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FREESTANDING APPLIANCES

Freestanding appliances such as cookers, dishwashers and washing machines can be made to look smart and built in with a little thinking.

COOKERS

When placing freestanding cookers, always plan to fit colour matched end panels to the cabinet sides. End panels serve various purposes; one is to insulate the adjacent cabinets from the heat of the oven, two is hide any of the cabinet edge from view and three is to give symmetry if an extractor with end panels is fitted above the cooker.

When fitting the cooker, make sure that the sides are either flush with, or approximately 3mm higher than the worktop. This can be achieved by making sure the worktop is level and adjusting the feet of the cooker. If the cooker is exceptionally low and requires raising, cut some old worktop to make a base then adjust the feet to level it. A section of plinth can then be fitted to the base to give a built in look. Sitting the cooker against the back wall will also help the built in appearance and prevent the front of the cooker protruding beyond the face of the cupboard doors. Fit aluminium trims to each side of the worktop to prevent the worktop edges bubbling from excessive heat.

WASHING MACHINES AND DISHWASHERS

These appliances are usually shorter than the height of the base cupboards and can be made to look fitted by either of the following methods:

1 Fit end panels to the cabinet sides and make a solid base from off cuts of worktop to raise the appliance level with the bottom of the worktop. Fit or glue some slip proof material to the base to stop the appliance from moving. Cut and fit a length of plinth to cover the base, giving the built in look. Note! Washing machines can move with vibration if not perfectly level. Although the plinth will stop the machine from falling from the base, make sure the washing machine is level once fitted. Dishwashers do not tend to move as much as washing machines as they do not have a spin cycle.

2 Again, fit end panels to the sides of adjacent cupboards. Place the appliance on the floor and make sure it is level. The space between the top of the appliance and the worktop can be utilised in one of two ways; the first is to construct a tray storage space from colour matched end panels. This can simply be fitted above the appliance by screwing through the construction and into the side of the cupboards. The second is to use an oven filler panel to create a dummy look drawer. An oven filler panel is a narrow strip of colour-matched panel with laminate covering all edges. It can simply be cut to height along the bottom edge and iron edging applied to cover the exposed cut. Fit a handle to the centre of the panel and fit to the space using cup and ball type brackets.

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FRIDGES AND FREEZERS

Both appliances can be fitted using either of the above methods. Bear in mind that fridges and freezers are constantly opened and closed so any base constructed needs to have a good slip proof top to it. If fitting these appliances next to each other, try to plan a support panel to be fitted between them

OTHER APPLIANCES

All appliances can be made to look fitted with a little forethought. To make a space and place an appliance in it is simple. To make the appliance look a part of the kitchen is what will give your kitchen the professional look!