

# the working kitchen

So your kitchen looks the part but what about on the inside?  
How does it work? How well planned is your storage?

**We may all** have a cutlery insert in our drawer and an old lazy susan in the corner cupboard but today's kitchen can be a wonderland of clever storage and smooth operation thanks to hardware innovations. Not only can you get just about any form of drawer insert to store cutlery, utensils, cleaners, canisters, spices, pots, crockery... you name it. But other technologies such as soft-closing drawers, push-to-open drawers, robust runners that allow drawers to take up to 70kg in weight, moving corner pantries and slide-out pantries are all becoming more common in our kitchens... and more affordable.

Having said that, the difference between a cheap kitchen and a more expensive one is often in the bits you can't see – the robustness of the hinges, carcasses and runners. Kitchens suffer a lot of wear and tear (think of how many times you open the cutlery drawer each day) so investing in good-quality hardware often pays off.

## Drawers and more drawers

Drawers are big... full stop. They've become popular as the most efficient way of storing anything from napery and placemats, to crockery, pots and plastics. With a drawer, everything is easily seen and reached when the drawer is open, unlike cupboards where you have to reach in and over other items to get to the back.

Some people put their small kitchen appliances like whizzes and mixers in a big top drawer, pull out the drawer, plug in and away they go without having to heft the machine on to the benchtop.

Internal drawers are an option, giving a more streamlined look, where you might have your pots in the main drawer then the lids in a more

slender secondary drawer hidden inside the main deeper one. You can put a non-slip mat on the bottom of the drawer, or a system that keeps the pots or stacks of plates steady. Everything is modular and easily adapted to suit individual needs.

Overhead cupboards have seen a couple of incarnations of late. They've gone from side-hinged opening, to top-hinged lift-up versions. Now, Hettich predicts that side-to-side sliding doors will become popular for overhead cupboards. Sounds like a return to the 1950s but knowing today's technology, these will be a smooth-running, high-tech version.

Pull-out pantries are still strong especially in kitchens that don't have the room for a walk-in pantry.

## In zone

Aside from what you put in the drawers and cupboards, zoning a kitchen makes it more efficient – all your crockery and cutlery in one place near the table perhaps, the rubbish and cleaners near the sink, pots and pans near the cooker, food prep equipment near the most-used part of the benchtop and food storage close to the fridge.

One area that has attracted a lot of interest is the humble rubbish bin. We're now putting it in a drawer alongside another bin for recyclables and perhaps another for compost scraps. Put a push-to-open mechanism on it (an electronic one that also soft closes) and you can get your rubbish in the drawer hands-free. **H**

information and photography supplied by Hettich



**Above** We're using drawers for so much more than just cutlery and teatowels. This clever flag system keeps the plates in order.

**Right** The bane of our lives – rubbish and cleaning equipment. This solution keeps it all nice and tidy.

**Far right** This curvy corner solution glides out of hidden corners, giving much more storage space.

