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# kitchen & bath DESIGN NEWS<sup>®</sup>

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Storage Innovations | 36

**THOUGHTFUL  
KITCHEN  
STORAGE**



*Jennifer Thompson*  
**OWNER/CKD  
 CREATIVE CABINETS  
 AND DESIGN  
 BIRMINGHAM, AL**

**Storage trends/philosophies:** “The two words I hear most often are ‘clean’ and ‘simple.’ Most of my clients don’t want to see anything on the counter, so we are not only having to find places to store all of the kitchen wares, but we are also having to find places to hide everything. That means kitchens are getting bigger. People aren’t using less, they just want to hide it all so there has to be a place to put everything. In many of our remodels, we are taking in other rooms to make space for a huge kitchen.

“Electronics are also moving into the cooking space. Families revolve around the kitchen, and a lot of my clients are adding TVs. Sometimes I’ll put one above the refrigerator behind pocket doors. Other times I will put one underneath a wall cabinet or in a sitting area next to the kitchen, along with a couple of chairs or a loveseat. I will also almost always have a charging station hidden in an appliance garage, drawer or pantry.”

**Most difficult storage challenges:** “The most difficult challenges are for unusual requests, such as how to create a pet area in the kitchen. I have seen a lot of interest in this on Houzz and Pinterest. As designers, we have to figure out how to make those unusual requests work, keeping in mind that

any remodel has to be an improvement on the space and storage.

“Maximizing storage in small spaces can also be challenging, but with so many accessories available, we can make it work.”

**Favorite storage element:** “Mine is pretty basic. Two main requirements I include in all of my kitchen designs are wastebasket pull-outs and pots/pans storage. People just don’t like to see garbage cans sitting out. They want to walk into their space and see a clean kitchen...the less clutter, the better. If I do two prep stations, I will often include two wastebasket pull-outs. And, for people who recycle, I will do a double pull-out: one for waste and one for recyclables. I also love the really, really big, deep pots and pans draw-

ers...at least 24” or 27” wide and 36” wide if I have enough space. I put one to each side of the range or cooktop.”

**Favorite storage tip:** “Before anything is finalized, know where everything will go. My clients are thinking through their kitchen designs much more thoroughly these days. Designs are taking longer to finalize, with some people taking as long as a year to plan their kitchen. But I think they are more purposeful.

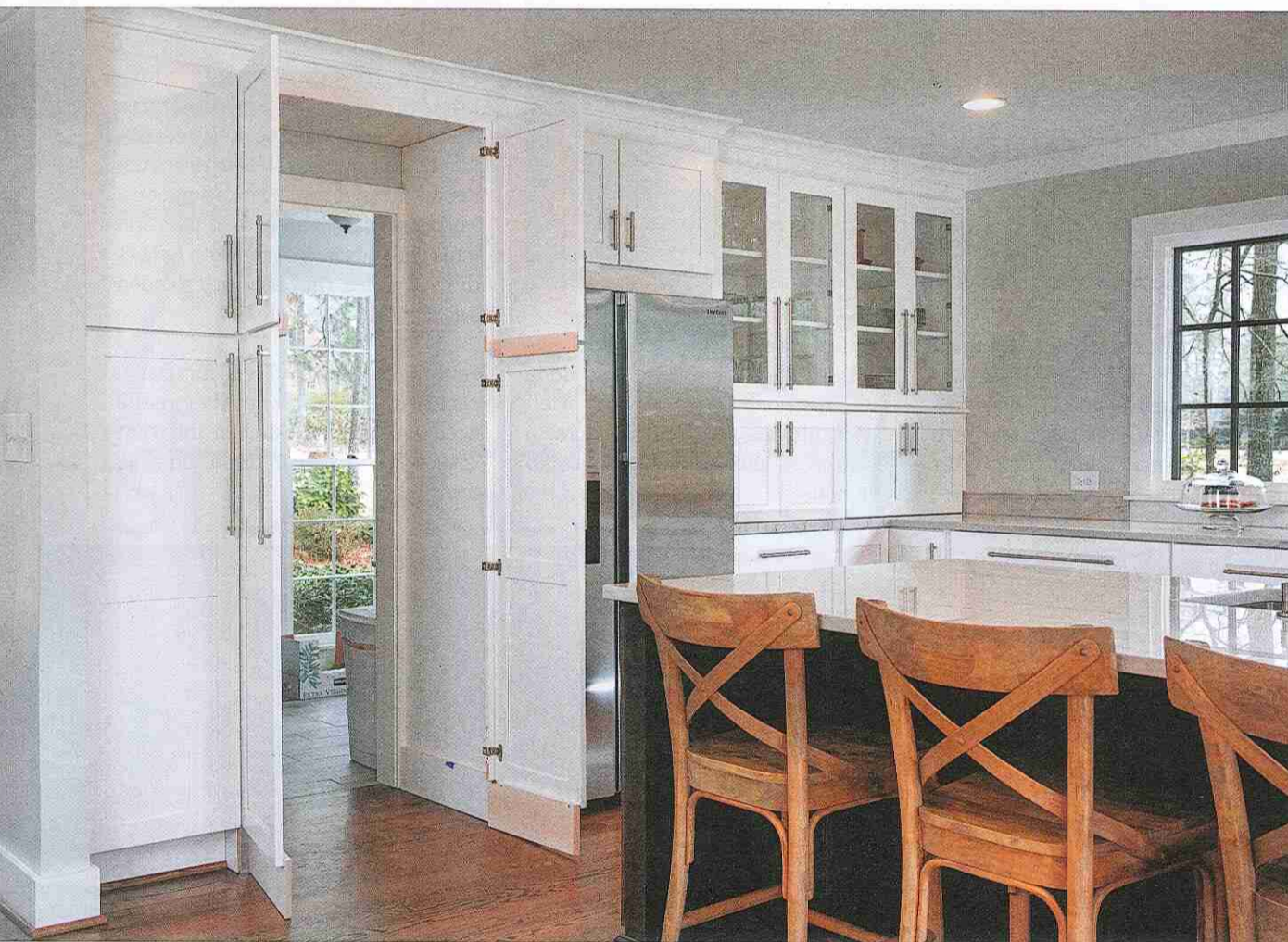
“People know they have a lot of stuff, and they want their kitchen to be an improvement over the existing space, so designs are very methodical. Every cabinet has to make sense. For each and every one, we figure out what it will be used for. Everything has to have a place, but it also has to be pretty.

“Design just isn’t as simple as it used to be, where we ordered stock cabinets and figured out later what to do with them. Now, people are spending more time shopping, going online and pinning ideas from Houzz and Pinterest.”

*Gianna Santoro*  
**DESIGNER  
 DEANE, INC.  
 NEW CANAAN, CT**

**Storage trends/philosophies:** “Design trends such as floating shelves are changing storage needs, especially when it comes to dishes, which I then move to a base cabinet with peg drawers. Floating shelves do still provide storage...but they are much more graphic storage with an open look so they do have an effect on storage, and it needs to be made up somewhere else.

“I also don’t see seated desks in kitchens anymore. People don’t have



This contemporary kitchen by Jennifer Thompson showcases a sleek design with an entire wall that is free of wall cabinets. The space features a larger footprint to accommodate storage needs. She notes, “Several walls were removed to create this open plan. We moved the laundry room and relocated it inside a hidden pantry that is accessible from the kitchen and is concealed behind cabinet doors. It keeps all of the unsightly things behind closed doors.”



Photos: Brendon Pinola

# Storage Innovations



Photos: Jane Belles

↑ The Deane Inc. showroom highlights a variety of storage accessories, including this narrow pull-out pantry with integrated lighting. Spice pull-outs, such as the one included in this display, are also popular.

➔ Gianna Santoro also likes to include pull-outs in sink bases, such as the one shown here in the Deane showroom.



big computers in the kitchen, so they don't need a standard 30" desk. Instead, they'll bring their tablet to the island and they'll have their calendars on their phones. What I often include instead of a desk is a message center that is part of the cabinetry and is at the same height as the counter. People can also use a couple of shelves as a place to drop mail, and I'll add outlets inside a drawer for charging electronics. Sometimes I also add corkboard behind a door so my clients can easily access things like invitations, etc. It's less formal than a desk, but still provides a home for everything."

**Most difficult storage challenges:** "I recently redesigned a kitchen where the homeowner had been storing all of the kids' arts and crafts supplies, dining room items and holiday linens in the kitchen. Items such as these, that aren't being used daily, should be out

of the main kitchen and moved elsewhere, such as to a hallway closet. That frees up the kitchen for items that are used on a daily basis."

"To create more storage, I have also included banquettes in my designs. They work great for kids' games. I actually include them in many designs, although not all of them have storage. Depending on the angle, if they have an exposed end, I can add drawers and give easy access to items inside."

**Favorite storage element:** "In our showroom we have a tall, narrow pull-out pantry that is open on both sides and has integrated lighting. Underneath we included a pull-out for spices. We also have a pull-out under

a sink base that gives easy access to cleaning supplies. There is even a dish towel rod. Everything is right there... and it is so much better than those tilt-outs at the sink!"

**Favorite storage tip:** "If the ceiling is high, people often want to take the cabinets up high, too. But whatever is stored up high is out of sight...and out of mind. I like to do a single cabi-

net door that has two panels, giving the impression of two separate doors. That way you can open the door, stand back and still see what's on the top shelf. Otherwise, the only way to see what is up there is to somehow get up there and open the second door. You can still use that upper space for items you don't use on a daily basis, but you will see them more often, and most likely use them more often, too."