

HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR KITCHEN LIKE A CHEF

Here are a few tips to help you organize your kitchen so you can focus your attention on the recipe at hand. No more burning, boiling over, or over-seasoning because you got distracted while looking for a clean spoon. Organizing like a professional chef will also help you cut down on unplanned trips to the grocery store and generally make your cooking more efficient, easier, and faster.

1. **Run Your Home Kitchen Like A Restaurant Kitchen** – Restaurants can only successfully prepare hundreds of meals each day because they have a plan, functional workspaces, and an assembly line approach. And many restaurant kitchen spaces are not much bigger than the kitchen in your home.
 - a. Clear out your dirty dishes so you have a washing station.
 - b. Have your prep station, where all the chopping happens, as close to the washing station as possible.
2. **Start With A Clean Kitchen** – Piled up dishes, potato peelings, packaging from food, and random items spilling all over the counters can create stress and frustration. Take some time to clean up so you don't feel like running away from your kitchen. It can also be dangerous to have a dirty kitchen when you begin to cook as disease can be spread in many different ways. Protect your family by making sure all your kitchen utensils, equipment, counters, and cutting boards are clean.
3. **Use Prep Bowls** – Prep bowls will help you keep everything separate, allow you to know where to find everything when you need them, and allow you to transport them to the washing station should your kitchen space not allow you to chop items right beside the sink. As you move through the various parts of the recipe, you will have all the ingredients at your fingertips.
4. **Gather Everything You Need Before You Start** – Running back and forth to the different areas of the kitchen is not a productive or effective way to use your time or keep you focused on the appropriate steps of your recipe. Gather all the ingredients, spices, and tools (cutting boards, knives, pots, pans, etc.) you'll need and have them within reach.



5. **Re-Organize Your Kitchen To Optimize Stations** – Having what you need readily available when you need it will make cooking for you and your kids a much more pleasant experience. You will want to have your prep bowls near the prep station, so you can easily access them if you need more. At your “make” station, you should have your drawer of tools, including tongs, spatulas, and wooden spoons. You might also look to have your main seasonings and spices sitting on the range or in a close cupboard so you can easily grab what you need without any hassle.
6. **Find Ways To Use Fewer Dishes** – Most people don’t love doing dishes, so do everything you can to reuse dishes or look for ways to minimize the use of dishes. Instead of seasoning your soon-to-be roasted potatoes in a separate bowl, move them right from the cutting board to the foil-lined baking sheet (which, of course, will be right there ready to go). Once they are on the baking sheet, season them there. You will have saved yourself one more bowl to wash and have one less bowl in the way.
7. **Have A Trash Bowl/Bag At Your Prep Station** – Place a large bowl, plastic bag, or compost container at your prep station. All food trash can go right into it so you’re not running back and forth between your trash can and your prep station. This will save lots of time. Be aware of any food items you may be able to compost and items you might be able to recycle before throwing them out.
8. **Clean Up As You Go** – There is often time during the cooking process when you’re waiting for a pot to boil or the onions to soften. Use those spare minutes to return items to their home, deposit dishes or utensils in the sink or dishwasher, and wipe down counters.

