

Renovation, Week One: Demolition

I cook. I am not a trained cook, but it's my favorite thing to do for my family, my friends and my fans. I just needed a better place to do it all.



This is the last picture I took of my old kitchen before we started tearing it apart.

But my kitchen— well, it was still circa 1985 with a laminate countertop, too little cabinet space and not enough storage. This is my office, my test kitchen, and it was time for an upgrade. It took six months to plan and will probably take six weeks to do, but I am so excited to share this whole process with you.

DISCLAIMER: I was hoping to get sponsorship on the renovation and tell you all about it and thank the companies blah blah blah, because it was better for ME to get that. But since we're doing a lot of the work ourselves, it made more sense to just be brutality honest with you about the process and give shout outs to those that did great... and let you know what choices I would make differently in retrospect.

I worked primarily with my local [Home Depot](#) to do the designs—the kitchen designer was fantastic. She met with me every week for almost three months. We played with different layouts, discussed my style and what I was picturing in my head and figuring out how to get it on paper. We carefully selected cabinets and worked out some interesting kinks in my space. She was patient and knowledgeable and even kept it on budget. Thank you, Kelly, for helping to bring my project to fruition.

My kitchen style is going to be French Country. It's going to be a careful balance between rustic and elegant. It will be very user-friendly, lots of workable surfaces, and even a desk. It will be sturdy and spacious and inviting. When it's all done, you'll get to see me working in my crock pots while looking out the back windows. You can belly-up to the counter bar and enjoy libations while I fix dinner. If you want to help out, there will be two prep stations on the kitchen island. And at the end of the day—cleanup should be a cinch. I'm giddy with excitement.



And 24 hours later...
the kitchen was gone.

But before this can all come together... it has to all come apart. We've spent the week tearing my old kitchen apart— as a

family. Yes, I gave my kids hammers and crow bars and a lesson is safety. Yes, I prepped meals ahead and cooked in my crockpot while wearing safety glasses. It was hard work—exhausting, in fact, but I love the fact that we did it. I encourage you to push yourselves to be involved as much as possible in projects of the home and of the heart, when possible.

And then I got the call... your cabinets are ready. WHAT?! But that's three weeks ahead of schedule! In what alternate universe does production and delivery go ahead of schedule.

My kitchen— and family room— are torn out down to the subfloors and my cabinets will be delivered in a week?

Happy Thanksgiving, y'all. It's time to get to work!