

Forest Hill

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# LIFESTYLE™

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# Hanging in the Balance: Beauty & Function in the Kitchen

By Designer Kate Davidson



**WHEN** it comes to interior design, function and fashion go hand in hand. While it's certainly possible to achieve each independently of the other, without both, the space falls short. Contrary to popular belief, you can have your cake and eat it, too—particularly with regard to the kitchen. In this room especially, each design decision requires thoughtful consideration of beauty and brawn. Here are three key areas that we focussed on, in this recent project for a busy family of six.

## Colour Palette

Black and white is a classic combination with a strong, modern sensibility. While one might typically consider it for its aesthetic qualities, it has a practical purpose, too. Black and white rooms have a timelessness that won't soon get dated. Despite this, they somehow manage to maintain their trendy appeal. This bodes well for a kitchen renovation, which can be expensive and hard to live through. Once your kitchen reno is over and done with, you won't want to do it again for a very long time. With a black and white palette, you won't have to.

This kitchen features a classic white backdrop, which acts as our “neutral” hue. Then we added punctuation via the black range hood and lower cabinets, which become focal points and attract the eye. To offset the white and black cabinetry, we chose warm-toned Quartz countertops and floor tiles, which soften the space. We then added further interest and warmth by combining brass and black fixtures.

The cooking area is the focus of most kitchens, and rightfully so. Here, we made the range and hood fan a focal point by centering them in the space and finishing the cooking area with a strong, square-shaped hood cover, in a bold black hue of course!

## Functional Finishes

Finishes are another typical aesthetic focus, but don't forget to weigh their practicality before you commit. If you live a busy life, as most of us do, look for finishes that require minimal maintenance on a regular basis; are easy to clean, when you get around to it; and are durable enough to survive daily wear and tear with grace.

Our clients specifically requested surfaces and finishes that were hardwearing and efficient, to meet and withstand the demands of this family with four teenaged boys. Given the option (and with all the amazing products on the market these days, there's always an option) I always recommend choosing something that meets your functional needs while fulfilling your style goals.

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## Storage Space

Contrary to colour and finishes, storage is typically considered purely for its functionality, but don't discount its many aesthetic attributes. Overall, having a sufficient, smartly designed storage system makes it easy to keep your kitchen neat and tidy without too much effort. But in terms of the storage elements themselves, explore different options to up your style game.

The kitchen can be a real pressure cooker, both from a design perspective and when it comes to daily demands. For a truly seamless and high-functioning kitchen, be sure to factor your overall lifestyle in at the design stage. Work with a professional designer like myself to ensure all your needs and wants are built into a design from the start, that will stand the test of time.



*Kate Davidson, is the founder and principal designer of Kate + Co Design. For more than a decade the multidisciplinary interior design firm has been providing complete residential and commercial design services throughout North America. Kate + Co is known for creating luxurious livable interiors.*

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