

By T.J. Banes

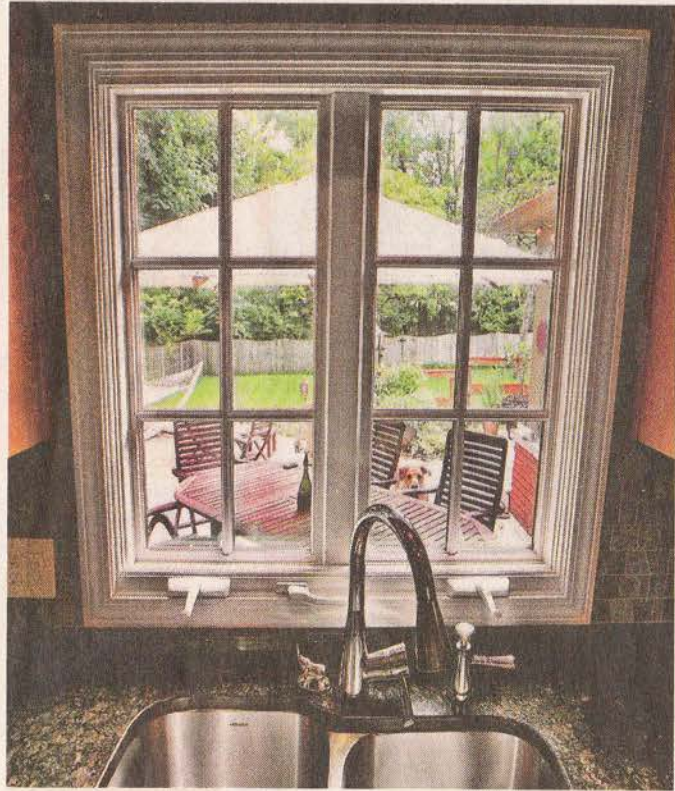
tj.banes@indystar.com

One tiny little ding in a chrome range hood taught Derek and Jennifer Payne a lesson about kitchen remodeling.

"We saved \$500 by installing our own appliances, but we wasted two days," said Derek. "If you're spending that much money, then pay to have someone else do all the installation too."

The ding — only noticeable to a trained eye — was the result of a lot of jostling in a small space.

Every bit of that space in the Paynes' galley kitchen is used to the fullest. When they moved into their Forest Hills ranch home 10 years ago as newlyweds, the Paynes invested



The Paynes moved the window above the stainless-steel sink to allow for more counter space and to provide a view of the backyard.

in a three-season room, deck, patio and fenced-in area for their yellow Labrador, Baron.

The two-bedroom home in the neighborhood near Kessler Boulevard and College Avenue provides about 1,300 square feet of living space. The kitchen was adequate but needed updates, said Derek, who works for the Department of Veterans Affairs. His wife is an advertising representative for the Indianapolis Business Journal.

The couple hired interior designer Diana Bryant of DB Interiors to reconfigure the existing area into a functional work space.

"We wanted to maintain the architectural integrity of the home, and we were committed to a budget," said Derek.

Their original budget was \$20,000. They estimate they spent about \$40,000, including electrical and plumbing upgrades for the mid-1940s home.

Bryant provided "story boards" with samples of flooring, cabinetry and countertops to help with the decision-making.

Derek, whose mother belonged to a neighborhood gourmet cooking club when he was growing up, learned to cook at a young age. He outlined a list of priorities for his kitchen makeover that included a small seating area where Jennifer can keep him company while he cooks.

"It's relaxing after a long day at work, and I knew what I wanted to make the work easier," said Derek, whose specialties are pasta sauce, homemade garlic potato chips and a mixed fish grill.

The kitchen's contemporary design includes maple cabinetry by Wellborn Forest and spacious countertops.

"I've lived with poor-quality cabinets," said Derek. "I wanted pull-out shelves with easy storage so I didn't have to get on my hands and knees to search for a spaghetti pot."

Included in the space-saving design is a knife drawer right below the four-burner Wolf cooktop and a built-in spice closet.

By moving the window above the sink, the couple gained counter space, covered in contemporary black granite. A signature of the Paynes' kitchen is a backsplash created by Bryant with metallic tile. The artful design is complemented by an Italian porcelain floor with flecks of chrome.

The area is set off by matching stainless appliances, including a side-by-side refrigerator/freezer, microwave, warming drawer and dishwasher.

"Everything is just the way I like it — all within reach," said Derek. "If we were to move, I'd have the same kitchen, only maybe a little bit bigger."

★ Call Star reporter T.J. Banes at (317) 444-6815.



Part of the space-saving design features a knife drawer below the four-burner cooktop. The kitchen also has a built-in spice closet.

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