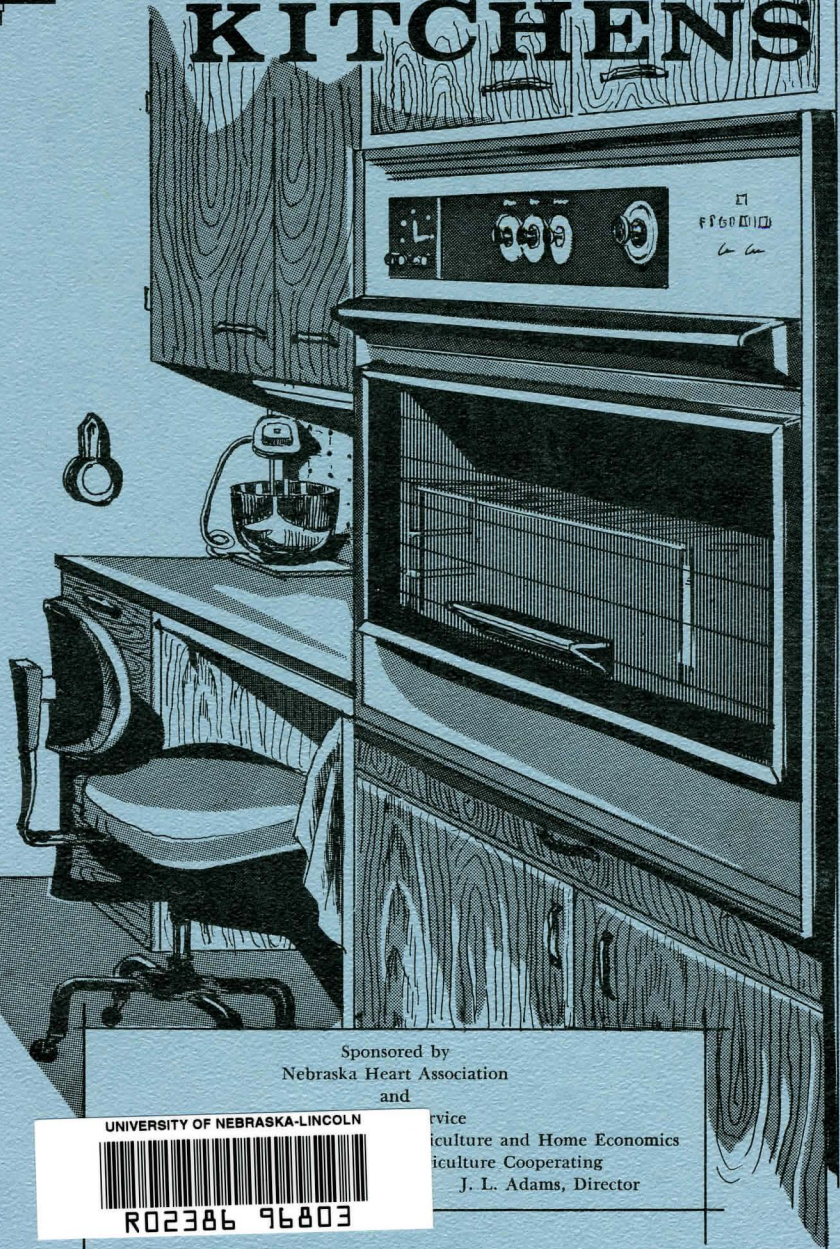
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EC 66-2200

For Physically Limited Homemakers

# Easy-to-Use KITCHENS



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# easy - to - use KITCHENS



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Many of your homemaking activities center around the kitchen. A well-arranged kitchen with organized work centers providing convenient working space and storage facilities to suit your particular needs helps you work efficiently and comfortably.

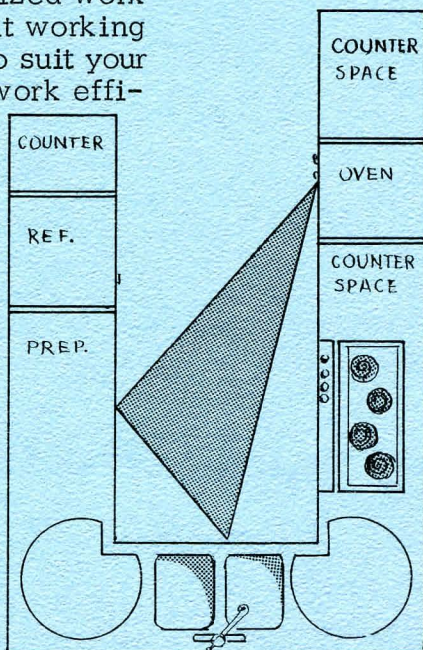
## The Four Basic Kitchen Shapes

L-shaped

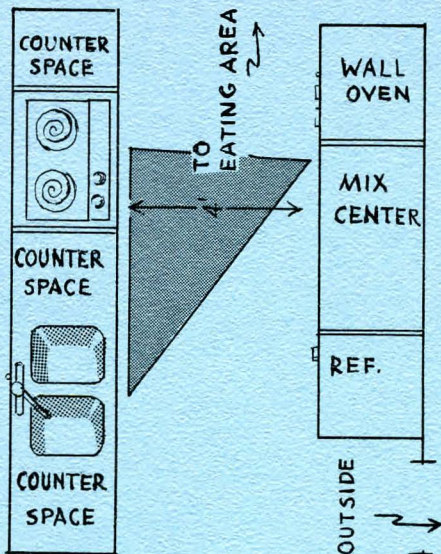
U-shaped

Parallel Walls

Straight Line - used if the space is long and narrow and all equipment and work surfaces must be along one wall.







A compact kitchen with the sink and range close together is a boon to any homemaker. The U-shaped and L-shaped kitchen may be your choice if you have arm and hand limitations.

However, a Parallel Walls kitchen may be good if the sink and range are along the same wall and if a cart on wheels is used to carry things across the room.

When energy is limited, as with the homemaker with a heart condition, you need a compact kitchen with work centers arranged in the same sequence that food preparation follows.

Leg limitations necessitate minimum walking. A Parallel Walls kitchen lets you support yourself against counters or other equipment.

A wheelchair, for comfortable use, requires enough space for easy turning. The L-shaped arrangement is excellent for a wheelchair kitchen. The Parallel Walls kitchen is good if the aisle is wide enough so that the wheelchair turns freely.

### What Every Kitchen Should Have

Mixing and Preparation Center (refrigerator adjoining if possible with door opening toward the mix center) located near the entrance door.

Preparation and Cleanup Center (sink).

Cooking and Serving Center (range and oven) located near the eating center.



Arrange your kitchen so the "flow of work" follows the sequence in which you prepare foods .

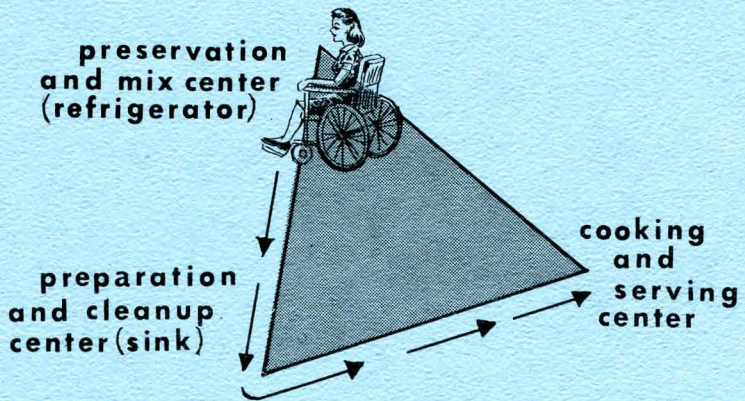
### "Flow of Work"

Preservation

and  $\longrightarrow$  Sink Center  $\longrightarrow$  Cooking and Serving Center

Mix Center

The "Work Triangle" is one measure of kitchen efficiency. Paths between the three work centers form the "Work Triangle." Traffic through this triangle interferes with meal preparation. The distances between the centers should be comfortable for working , allowing for enough counter and storage space between appliances but not so much as to waste space and require extra steps and effort.



Recommended distances between the centers as measured from center front of appliances:

- Refrigerator to sink    4-7 feet
- Sink to range            4-6 feet
- Range to refrigerator   4-9 feet
- Sum of above distances not to exceed 22 feet.



Recommended total linear space allowances for cabinets and appliances:

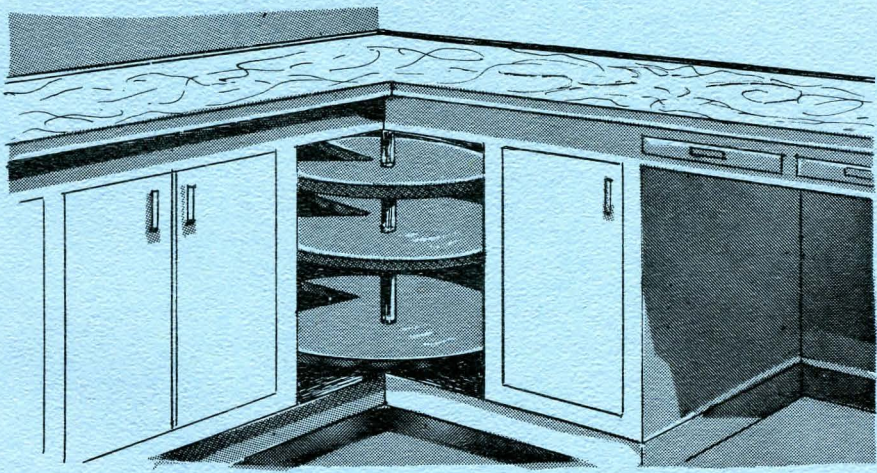
Liberal Storage	20 feet
Medium Storage	17 feet
Limited Storage	15 feet

The amount of space you need depends on the appliances in your kitchen and the utensils, food items and equipment that you store and the amount and type of meal preparation that you do.

Store items at the center where you use them first. Storing the most used items within easy reach reduces energy costs. The items and their location determine the most suitable type of storage unit.

Roll-out drawers and shelves are more satisfactory than stationary shelves for under-counter storage. Roll-outs bring all contents into view. Storage on backs of doors permits easy access to articles.

Revolving shelves (lazy Susans) for a corner bring articles to the front and use otherwise wasted space. They are also useful for straight shelves that extend too far back.



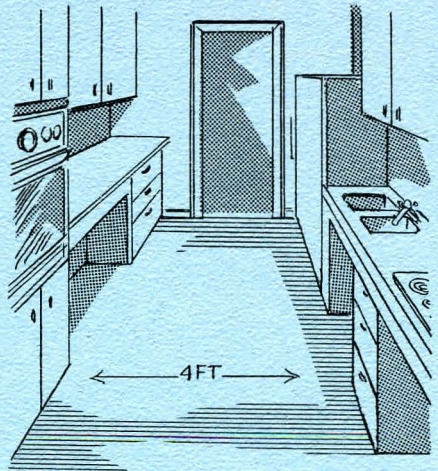
Adequate space must be provided in front of cabinets or appliances for passageways and work area. Recommended clearances are:



1. Between cabinets or appliances opposite each other - 4 feet.

2. Cabinets at right angles but separated by a door - 3 feet.

3. Appliances at right angles - 4 feet.



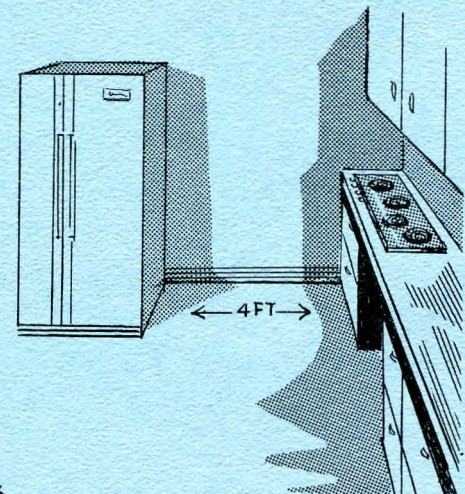
Crutches or a standard 25" wheelchair require a passage space of at least 3 feet. A 4-foot allowance is much better and allows easier turning and moving.

For a "wheelchair" kitchen you need enough space to allow a 360° turn.



The work surface height (counter top) should allow you, whether you sit or stand, to work without stooping or raising your arm above elbow level.

Sitting to work can mean less fatigue and more comfort for some homemakers. This may be especially important if you are a homemaker with a heart condition or have otherwise limited energy.





For seated work in a chair or wheelchair provide an opening under the counter for knee space. This should be at least 2 feet 6 inches wide and 2 feet to 2 feet 5 inches high (depends on you and your chair or wheelchair). With this you can sit closer to the counter without twisting to one side to work. This lets you use counter space and the cabinet area is more accessible. When you lower storage heights you can more easily reach items while seated.



Your arrangement for seated work depends on the type and degree of your disability, your resources and your likes. Some alternatives are:

1. Sit or perch on a high stool and work at the standard 36" height counter or at a standard sink.

2. Sit in a posture-type chair or wheelchair and provide a pullout board in a cabinet or a fold-down table on a wall. The height for most comfortable work surfaces varies with your height, your arm reach, the kind of task you are doing and the distance needed for feet to rest comfortably on the floor or footrest. Hands work on or near the surface. A lower surface is needed when mixing with long handled tools.

3. You, like many physically limited homemakers and their families, may feel that the increased ease and utility gained by lowering countertop heights for comfortable seated work justifies the expense and remodeling involved. Upper cabinet storage should also be lowered so that you can reach needed items. The maximum height shelves most homemakers seated in a chair or a wheelchair can reach are 50"-52", although this varies with the individual. When you lower counter tops to provide for comfortable seated working, some 36" high counter top



area should be left for other family members who wish to stand to work.

Easy care finishes which do not mar or show dirt are recommended for cabinets and counters.<sup>1/</sup> General kitchen lighting and area lighting for the work centers should be adequate and provide for safety. A color scheme that you and your family like makes your kitchen a pleasant place to work.

<sup>1/</sup>See: EC 59-1137: Surface for the Purpose, by Jerri Withrow, University of Nebraska Extension Service, Lincoln.

### References

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Goldsmith, Selwyn. Designing for the Disabled. London: Royal Institute of British Architects Technical Information Service, 1963.

Contact your County Extension Agent for other bulletins in this series for homemakers with physical limitations.