

MAKE YOUR DREAM HOME A REALITY

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# REAL HOMES

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A BOLD  
NEW LOOK  
AND CREATE A  
STYLE YOU'LL LOVE**

# DREAM EXTENSIONS

BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED SPACES THAT LET IN THE LIGHT



# FOCUS ON

## Worktops

Work surfaces are a major feature in a kitchen design – and they need to stay looking good with daily use. Read on for the latest designs and buying advice

### BEST FOR MARBLE LOOK ↓

If you want the appearance of marble without the maintenance requirements, consider quartz. This work surface has veining and highlights distributed through it, including the edges, to give it an authentic look. It is impact and scratch resistant, as well as water repellent, and has a 25-year warranty. Eternal Collection Bianco Calacatta, from £400 per m<sup>2</sup>, Silestone



### BEST FOR ← CONTRAST

Team a dark work surface with white cabinets for a striking monochrome scheme that will always be in style. This quartz worktop has the look of natural marble but is easy to care for thanks to its non-porous properties, offering excellent stain resistance. It's also scratch, heat and impact resistant. Aster, from £280 per m<sup>2</sup>, Radianz

### BEST FOR → NATURAL COLOUR

Made from solid wood and walnut veneer, this cut-to-length worktop features appealing dark tones that will lighten to rich honey as it ages. It can be sanded and surface treated and it comes already finished with a hard wax oil for protection. Pinnarp worktop in walnut veneer. £110 for L186x W63.5x3.8cm thick, Ikea



### BEST FOR ← GRABBING ATTENTION

Choose natural stone with a lively pattern to turn a functional part of a kitchen into a standout feature. The distinctive grey veining of this granite, which has a polished finish that catches the light, gives the scheme sophisticated style as well as the unique look created by using a natural material. Strata Sinuous White granite, around £381.60 per m<sup>2</sup>, Second Nature Kitchens

### BEST FOR ENDURING STYLE ↓

A wooden worktop suits both modern country and classic kitchen designs. It won't go out of fashion and, properly cared for, will become more beautiful with age. Prime oak solid wood work surface, from £165 for L200xW62x4cm thick, Worktop Express



### BEST FOR ↓ CONTEMPORARY SCHEMES

Concrete is on-trend for its industrial style, but you don't need the real thing to get the look. This is a budget-friendly alternative that doesn't need sealing like concrete does. Kala concrete-effect laminate worktop, £98 for L300xW62x3.8cm thick, B&Q



### BEST FOR VERSATILITY ↗

This compact laminate is made with layers of laminate rather than having a chipboard core. This colourway has a white core, making it possible to grout drainer lines or edge an undermounted sink with it. It can also be used for upstands, splashbacks, shelves and cladding. Apollo compact laminate in White Peak, from £359.99 for L305xW64.5x 1.25cm thick, Benchmark Kitchens



## FINISHING TOUCHES

Protect your walls with an upstand or splashback and complement your worktop with one of these stylish solutions



### STAY CLEAN

The modern metallic finish of this panel works alongside timber or stone worktops. Space Silver, £109 per panel, Essentials Collection at AluSplash



### MATCHING PAIR

For a smart finish, opt to match the worktop to the splashback. These are both hardwearing quartz surfaces. 20mm Savannah splashback, from £400 per m<sup>2</sup> installed, CRL Stone



### STATEMENT FEATURE

Ring the changes by laying brick-shaped tiles upright to make a colourful splashback that adds a modern accent to a kitchen. Craquelure Living Coral tiles, £34.95 per m<sup>2</sup>, Walls & Floors

## THREE TOP TIPS

Find all you need to know to choose the surface that suits your kitchen and your lifestyle without busting your budget

### SURFACE VIEW

Stones such as granite or marble offer natural individuality and a price point that reflects rarity. Man-made solid surfaces can be joined seamlessly and are a high budget option. Also consider quartz – aka engineered stone – made of natural stone plus man-made materials. For a lesser outlay, think slim and contemporary looking compact laminate, or beautiful wood.

### TAKE CARE

Porous stone needs periodic resealing, while wood requires oiling regularly to keep it water resistant. Although some surfaces have better heat resistance, use trivets to protect your choice from hot pans. Avoid using acidic cleaners and getting acidic foods or wine on granite and marble, and don't scratch laminate with knives – it can't be repaired.

### FRESH OPTIONS

Like the idea of a more unusual work surface? Consider glass for a modern look and a stain-proof finish, but keep up with water marks. Stainless steel has industrial style and is hygienic. Scratches will show, so you'll need to like the character they create. Ceramic worktops are easy to care for and durable, but they can be cracked by a heavy object.