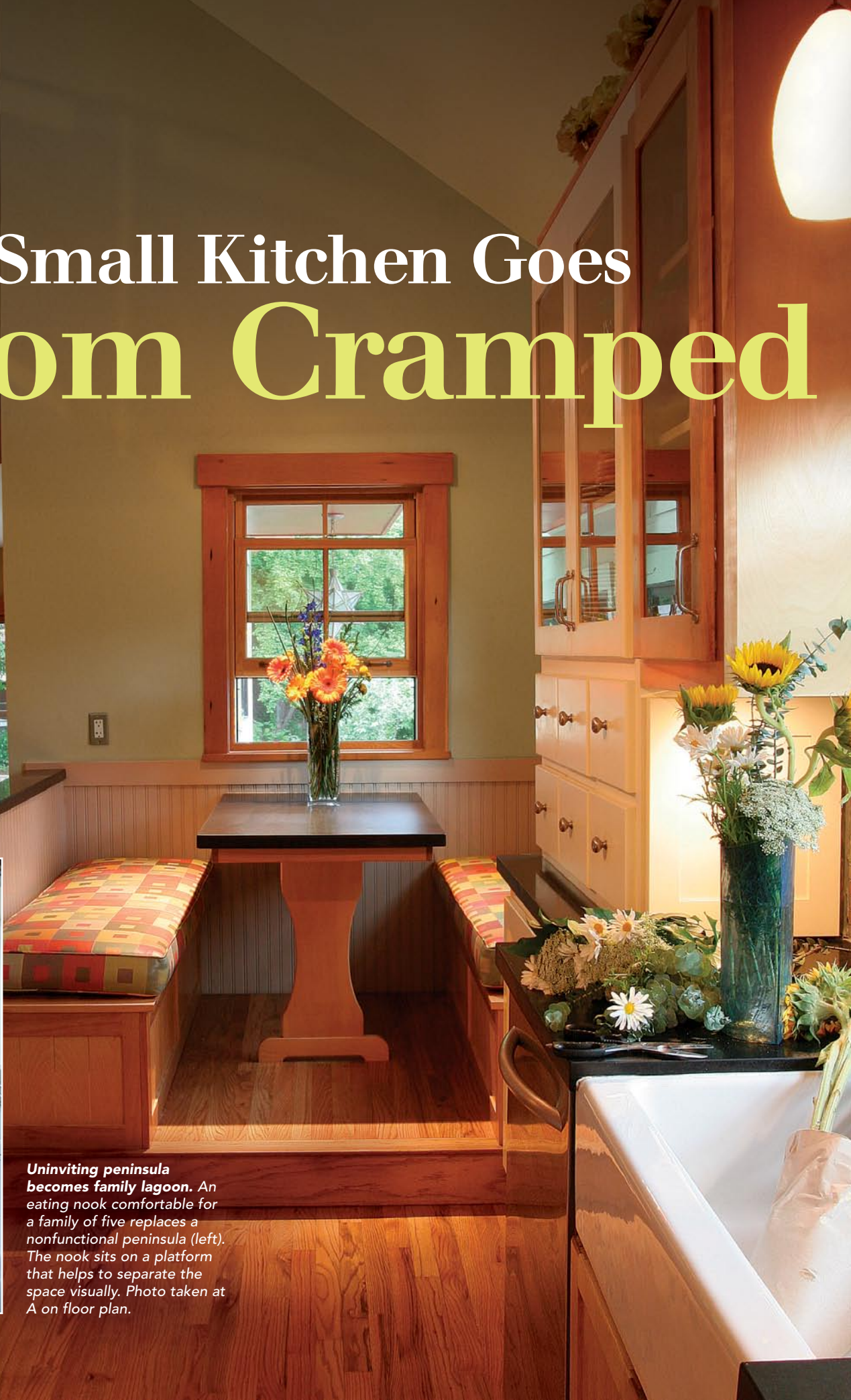


# A Small Kitchen Goes From Cramped



**Uninviting peninsula becomes family lagoon.** An eating nook comfortable for a family of five replaces a nonfunctional peninsula (left). The nook sits on a platform that helps to separate the space visually. Photo taken at A on floor plan.

Open up the ceiling, rearrange the plan, and this kitchen feels a lot bigger without adding much floor space **BY WARREN LLOYD**

# to Comfortable

A few years ago, our family of four moved back to Utah from Seattle for, among other reasons, affordable housing. We found a 1920s brick bungalow on a tree-lined street in a quiet Salt Lake City neighborhood. With only two bedrooms and one bath, the house was small, but the deep lot and big backyard would give us the space to expand the house eventually. When our third child arrived in 2002, the time had come to make some changes.

## Making a good plan even better

Our goals for the project were to add a family room in the rear of the house with two bedrooms for the children on a new upstairs floor. In addition, we wanted to add a master bedroom in the existing attic space. We planned to renovate the kitchen, too, but it would have to stay in basically the same footprint.

The existing kitchen had adequate counter space, but the seating for three at the end of the peninsula bar was limited and uninviting at best. The cooktop and oven were not easily accessible, and we literally had to step over the dishwasher door when it was open.

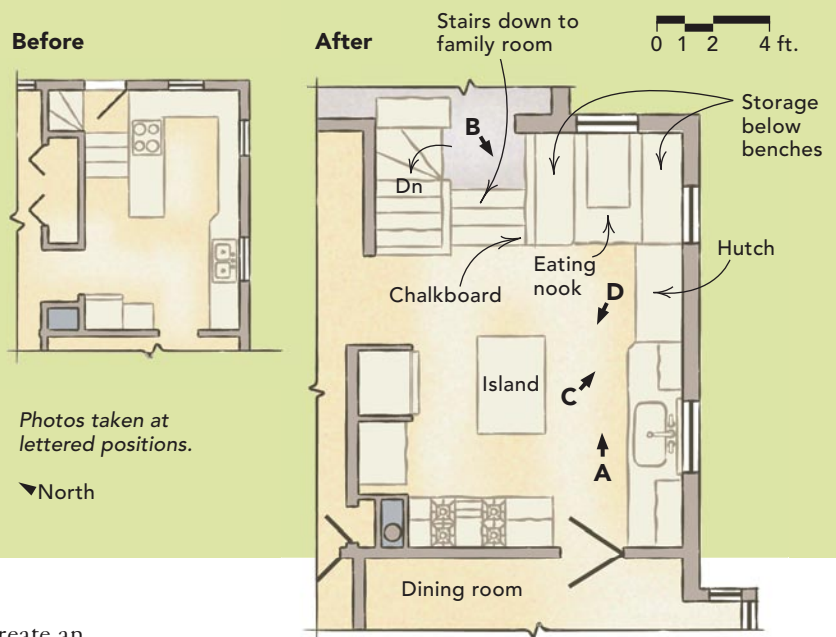
Despite space constraints, our plans for the new kitchen were fairly ambitious. First, we wanted to create an informal eating nook for two adults and three kids (photo facing page). We wanted a baking area with wall ovens, as well as a food-prep area near the sink. Easy access to the dining room was also important, and the kitchen had to have a good view of the backyard so that we could keep an eye on our active kids. Additionally, we wanted the kitchen to have an open feeling that would link the new second-story spaces to the original house.

## The kitchen bridges new and old

The kitchen became the key to connecting the original bungalow to the added spaces at the rear of the house. We began by opening

## COUNTERS AND APPLIANCES MOVE CLOSER TOGETHER

A family room with bedrooms above expanded the original house, but the size of the kitchen had to stay essentially the same. Although closet space from an existing bedroom added 15 sq. ft. to the kitchen, the layout changed dramatically to accommodate an eating nook as well as expanded and more functional cooking facilities.



Photos taken at lettered positions.

North

the ceiling over the kitchen and also over the stair hall adjacent to the kitchen.

We still needed a way to link the master bedroom created from the original attic space to the two kids' bedrooms in the addition. The solution was a bridge of tongue-and-groove decking supported by four glulam beams (photo bottom, p. 91). The frame for the bridge railing was fabricated out of steel angle. Instead of balusters, a laminated panel of rice paper sandwiched between two layers of polyester resin provides a tough, kidproof barrier while letting light from the skylights reach the spaces below. A Salt Lake City-based



**Kids stop here.** A chalkboard at a child-friendly height graces the back of the eating-nook bench. Photo taken at B on floor plan.

**Faux drawers, four drawers.** Looking a lot like a piece of built-in furniture, the hutch has four functional drawers, with organizing dividers incorporated into each one. The two right-hand drawers disguise an appliance garage where the mixer lives. Photo taken at C on floor plan.



company, 3form, makes the product (800-726-0126; [www.3-form.com](http://www.3-form.com)). We used the same panels for the railing around the stairs to the family room and basement.

### **Cabinets inspire diplomacy**

Several years earlier, we'd come across some beautifully simple cabinetry built by an Amish carpenter, Ervin Raber, in Ohio (13238 TR 473, Lakeville, Ohio 44638). His card carried only his mailing address, no phone or email, and these strict instructions: No Sunday Business. So we sent off a letter, and thus began a happy communication with this talented man. He built all the kitchen

We disagreed over painted versus natural-finish cabinets, and in the end decided to compromise.

cabinets, benches, and kids' lockers for the family room out of solid birch, and then shipped the pieces out for us to finish and install.

Originally, we had intended to paint all the cabinets. But when they arrived, the wood grain was so beautiful and the craftsmanship so superb that Jennie and I experienced perhaps the classic husband/wife conflict over paint versus natural finish. We compromised and painted about half the cabinets, with the rest receiving a natural finish (photo facing page).

Despite the limited space, we were able to include a 30-in. by 42-in. island, big enough for food prep and a place to stack dishes for after-dinner cleanup. To add more interest, we framed and dry-walled cabinets for the refrigerator and wall ovens. The depths of the two cabinets are staggered, with open shelves above each one.

One detail from the old kitchen that we didn't want to change was access to the dining room, where a doorway provides a view of the entry foyer for someone working at the sink. We replaced the original door with a fir-paneled door with a single lite. It closes off the sights and sounds of the kitchen during dinner, but swings open on dual-action hinges for easy access.

### Choosing the right materials and colors

With the exception of the wood floor that we refinished, all kitchen materials and finishes were replaced. Some of the materials were recycled products, such as the mosaic glass-tile backsplashes that extend up the walls over the sink and the range hood.

Others choices were more challenging. We liked the look of soapstone countertops but had heard repeated warnings about maintenance issues and the softness of soapstone. So we settled on honed black granite. The hardness and heat resistance of the material is a good choice for a hardworking kitchen. And the casual appearance of an unpolished surface complements the natural wood hues as well as the four or five paint colors in or visible from the kitchen. □

After studying and working in Japan and Seattle, Warren Lloyd, AIA, established Lloyd Architects in Salt Lake City, where he and his family live happily. Photos by Roe A. Osborn, except where noted.



### A KID-FRIENDLY EATING NOOK

In place of the peninsula in the original kitchen, we built an eating nook (photos p. 88) with enough space for our family of five. The nook is raised 6 in., which improves views of the garden from the benches and keeps the granite tabletop and counters at the same height. The bead-board wainscot wrapping the nook gives it a distinct feel but also hides scuffs and stains. The benches have lift-up seats for access to storage

underneath, and the bench cushions are covered with a fabric that we had "vinylized" (Americo; 800-626-2350; [www.americo-inc.com](http://www.americo-inc.com)) to stand up to juice spills, syrup stains, and other abuses from the kids (photo above). Just behind the eating nook are four steps leading down to the family room; here we added a kid-height chalkboard for messages, rants, raves, and artwork (photo facing page).



**Breakfast view.** Sunlight filters down from skylights above the second-floor bridge that rings the new kitchen. The bridge connects the upstairs bedrooms. Photo taken at D on floor plan.