

**HOW TO PLAN A
LUXURY KITCHEN**
A GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED

**HOBSON'S
CHOICE**

THANK YOU FOR VISITING OUR WEBSITE!

We thank you for taking the time to visit our website and learn about the exciting and sometimes overwhelming journey that is buying a new kitchen.

At Hobson's Choice we consider ourselves as guides and teachers. We are here to support you through your design journey. Throughout your interactions with us we commit to being honest and transparent at all times.

We hope that you will use the information we provide to make an empowered decision that enhances your life and that of your family. Even if you don't complete your design journey with us, we want each step of the process - from discovery and exploration, to design, sales and installation - to be an enjoyable experience.

In this modern age, we feel this approach is the only way to conduct business and deliver a service we can be proud of.

Hobson's Choice are an independent business that has been designing and installing luxury kitchens, bathrooms and living spaces for over 40 years.

“We are the longest standing independent retailer of bulthaup kitchens in the UK.”

Our kitchen and bathroom designs can be found in properties across the South of England and Wales, from penthouse apartments and luxury London townhouses to large country manors and contemporary new-builds.



IN THIS GUIDE, WE
ARE GOING TO COVER
THE MOST RELEVANT
QUESTIONS CUSTOMERS
HAVE ABOUT CREATING A
NEW SPACE TODAY >>>

If you are thinking about a new kitchen renovation, it is always advisable to have a conversation with an expert. Their knowledge, expertise and experience can open up new possibilities whilst potentially saving you money, stress and time.

To help you get started, we have put together this guide to help you think about what you want from the new space.

KITCHEN

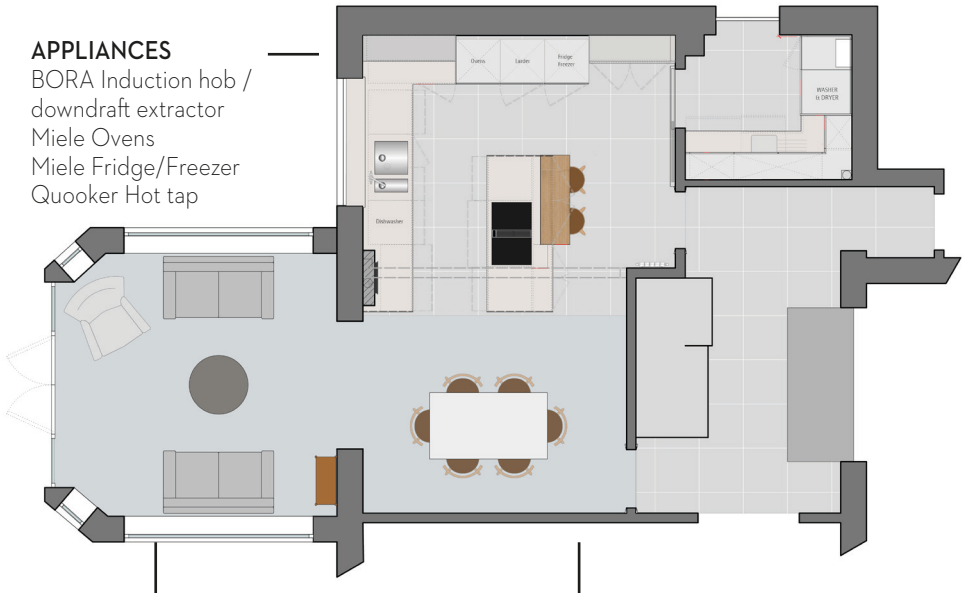
bulthaup b3 kitchen furniture finished in Oak veneer and Gravel laminate
20mm Caesarstone worktop
Carl Hansen & Son breakfast bar stools

UTILITY

Schuller utility furniture

APPLIANCES

BORA Induction hob /
downdraft extractor
Miele Ovens
Miele Fridge/Freezer
Quooker Hot tap



FOOTFLOWS

A Hobson's Choice designer will consider the movement of people around the kitchen and adjoining spaces.

- Where you enter with heavy shopping bags and put them down.
- Taking plates of food to the dining table.
- Routes through, and around, kitchen working areas.

SIGHTLINES

Views in and out of the kitchen area are explored. For example, looking into the garden whilst washing up or talking face to face with guests whilst preparing dinner.

This document highlights some of the obstacles you may encounter and the questions you may like to ask designers when you venture out into the world of kitchen design showrooms.

The many different styles, finishes, and new technologies might be all you can focus on initially, but the essence of a

great kitchen is how it works for you. Does it make everyday tasks more effortless, more enjoyable, or quicker to accomplish?

If you can work with a designer to create a layout that gives you all the functionality you desire, you are well on your way.



CLIENT

Mr & Mrs Jones
1 New House Rd
N3W 8RM

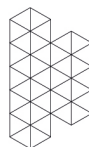
DESIGNER

Charlotte Wright
Hobson's Choice

KITCHEN PLAN

REVISION Rev D
SCALE 1:25@A3
DATE 2021
SHEET 1 of 5

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**HOBSON'S
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Transforming a kitchen into a space that improves the functionality, style and layout can be a real boost to your everyday lifestyle, well-being and property value.

However, the task of designing and building your new kitchen vision can be easy to underestimate. Modern kitchens perform many household duties besides the obvious cooking

requirements. Family rooms, open plan kitchen/dining, direct garden access, working from home, the list goes on.

To truly capture the needs of your household, there is a lot to consider within your design if it is going to work as you wish.

1. HOW DO I KNOW WHAT I WANT? Clarifying your ideas and defining your requirements.



2. WHERE WILL I FIND INSPIRATION? Websites, publications and places to explore.

HOW DO I ORGANISE MY THOUGHTS?
A structure to help you list your preferences.

3.

4. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE WITH ME WHEN I VISIT A SHOWROOM?

Getting the most out of your exploration.

5. WHAT SHOULD I ASK A LUXURY KITCHEN DESIGNER?

Questions to get you started.

5.



6. HOW DO I FIND A REPUTABLE COMPANY?

Checking the company will deliver a quality installation and customer satisfaction.

7. WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR WHILST EXPLORING THE SHOWROOM?

Highlighting details that show great design and fitting quality.

7.

1. HOW DO I KNOW WHAT I WANT?

In this section, we provide a series of questions which you should ask yourself. Your answers will help you to begin to understand the boundaries of your brief, your wishlist and what you want from the finished space.

These pages are designed to provide space for your notes beneath each question. If you live in a household that will share the new kitchen don't forget to talk to those users as well.

1. WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT YOUR CURRENT KITCHEN?

Examples - The layout works well, lots of natural light, the position in the house is perfect for views out into the garden.

2. WHAT DO YOU DISLIKE ABOUT YOUR CURRENT KITCHEN?

Examples - The furniture is looking tired, small appliances are cluttering the work surfaces, and nothing is within easy reach when you are cooking.

3. WHAT DO YOU WISH TO SPEND, IN TOTAL, ON YOUR PROJECT?

Bear in mind you may be thinking about more than simply kitchen furniture and appliances. Flooring, lighting, heating and decoration all need to play a part in your plan.

4. WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR FINISHED SPACE TO BE?

Examples - Is it a social cooking/dining room, will it become an open-plan area or have you always wanted to cook a certain type of food but haven't had the right appliances?

5. HOW DO YOU WANT YOUR NEW SPACE TO FEEL?

Many elements fall into this question, from your taste in colour and style to the functions you wish the room to achieve. Examples – Warm, textured, light and airy, glossy, matte, social, sleek, rustic.

6. DO YOU HAVE THE TIME TO MANAGE THE PROJECT?

A kitchen renovation can be time-consuming due to the many different elements all required in one space. You may have multiple tradesmen visiting in succession, each reliant on the previous work being complete before they can continue. Monitoring time scales is essential so your project remains on track.

7. HOW WILL YOU MANAGE WITHOUT THE KITCHEN?

Can you store and prepare meals elsewhere? If not, how do you think you will live whilst the installation is being completed?

8. SPACE FOR FURTHER NOTES

These questions, and the many more they are sure to spark, will help you form a basis for the luxury kitchen you wish to achieve.

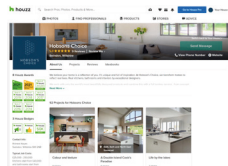
2. WHERE WILL I FIND INSPIRATION?

Inspiration can come from a myriad of sources, with new channels popping up all of the time. Here are a few of our favourite places to get you started.

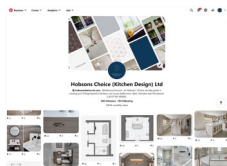
MAGAZINES



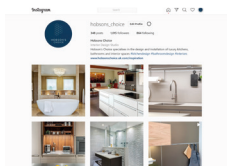
WEBSITES & SOCIAL MEDIA



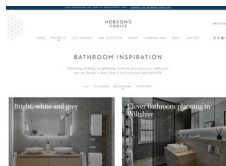
Houzz



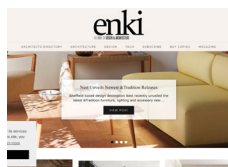
Pinterest



Instagram



Hobson's Choice



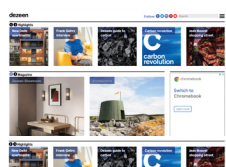
Enki



Grand Designs



Interior Design Homes



Dezeen

PUBLIC SHOWS



DECOREX



Homebuilding & Renovating Show



Microsoft Edge - You are viewing Charlotte Wright's screen

Home Tools Add Microsoft One...

File Edit View Sign Window Help

Home Tools Add Microsoft One...

File Edit View Sign Window Help

Home Tools Add Microsoft One...

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Home Tools Add Microsoft One...

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HOBSON'S CHOICE



Convert PDF files to Word or Excel Online

Select PDF file

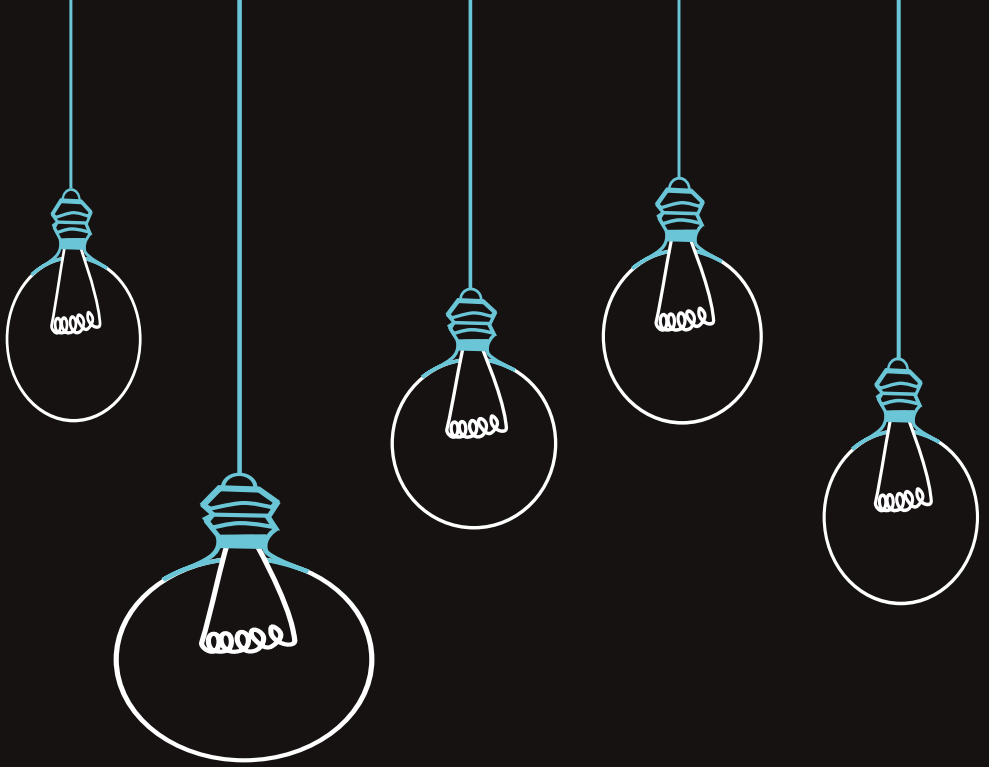
Convert to

Microsoft Word (.docx)

Document Language

English (US)

Participants Chat Share Screen Record Reactions



3. HOW DO
I ORGANISE MY
THOUGHTS?

When you collate your ideas and inspiration, Pinterest, 'mood boards' or 'scrapbooks' are handy for reference. Carefully organised, they can support

discussions later in the process.

These are the sections we recommend you use to organise your thoughts; you can choose whatever you like.

COLOURS & TEXTURES

Walls, kitchen furniture, worktops, wall panelling

KITCHEN STYLE

Modern, flat panel, shaker, framed door, or classic (decorative)

FLOORING/WALLS

Tiles, wood, concrete, paint

ROOM LAYOUT

Kitchen/dining, open plan, footflow, garden access

APPLIANCES

Cooking, cooling, extraction, washing, hot water tap

LIGHTING

Hidden, ceiling, dining, cooking, natural

HEATING

Radiators, underfloor

However you explore the wealth of imagery, advice and styles available to consider, remember to enjoy it. Always remind yourself that it is your home and your kitchen, so make it perfect for you.

Armed with all this knowledge and brimming with ideas, it is now time to venture out and experience some kitchen showrooms that meet your criteria.

A good quality showroom will have designers on-hand to talk about their services, kitchen products, design process and recommended brands. To ensure you visit the right place for your project, take time to research the companies you believe meet your wish list.

If you are open and honest about your project with your designer, they will be in the best position to provide you with the perfect design solution.

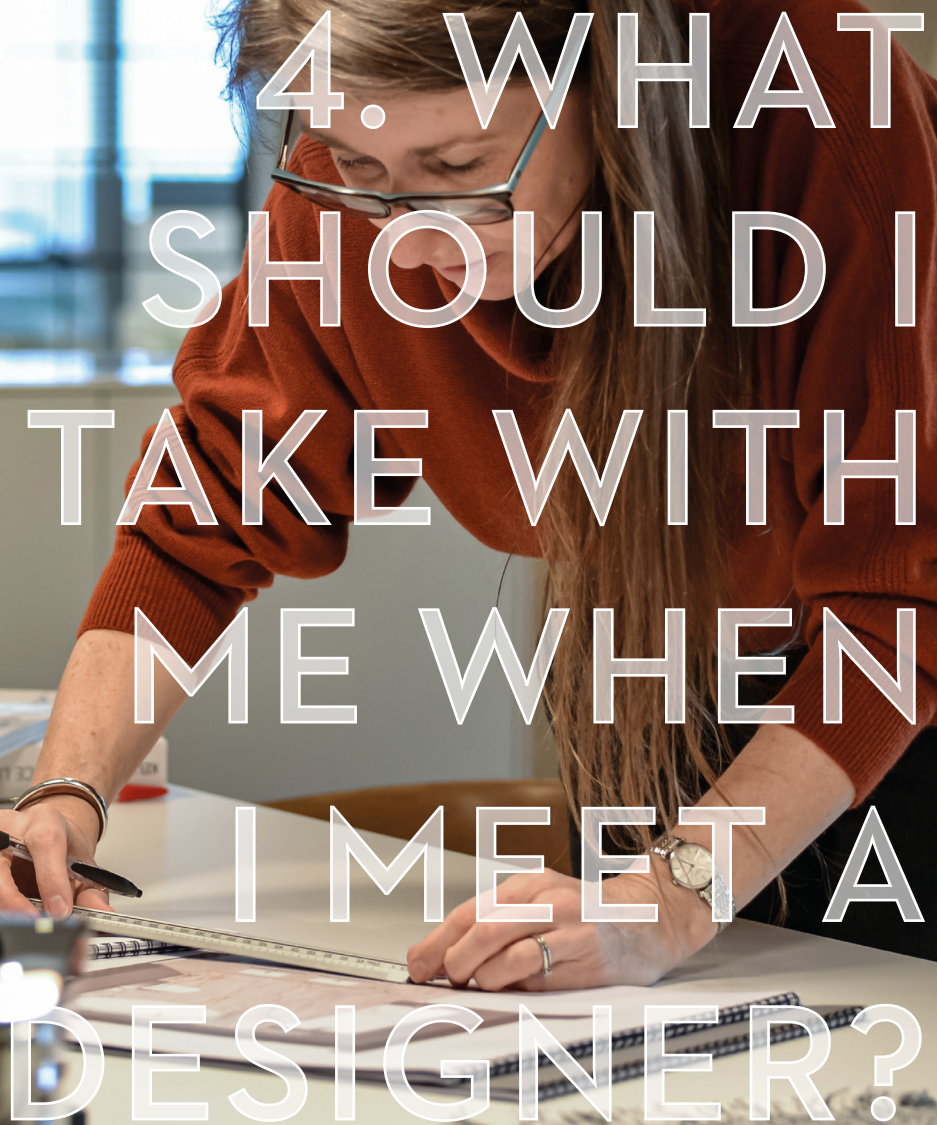
A company's website is often the first contact for clients exploring ideas and styles. By looking at previous project case studies, client testimonials, the history of the company and their recommended suppliers, you should understand what they can offer, their reputation, and their client satisfaction.

Additional content may cover the customer journey, the design, sales, installation and aftercare process, and answers to frequently asked client questions. To view a video of [Hobson's Choice Managing Director, Richard Carter, explaining our client journey](#), visit the [Learning Hub](#) on the Hobson's Choice website.

Social media channels are also a great way of learning about a company, the staff, and their projects. If you are lucky, you might even find a client that has documented a project in photos.



Click on the icons to visit the associated Hobson's Choice social media channels.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing glasses and a red sweater, is leaning over a desk in a professional setting. She is holding a black pen in her right hand and a ruler in her left, appearing to be measuring or drawing on a document. The desk is cluttered with papers and a desk lamp is visible in the foreground. The background shows a window with a grid pattern and some office equipment. The text '4. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE WITH ME WHEN I MEET A DESIGNER?' is overlaid in large, white, outlined letters across the center of the image.

4. WHAT
SHOULD I
TAKE WITH
ME WHEN
I MEET A
DESIGNER?

YOU WILL NEED...

- *A plan of the space*

Measure the whole room including windows, doors, kitchen elements - sink, extraction, radiators and waste pipe locations.

- *Your Scrapbook or Mood boards*

A printed or electronic version of your research and preference.

- *Photos of your current kitchen*

A selection of photos from different angles showing the layout and any particular details you think could be relevant - soil pipes, doorways, windows, etc

- *A plan of the whole property and its compass position
(If possible)*

The sketch doesn't have to be accurately measured; just a rough layout will help your designer understand the flow of the property and the direction of natural light around the room.

All of this information will enable you and your designer to have a meaningful conversation and begin to shape the brief they will need to do their job. Good designers will start to build a picture of your requirements from the moment they meet you.

Over a coffee, you could be asked several questions such as:

- How do you wish to use this kitchen?
- How many people live at the property?
- What sort of lifestyle do you lead?
- Do you have any particular requirements your designer would need to consider?
- What sorts of food do you enjoy cooking?
- A reasonable idea of your budget?

For more information, see our [Learning Hub article 'Why should I tell my Designer my Budget'](#) available on the Hobson's Choice website. Our advice is to be as open and honest as you can. Your designer is doing what they feel is required to understand you and what you would like from your future space.

5. WHAT SHOULD I ASK A LUXURY KITCHEN DESIGNER?

When speaking to the designer, you need to ask questions to help you make an informed decision as to whether they can offer you what you need and whether you will feel comfortable working with them. Here are some suggestions of things you could ask.

1. WHAT SERVICES DO YOU OFFER?

- Design & build - is it all done by the same company?
- Supply only - How does that work for a kitchen, is an element of the design required beforehand?
- Minor remedial works - What can be done?
- Other Rooms - If your project includes another space like a utility room, can this be designed simultaneously?





2. CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE PROCESS TO ME?

Let the designer walk you through every stage, from design, presentation and payment schedules to project planning, installation and sign off.

3. WHEN WILL YOU RELEASE PLANS?

For any reputable company, letting go of design work before receiving client commitment is unlikely. It might seem like a reasonable request; you want to take the plans home to review them later, but the plans are their work; their intellectual property.

All companies are conscious that buyers may take their hard work and design skills to another business and wish to avoid this potential eventuality.

Some companies may insist on a design fee upfront; others may begin exploratory work without charge. It can differ from place to place. If you know you will need plans for a specific reason, you should talk to your designer about this and reach an agreeable solution early on in the process.



4. HOW LONG DOES AN AVERAGE DESIGN AND BUILD TAKE (UNDERSTANDING EVERY PROJECT IS DIFFERENT)?

The initial design phase can take a few weeks. Your designer may set a date for your return visit before you leave, setting out expectations and any further requirements they need to do their job.

Beyond the first presentation, the process can be affected by several factors, including:

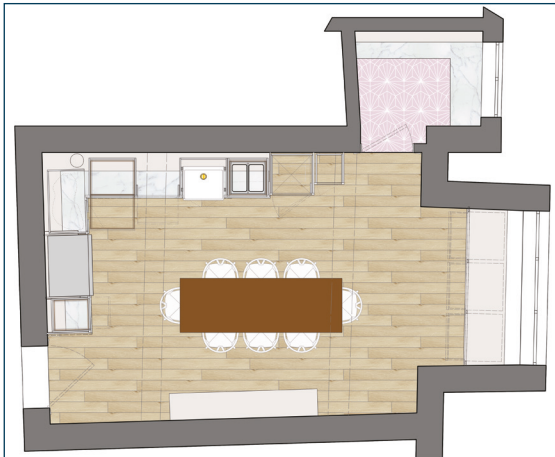
- A client's decisiveness
- Availability of associated professionals, such as an Architect or Interior Designer, and drawings
- Product lead times, potentially up to 12 weeks
- Installation team availability
- Any unforeseen site challenges

Your designer should have an idea of how a 'normal' project would progress and advise you accordingly.

5. DO YOU WORK WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS SUCH AS ARCHITECTS, BUILDERS AND INTERIOR DESIGNERS?

If your project requires additional building work or is a new build, it would be reassuring to know the company has experience of working alongside other trades and collaborating with other design professionals.





TRADITIONAL KITCHENS

A traditional hand-painted kitchen can provide a softer, more decorative appearance than modern, flat-panel styles.

Framed doors can be made by hand in a workshop or by machines in a factory. If handmade, the raw material quality and the craftsmanship of the workshop will be vital in providing you with a reliable, accurately fitting kitchen.

6. HOW DO I FIND A REPUTABLE COMPANY?

Making sure you find a company that provides the right product style, design skill, quality of installation and long-term accountability can feel like a challenging task. The business you entrust your property with to install your luxury kitchen will make or break the entire process.

By asking our suggested series of questions, see over-leaf, you will gain a greater understanding of the fitting process and be able to better determine whether the company will provide you with a high-quality installation.

Before we delve in, there are two reasons why people often make the wrong decision when choosing a company to work with - Price and Installation Time. Due diligence is of the utmost importance when selecting a suitable company. It is not always correct to go with the lowest price or the quickest installation time.

Despite the temptation, you shouldn't be moved from a price standpoint or unnecessarily swayed by a quick turnaround.



FULL PROJECT
MANAGEMENT

SINGLE POINT OF
CONTACT

EFFECTIVE PLANNING

ACCREDITED
TRADESMEN

CLIENT COURTESY

PROPERTY
PROTECTION

RELIABLE PRODUCTS

QUALITY
CRAFTSMANSHIP

DETAILED FINISH

DESIGNER LED
SNAGGING



Nothing can
compensate
for a poorly
installed
luxury
kitchen.

1. HOW MANY LUXURY KITCHENS HAVE THE COMPANY INSTALLED?

This may seem obvious, but check who exactly installs the kitchen. Does the company have an in-house team, or do the design plans get handed over to a 3rd party? The project page on the company website will be a good place to start, but it may not have photography for all of the projects - it can depend on the client's wishes.

2. WHO MANAGES THE INSTALLATION PHASE? WOULD I HAVE A KEY CONTACT?

Different companies control their processes in different ways. At Hobson's Choice, a client has a single point of contact from the very start; their Design Consultant. We believe they become the best person to see the project management phase through; they have the greatest understanding of both project and client.

3. HAVE YOU EVER FACED AN UNEXPECTED ISSUE DURING INSTALLATION?

If they say "No", they are not being truthful or highlight a level of inexperience. Everyone, at some point, has to deal with an unexpected issue during an installation.





4. HOW DID YOU HANDLE IT? WHAT DID YOU DO?

The explanation should cover the communications made with the client, how quickly the company overcame the problem and the eventual outcome. You could ask if the company has a client testimonial to support the example given or if they could arrange for you to speak to a selection of clients directly.

5. DO YOU HAVE REFERENCES I CAN SPEAK TO?

If the proof is in the pudding, then this is the pudding! Speaking directly to previous company clients may seem like a time-consuming activity, but it may give you the assurance you need to continue or step away. Bear in mind that GDPR rules do not permit a company to hand over personal details; your request may require some prior arrangement.

- Try and speak to old and new clients to understand the current service level and how their products hold up over time.
- Clients who live near and far from a local showroom may highlight geographical challenges in service delivery.
- Ask how the client felt during the installation phase. Were they and their home well looked after by the installation team?
- Find out what impressed them the most and the least about the service. Would the homeowner change anything?





6. WHAT AFTERCARE AND WARRANTIES ARE PROVIDED?

Check the details of what is covered and for how long, how are issues resolved and what level of customer input is required. Are issues handled for you, or are you expected to make calls, follow-up emails, and chase resolutions?



Spread over two floors, our Swindon showroom is a destination for luxury kitchen project inspiration.



7. WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR WHILST EXPLORING A SHOWROOM?

A showroom should be the pinnacle of what a kitchen company can achieve. Everything should be perfect, from the display layouts to the quality of the installation.

Don't be afraid to open units, check drawer alignments or study silicone lines and lighting arrangements. It is these details that a good design company will have considered long before fitting. There should be nothing that doesn't have an explanation for being where it is.

By the time you have visited some kitchen companies and talked to their designers, your head will no doubt feel like it could burst! Don't fret; take time to digest the notes you have taken and talk about the feelings you took away from each visit.

It is quite normal that a designer will contact you a few days after a visit to ask about your thoughts. Again, be honest. If their company wasn't for you, the most valuable thing you can say is why. If you would like to talk to them again, take the opportunity to arrange a second visit to speak in more depth and refresh your memory.



To visit our virtual Swindon showroom, click on the image above.

You will know if you have met the right designer from a company you feel delivers what you want. Once you have found them, you can begin the next phase together, shaping your ideas into a real, fantastic space that will make your life even better.



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SWINDON 01793 490 685
WINCHESTER 01962 849 000
www.hobsonschoice.uk.com