



## SPLASHBACK IMPACT

This mid-century kitchen makeover by Cantilever Interiors uses geometric tiles for a great splashback. Look for hexagonal or diamond shapes and keep the look simple by using the same colour grout as the tiles, or use a contrasting grout to make them really pop.

## CUPBOARD FACELIFT

Often, the bones of a mid-century kitchen will still be in great shape. Before you consider a complete remodel, think about keeping the cabinetry and just changing the drawer and cupboard fronts for a fraction of the price.

# WHERE SIXTIES STYLE MEETS 2016

Struggling to envisage a new kitchen in your mid-century house? **Chelsea Clark** asks the experts for their best tips

The thought of a new kitchen is enough to bring a wistful smile to the face of any homeowner.

According to Australian Bureau of Statistics data, the kitchen is one of the most commonly renovated rooms in the house (along with the bathroom) while figures from the Housing Industry of Australia (HIA) suggest there were about 150,000 kitchen renovation jobs in the 12 months to June this year. Modern kitchens are sleek and glossy and look great in contemporary homes but what if your home is a little older — say dating from the 1960s or 1970s?

Modern amenities and appliances are particularly important in these homes, especially if a sale is in the near future but maintaining a look that is consistent with the rest of the home is just as critical.

"The kitchen is now a multipurpose space for the whole family, so when planning a mid-century kitchen renovation, you may need to factor in some structural changes so it can integrate with open-plan areas," says Travis Dean from Cantilever Interiors who specialise in renovating older kitchens.

### Before you start

If you have a dated kitchen in need of improvement, there are a few things you

need to consider before going ahead with a full renovation.

The first is, of course, budget. Don't think that because you have a limited amount to play with you won't be able to achieve a great result renovating an older kitchen.

Rob Drechsel, co-founder of Sherbrooke Constructions, says simply replacing the end panels on your cabinetry can give your kitchen a much-needed facelift.

"A lot of the time an older kitchen will have a great base carcass so if you're on a tight budget and don't want to carry out major structural work, consider replacing existing surfaces using a new paint finish or cladding," he suggests.

Just remember to stick with the same or similar colour palette and choice of finish to ensure your kitchen doesn't end up as a shining beacon of modern design in an otherwise period home.

If your budget can stretch a little further, update a mid-century kitchen by opening up your space to increase interaction with living and dining spaces.

"Mid-century homes were typically designed with kitchens closed off in a back corner, however modern lifestyles now require a kitchen to have greater interaction with other rooms in the home," Travis says.

Interior designer Karen Aston says her recent renovation of a 1960s home involved taking a mid-century design idea and modernising it just a touch.

"There was a dining table located in the middle of the kitchen which was quite restrictive in the use of space," she says.

"By removing it we could extend the kitchen slightly and incorporate a return/breakfast bar. These were increasingly found in later mid-century kitchens as they opened the kitchens up to the living spaces.

"It was a new idea from this period that we have really embraced today."

If you do decide to carry out major structural work, bear in mind that mid-century kitchens were often far less generous when it comes to bench space and depth so a rethink

In the 1960s and 70s, kitchens were often tucked away at the back of the house. If knocking down walls to create an open-plan space is outside your budget, you can instantly bring a dated kitchen into the modern era by adding more natural light either via a skylight or replacing existing doors with french doors which open up to the outdoors.

of dimensions might be necessary especially if you are purchasing new appliances.

"Sometimes the benches in mid-century kitchens can be lower and or narrower than we are used to today and may make it difficult for new sinks or dishwashers to be accommodated," Karen says.

"It's always recommended to check the height of your dishwasher prior to purchasing if you are not making major structural changes."

### It's all in the detail

Keeping seemingly small details such as architraves, skirtings and mouldings intact when renovating a mid-century kitchen can really tie your new space back to its heritage.

Typically mid-century ceilings and walls were quite plain, with decorative details like ceiling roses, cornices, and any excessive flourish on skirtings and architraves left out.

"In some older homes that get renovated, there can be a distinct line between the old and the new," Rob says.

"If your kitchen renovation involves any kind of extension be sure to keep details the same throughout."

If you want to update surfaces but are unsure about what will fit, Karen suggests sticking with a palette of stainless steel or