

Cabinetry Installation

Installation of cabinetry for your home is an exacting exercise. In our view, the cabinet installer can make or break the look of entire kitchen, bath, or built-ins we have designed for you. If you have hired an installer, it is good for you to know what his or her responsibilities are:

When the cabinets are delivered, the installer will un-carton them and inspect for damage and correct sizing compared to the drawings. The doors and drawers should come off and placed in a safe place so as not to get damaged during install. Blue painter's tape is often used to label the doors and drawers so they go back into the correct cabinet openings.

Some cabinets may be finished on one side and not on the other. It is important to place each cabinet in its proper location so that all exposed ends are finished.

Before any cabinets are installed, an assessment of the level of the room should be done. There is a high spot and a low spot on every floor, new house or old. Shims must be used to build up base cabinets sitting on the low spot. If you don't see shims, there will be problems with racking of cabinets and the doors will not align or close correctly.

Cabinets must be screwed to the walls and to each other. The joints should be smooth, level and plumb. You should see a level used often to check for this.

When the cabinets come up against a wall, a "filler" will be provided which should be "scribed" for exact fit. The walls will undoubtedly be slightly out of plumb, but the cabinets must be level and plumb. This solid wood piece makes up for that. If you have custom cabinets, you may have extended stiles in place of loose fillers. This is a nice custom feature which eliminates a seam. With painted cabinets a seam is sometimes obvious. If your installer has problems with extended stile type installations, it is important for us to know prior to ordering your cabinets.

When all the cabinets are installed according to the plans, the trim and molding installation begins. The mitered joints of the crown, light rail and any other trim pieces should be tight and clean looking. A fine-toothed sharp saw blade is necessary. If you smell burning, the blade is very dull and the joints will be rough.

The doors and drawers can be re-installed any time prior to the countertop templating.

Now the cabinetry should be covered with drop-cloths, heavy plastic sheeting, or cardboard to protect the finish from damage. After the countertop is installed, the electrician, plumber, and flooring contractors will still have some work to do.

The decorative hardware (knobs and pulls) can be installed now. You will want to go over the details with the installer before any holes are drilled. The doors and drawers are the most expensive parts of your cabinetry. They are very costly to replace if holes are drilled incorrectly.

You will receive a touch up kit with your new cabinetry. The installer will fill all nail holes, touch up any small nicks and scratches, and fill any molding joints that need it. You should hang on to the touch up kit for any later mishaps with your new cabinets.

One of the final steps for your installer is to adjust all the doors and drawers so they line up properly and open and close nicely.

You have spent much time, energy, and money to get beautiful cabinetry for your home. It is worth it to have an experienced installer to finish it off with a professional installation.