



**LOOK
AT
STRATA
KITCHENS**

**STRATA
KITCHENS**

**DIY
installation**

Strata Kitchens brings you six simple steps to a brand new kitchen!

The Strata Kitchens range has been designed with simplicity in mind, making it as simple as possible for you to assemble and self install your new kitchen. This Installation Guide has been filled with tips, tricks of the trade and ideas about how to assemble and install your new kitchen—step by step.

Before you begin, consider the following:

The Trades

Well before removing your existing kitchen, or starting your new kitchen, it is important to contact qualified tradespeople to discuss the help you will need with plumbing, gas and electrical work. Keep in mind that in the case of removing an existing kitchen, you will need qualified tradespeople to disconnect your services such as sink and tap, cooktops, ovens, etc. If you are unsure of any plumbers or electricians in your area, a good place to start is your local services directory or yellow pages.

IMPORTANT Never attempt to undertake electrical or plumbing work yourself. All electrical and plumbing work must be carried out by a licensed electrician or plumber with a certificate of compliance supplied at completion.

Preparation

This guide works through the entire kitchen assembly and installation process, step by step. We strongly recommend reading through the guide carefully before starting your installation.

The Tools

It is essential to have the right tools when assembling and installing your new kitchen. Below is a checklist of the tools you'll require:

- measuring tape,
- spirit level (ideally longer than 600mm),
- fine toothed handsaw or circular saw,
- jigsaw,
- electric drill & assorted drill bits,
- set square,
- clamps,
- screwdriver (Phillips head),
- protective glasses,
- stud finder,
- hole saw drill bit.

Disclaimer

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1/ Preparation

Remove the existing kitchen

Before starting demolition, ensure that the electricity, gas and water are switched off and disconnected by a licensed person. It is also a good idea to hire a skip for the weekend, allowing for easy removal of all the waste/rubbish. Remove the base cabinets and benchtops first, allowing easy access to remove the wall cabinets.

Level the walls and floor

Flat and level surfaces are essential for a sound installation. The steps below explain what you should do to check for irregularities. Where walls or floors are extremely uneven or there are other problems, we recommend you hire a professional to fix them, or at least provide advice.

1/ Check the walls for irregularities

Using the spirit level, check the walls marking any uneven spots. It may be necessary to use packers when mounting wall cabinets which are used to fill in gaps and correct angles. Depending on the size of the gap, use a piece of wood or masonite as the packer.

2/ Check any right-angled corners

Using the set square, check that the corner is at a right angle. If the gap between the wall and the set square is greater than 6mm, we recommend involving professional tradesmen to assist.

Where you have walls opposite each other, measure the distance at a number of points to ensure that they are parallel.

3/ Check the floor

Using a spirit level. Check the floor areas where you'll be installing base cabinets and using a pen, mark the floors highest and lowest points against the wall.

TIP Before installing any rangehood cabinets, cut the hole for the ducting through the top. Refer to the instructions that were supplied with your rangehood for more information, as specifications and sizes will vary by brand.

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Mark the position of cabinets

From your plan, measure the position of your cabinets and mark them on the wall, helping you to ensure that everything fits.

TIP As you are working along the wall, mark the position of studs (where the base cabinets will hide the marks), as you will need to fix your base and wall cabinets into these. The most reliable way to locate studs is with an electronic stud finder. This handy tool detects changes in density, so it works on all kinds of walls.

Before you start drilling holes in you wall, be aware that they also find pipes, metallic cables, nails and screws that may be nowhere near studs, so it's best to run the finder vertically up and down the wall from the initial detection point to determine if there are other fasteners present on the same vertical plane.

Power points are often mounted to one side of a stud, so carefully remove the cover plate, and you may be able to see the stud the power point bracket is attached to.

Painting & Flooring

With your room empty, now is the ideal time to paint your walls with a first coat of paint and lay any new flooring. Remember to use a sealer/primer undercoat on raw plasterboard before painting. It is recommended to complete the second coat after installing your cabinets. Be sure to protect any new flooring whilst installing your new kitchen.

Hire tradespeople

Qualified tradespeople should be hired if you are re-routeing plumbing or gas pipes, or moving electrical outlets. Both qualified plumbers and electricians should provide you with a compliance certificate, in line with Australian regulations. Before hiring the tradesperson, ensure that they can provide you with this certificate, which will protect your insurance should anything go wrong, now or in the future.

Make sure you have everything

Double check that you have all of the components for your kitchen by ticking them off your order form. Sort the components into groups, e.g. place all of the base cabinets together, etc. Bench tops should be stored indoors, at normal room temperature and away from radiators or cold floors.

Use the right fixing hardware

There are many different types of walls; bricks, wood, plaster or concrete—among others! Because of this variation, each cabinet is only supplied with 60mm screws for use with fixing into studs. If this fixing arrangement doesn't suit your wall, you will need to visit your local hardware store and obtain advice in selecting the right hardware for your walls.

Get some help

Installing a kitchen is really a two person job, especially when it comes to hanging the wall cabinets. A stepladder will also make life far easier.

2/ Wall Cabinets Assembly & Installation

Assembling Wall Cabinets

Each cabinet will have its own easy-to-follow assembly instructions, enclosed within the packaging. Start with assembling and installing the wall cabinets, as it will make the installation far easier.

With most kitchen installations, the easiest place to begin is by installing the wall cabinets. This means that you won't have any base cabinets in your way. One exception to this rule is that for kitchens with a pantry cabinet, you should start with this first, as it will set your heights. In this case, refer to section 3 in this installation guide for the assembly and installation of the pantry cabinet.

If you have no wall cabinets, proceed to step 3.

Installing Wall Cabinets

The steps below outline the installation process:

1/ Setting the height

Fixing a strip of timber (~18x90mm) to the wall will allow you to accurately position and fix the wall cabinets—it will also make it far easier to hold them in place whilst fixing them. Start by marking the wall at 1620mm from the highest point in the floor (Note: Using this measurement, your ceiling height should be at least 2400mm). Using the spirit level, draw a straight line from this mark where you will be positioning the wall cabinets. This marks the bottom edge of the wall cabinets and the correct position for the top of the “timber strip”.

Fix the “timber strip” to the wall, using the spirit level as you go to ensure that the strip is level. For plaster walls, fix into the studs previously marked.

IMPORTANT Australian regulations state that the distance between the bottom of your rangehood and your cooktop must be 650mm. Keep this in mind when setting the height of your wall cabinets.

2/ Start in the corner

For kitchens with a corner, it will make things easier to start at this point. For plaster walls, measure from the corner to the studs and mark the equivalent measurements onto your wall cabinet.

NOTE For other types of walls, make sure that you use the correct type of screws and fittings for the wall material. You may need to use a wall plug system, so talk to your local hardware store for information.

Using a small drill bit (2–3mm), drill pilot holes through the cabinet at the points aligning with the studs.

3/ Secure the cabinet

Position the cabinet in place on top of the timber strip and using the 60mm head-hold screws, fix in place. Typically, two screws per cabinet should suffice. Check the cabinet with a spirit level and make any adjustments if necessary.

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4/ Hang the next wall cabinet

Mark, drill, align cabinet and fix with screws—exactly as you did with the corner cabinet.

5/ Secure the cabinets together

Use clamps to temporarily fasten cabinets together and using a drill bit (2–3mm), drill two pilot holes from the inside of the cabinet (top & bottom). Use the 30mm head holed screws to fix the two cabinets together.

6/ Hang the remaining wall cabinets

Hang the rest of the remaining cabinets in the same way, aligning each with the previous one.

7/ Add the hinge mounting plates

From the hardware packs supplied with each cabinet, press the hinge mounting plates into the pre-drilled holes and tighten the screws.

You've now completed the wall cabinet installation!
Remove the timber strip from below the cabinets.

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3/ Base & Pantry Cabinets Assembly & Installation

As was the case with the wall cabinets, start by installing the corner cabinet first. If your kitchen design doesn't include a corner cabinet, start with the cabinet that fits at the start of the run.

IMPORTANT Before fixing any cabinets in place, be sure to measure, mark and cut openings for plumbing, electrical sources or other utilities.

Assembling Base Cabinets

Each cabinet will have its own easy-to-follow assembly instructions, enclosed within the packaging. Assemble all your base cabinets as per the assembly instructions.

Installing Base Cabinets

The steps below outline the installation process:

1/ Setting the height

From the same high point in the floor used earlier (section 2, step 1), mark the wall at 870mm. From this mark, use the spirit level to draw a level line where the base cabinets will be positioned. This line will be used to set your cabinet heights using the adjustable legs.

NOTE Kickboards are 150mm in height, so for level floors, set your adjustable feet at approximately 152mm. Where floors aren't level, you will need to scribe (cut-down) your kickboards to suit.

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2/ Start in the corner

For kitchens with a corner, it will make things easier to start at this point. Position the corner cabinet in place and adjust its legs by winding up or down, ensuring the cabinet aligns with the marked line. Using the spirit level, make sure its level in all directions. Then remove the cabinet from position. For plaster walls, measure from the corner to the studs and mark the equivalent measurements onto the base cabinet.

The end panels of the 900mm corner cabinet extend past the back panels on both sides. This allows the installer to plane down the back edges in case the walls are out of square, for a better fit. If planning is not required there will be a small gap between the back of the cabinet and wall on both sides.

NOTE For other types of walls, make sure that you use the correct type of screws and fittings for the wall material. You may need to use a wall plug system, so talk to your local hardware store for information.

Using a small drill bit (2–3mm), drill pilot holes through the cabinet at the points aligning with the studs.

TIP If there's no corner cabinet, install the first cabinet in the run. Where this will fit against a wall, be sure to leave enough room between the cabinet and the wall for the end panel or filler, or fix this panel/filler first (refer to section 4 of this guide).



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3/ Secure the cabinet

Position the cabinet back in place and ensure it remains level. Then using the 60mm head-hold screws, fix in place screwing into the studs. Typically, two screws per cabinet should suffice. Check the cabinet with a spirit level and make any adjustments if necessary.



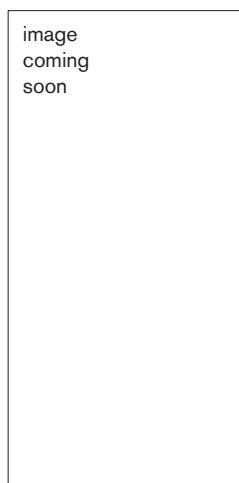
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4/ Install the next base cabinet

Mark, drill, align cabinet and fix with screws—exactly as you did with the corner cabinet. Use clamps to temporarily fasten the cabinets together and using a drill bit (2–3mm), drill two pilot holes from the inside of the cabinet (top & bottom). Use the 30mm head holed screws to fix the two cabinets together.



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5/ Sawing holes for the plumbing

Before fixing the base cabinet you will be using for the sink, saw holes for the water pipes and drain either in the base of the cabinet or through the back panel. Use a hole-saw drill bit or alternatively drill a hole and use a jigsaw.

6/ Creating the dishwasher cavity

When leaving space for a dishwasher cavity, make sure you allow space for the end panels (18mm each) either side of the cavity, to hide the exposed cabinet sides. Fixing the end panels is discussed further in section 4 of this installation guide.

7/ Add the hinge mounting plates

From the hardware packs supplied with each cabinet, press the hinge mounting plates into the pre-drilled holes and tighten the screws.

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Installing Pantry Cabinets

Unlike other base cabinets, pantry cabinets need to have their end panels fixed prior to fixing them against the wall.

1/ Position the Pantry End Panel

Prior to fixing the pantry cabinet to the wall, ensure that the pantry end panels are fitted to either side of the pantry cabinet. Make certain that the pantry end panel extends past the pantry cabinet side panel by 20mm at the front. This ensures that the pantry door will sit neatly in line with the end panel when fitted. Once happy with the location, clamp the panel in place.

2/ Fix the End Panel

After ensuring that both the pantry cabinet and panel are level and aligned, use the drill bit (2–3mm) to drill four pilot holes from the inside of the pantry cabinet. Use the 30mm head holed screws to secure the panel in place, from the inside of the pantry, through the pilot holes. Repeat steps 1 & 2 for the other pantry end panel.

3/ Position the pantry

With the pantry end panels now fitted, position the pantry against the wall and adjust the feet to the required height, ensuring the cabinet is level.

4/ Fix the Pantry in place

Then fix the pantry unit using the same process outlined for the base cabinets. Note that there will be a gap of approx 25mm behind the pantry but this will not be a problem when the pantry is secured to the wall studs with 60mm headhole screws.

Congratulations, you've now completed the installation of the cabinets!

4/ Panels & Cavities Installation

Installing Filler Panels

Where you have a gap between a wall and a cabinet, you can cut down an end panel to act as a filler panel. Use the following process for filler panels between wall, base and pantry cabinets.

1/ Check the wall

Firstly check that the wall is flat and level. Where walls are uneven see the section on uneven walls below, as you will need to cut the filler panel to conform to the wall's shape.

If your walls are even, skip to step 2.

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Uneven walls

Where walls are not flat or level the filler panel must be cut to conform to the wall's shape. Firstly, make a template for tracing the wall's shape onto the filler; a thick cardboard makes a good template. During this step, you will also require a tape measure, compass and pencil. Cut the template material so that it is the same height as the cabinet. Hold it in place where the filler is required. Open the compass by 40–50mm and place the compass point against the wall. Whilst holding the compass horizontal and level, follow the line of the wall so that the pencil traces a clear line on to the template. Now you need to cut the template to the correct width. Start by measuring the distance from the farthest point on the wall to the cabinet. Mark this on the template at the same point and draw a straight line to the top and bottom of the template. This line will form the straight edge of the filler panel, that will fit against the cabinet. Cut the template, ensure that it fits and then trace the shape onto the filler panel and follow the cutting directions in step 3.

2/ Measure the gap

Measure the distance from the cabinet to the wall and mark this distance on the top and bottom of the filler panel and draw a line to connect them.

3/ Cut the filler panel

To cut the filler panel, use either a handsaw or jigsaw.

Handsaw: cut along the line with the face side of the panel up.

Jigsaw: mark the line on both sides of the panel and apply masking tape over the line on the face side to ensure a clean edge without chipping. Cut the panel with the back side up.

4/ Install the filler panel

Put the filler panel in place (cut edge against the wall) and attach to the cabinet by drilling screw(s) through from the inside of the cabinet, after pre-drilling the hole. To ensure the filler panel stays in place and in alignment, firstly fix a strip to the wall.

Once all filler panels are fixed in place using the same method, proceed to step 5.

5/ Seal the gap

To completely seal the gap between the wall and the filler panel, you will need to caulk around the filler piece. Choose a quality brand of silicon at your local hardware store. Before applying the silicon, tape alongside the area to be caulked and apply a bead of caulk into the crevice.

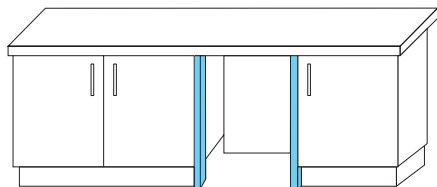
Using End Panels

The next step—after installing the base cabinets—is to add any panels.

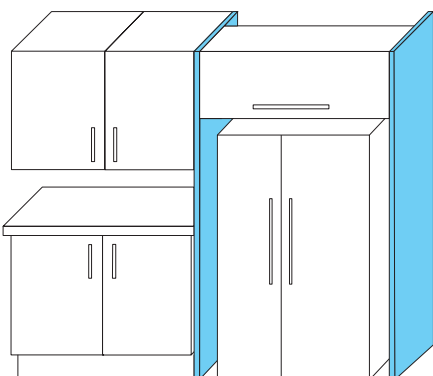
Panels are used to finish off the look of your kitchen. There are 5 different panel sizes available for each kitchen style and each has a different purpose, as defined by the table below.

Base End Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Used to finish the exposed side of base cabinets. – Used either side of the dishwasher cavity.
Wall End Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Used to finish the exposed side of wall cabinets. – Can be cut down and used as a filler panel between walls and base/wall cabinets.
Pantry End Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Used to finish the exposed side of pantry cabinets. – Used to create the fridge box (i.e. either side of the fridge wall cabinet). – Can be cut down and used as a filler panel between walls and pantry cabinets.
Island Back Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Used to finish the exposed back of cabinets in the case of an island bench.
Kickboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Used to hide the adjustable feet of the cabinets.

IMPORTANT When fixing end panels to the cabinets, always screw through from the inside of the cabinet and remember to ensure you are using the correct 30mm screws.



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Creating Cavities

There are two common cavities within the kitchen; the dishwasher cavity and the fridge cavity.

For the dishwasher cavity, leave a space of 636mm between two base cabinets. Fix a base end panel (18mm thick) to each of the exposed cabinet sides, which will leave a 600mm space for the dishwasher, as shown in figure 1.

TIP When using end panels for a dishwasher cavity, use wall end panels either side of a 600mm wall cabinet to keep the alignment of your base and wall cabinets.

In most cases, a 900mm wide opening will be sufficient to house your fridge. If this is the case, you can include a fridge overhead cabinet in your design and mount it in between two pantry end panels. The fridge wall cabinet mounts to the front of the pantry end panels, as shown in figure 2.

5/ Laminate Bench tops Installation

Now that all of the base cabinets are in place, it's time to install the bench tops and sink. These instructions relate only to the installation of laminate bench tops. For all other benchtops, refer to the installation instructions provided by the manufacturer, or with the bench tops themselves.

1/ Cut your bench tops to suit

Strata Kitchens supplies laminate bench tops as blanks, or cut to suit your kitchen design, for those who have opted for the custom sized bench tops (additional costs apply). If you have ordered custom sized bench tops, skip to step 2.

If you are cutting your own bench top blanks to size, measure and mark your bench tops with where they need to be cut, based on your kitchen cabinets. Remember you can finish your bench top in line with an end panel, or if space permits can have a slight over-hang.

When cutting in a straight line, clamp a guide (such as a piece of timber) in place, which will ensure you cut straight. We recommend using a jigsaw with a quality blade designed to cut laminate and to work slowly.

If you have two bench tops meeting in a corner, we recommend a masons mitre-cut join. This is a tricky join to do yourself without experience. You can take your bench top blanks to a local bench top company to cut, or if you have a contractor doing your installation they should have the equipment to do it themselves.

2/ Position the bench tops in place

Now that you have your bench tops cut to the correct sizes, position them on top of the base cabinets. Make any adjustments as required.

3/ Fix the bench tops in place

Once you are happy with the position of your bench tops, screw fix them in place by screwing up through the front and back rails, within your base cabinets, using the 30mm head holed screws supplied. If you have any masons mitre-cut joins for where bench tops meet in a corner, use the bench top connectors to pull the tops together tightly before screw fixing up through the rails.

4/ Fitting the sink

To fit your sink into the bench top, use the template supplied with the sink to mark where you will need to cut. This template should be slightly smaller than the sink itself to ensure the sink doesn't pull through your bench top (and hides your cut!). Use a drill with a 10mm bit to create a hole within your cutting template. From the hole drilled, use a jigsaw to slowly cut out the required template. Finally, fit your sink with the brackets and tape supplied, making any adjustments as required for the sink to fit.

5/ Fitting the cooktop

Use the same method as was used for the sink, based on the template or cut-out instructions supplied with your cooktop.

Congratulations, you've now completed the installation of the bench tops!

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6/ The Finishing Touches

Your kitchen is nearly complete! Now is the time to add the doors and drawer fronts, handles/knobs, kickboards and any accessories. This step of the installation guide will take you through each of these processes.

Install your accessories

There is a huge range of accessories to enhance the functionality of your kitchen, including pull out bins, soft close accessories for doors/drawers and tea towel holders. Before fitting your doors and drawer fronts, now is the ideal time to install these accessories. Refer to any instructions supplied with the accessory.

Add the doors and drawer fronts

Refer to the assembly instructions supplied with the cabinetry for the fitting of doors and drawer fronts. At this stage we recommend leaving on the door's protective plastic film. This should be removed after drilling for your door handle or knob.

If you have misplaced any instructions, they are available to download online at www.stratakitchens.com.au.

Add the kickboards

1/ Measure and cut your kickboards

Measure and cut the kickboards to suit your cabinet runs. Where your cabinets are lower than 150mm from the floor (i.e. the adjustable feet are less than 150mm in height including the glide), you will also need to scribe down the height of your kickboard.

2/ Fixing the kickboards

Position the adjustable feet clips (supplied within the hardware packs for the base cabinets), in line with the cabinets' feet and fix to the back of the kickboards using the screws provided. Once all clips are securely fastened, align the kickboard with the feet and press the clips into place.

Continue with the above method until all kickboards are in place.

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Install your handles/knobs

1/ Determine your handle position

To prevent any unwanted marking, you should still have the protective plastic wrap on the door or drawer front. If you have already removed this, use some masking tape to cover the edges and place a strip of tape where you wish the handle to be positioned roughly. Hold the handle up to the door and measure where the holes are going to be located.

2/ Mark your handle position

Using the tape measure, measure down from the top of the door or drawer front and mark (with a horizontal line) the distance from the top of the door for the first hole then mark the second hole distance (making sure the hole centres are exact).

Then take the set square and mark on it (use some masking take on the surface if it's hard to mark) the measurement from the edge of the door/front. Now just run the set square down the side of the door and mark (vertical line) the position for the holes. This will be the point where the horizontal lines (already on the door/front) meet the mark on your set square.

3/ Drill the holes and fix the handles

Double check your measurements and drill your holes, using a small drill bit marginally larger than the handle screws. Using the handle screws and a screw driver, fix the handle in place.

Continue with the above method until all handles are fixed in place.

Fix the alignment of doors and drawer fronts

Within the assembly instructions supplied with each of the cabinets and drawer units, is a section on adjusting the alignment of doors and fronts. Follow these instructions for each of your cabinet types, which will make sure everything aligns perfectly!

If you have misplaced any instructions, they are available to download at www.stratakitchens.com.au.

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Congratulations!
You've finished
installing your
new kitchen.

Caring for your kitchen

When cleaning the doors, cabinet interiors and benchtops, use a soft damp cloth and only cleaning products intending for these materials. Do not use cleaning agents that contain ammonia, alcohol or abrasives. After cleaning, wipe down with a clean and dry cloth.

Peace of mind

Strata Kitchens provides you with a 7-year warranty against manufacturing defects, providing you with peace of mind now and in the future. Your kitchen hardware (hinges and drawer runners) is also covered by a limited lifetime warranty!

For full warranty terms and conditions, view the statement online at www.stratakitchens.com.au

If you have questions—we are here to help!

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