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The studio-kitchen (pages 31—32)

The kitchen serves two important household functions: 1. cooking, as an overall term for preparation, cooking, washing up, clearing away and 2. eating, consisting of serving, eating and clearing away. This gives us two types of activity which are closely connected, which complement each other and which, together and separately, require the most varied of working tools.

We therefore find, in modern apartments, the following types of kitchens:

1. The working kitchen, also called the cooking kitchen, which is exclusively a workroom, principally serving as a cooking area, but often used for other housework, such as washing, ironing, polishing shoes. It is, so to say, the women's »work-room«. Here the proper organization and planning of work areas is important, as well as a good connection between the kitchen and the dining area, which is either in a separate room, in the hall or in the living room. The woman must cover this distance countless times each day, often while carrying a heavy tray or bowl.

Advantages: Definitely a work room, therefore, clear separation of work and relaxation, between working life and family life. Good noise and odor isolation between kitchen and living quarters is possible and should be attained.

Disadvantages: More work through more steps (kitchen-dining area), more expensive than other types of kitchens because more room required.

The work kitchen is preferred by families with household help and people engaging in intellectual work.

2. The combination kitchen-dining area. This room combines two functions: cooking and eating. This form is very popular today (especially in England, Sweden and Switzerland), because it saves the housewife much work.

Advantages: Cooking odors are concentrated in one room, which can be well ventilated (a ventilator over the stove has proved practical in this case). The mother can watch the children eat, while she continues to work. Different schedules for different members of the family require staggered mealtimes, which can be achieved in the combination kitchen-dining area without too much extra work.

Disadvantages: Eating should represent relaxation. This is not so easy to achieve in the combination kitchen-dining area, because it is, at the same time, the women's workroom.

3. Combination kitchen-living room. In such a room, cooking, eating and living are all done in the same area. It unifies, therefore, a series of functions and is one of the oldest styles of living. In many places it is stubbornly clung to, as, for example, in Westphalia. Whether advantages or disadvantages predominate here is the subject of violent discussions. There are people who refuse to accept this type of room as a modern way of living.

Advantages: These consist in the economy and simplification of housework. Only one source of heat is required, which combines stove and heating oven. The wife can observe her children while doing the housework, she is spared many steps, she participates in family life even while working.

Disadvantages: Various job sequences often overlap; lack of space follows. Odors cling to clothing and furniture, steam is harmful to wood and upholstery. Kitchen heat makes living in this room most uncomfortable during the summer months.

4. Living room with kitchen nook. This is a special type of kitchen-living room. The functions of the living and dining rooms and part of those of a work kitchen are combined, but the odors and dirt-making work connected with cooking are concentrated in a small nook. Nook and room are separated through use of a curtain, sliding doors or closets.

5. The living room-kitchen with dishwashing room. This is preferred in England. Here, as with the pure kitchen-living room, only one source of heat for cooking and room heating is necessary. Steam and odors must be drawn off directly over the stove. For all work involving water, a small workroom is available, which is also used as a work area for other duties such as ironing, shoe shining and the stacking of dirty dishes, preparatory to washing up. No extra heating unit is required for this room.

6. The American work center. The Americans have, because of the way they live—without household help, with the aid of all sorts of technical appliances, the easing of the mother's work burden through social institutions such as day nurseries, meals taken at school, informal entertaining—arrived at what they call the »work center«, which employs the principle of uniting many functions in one room, but in an even more practical fashion. They are of the opinion that a housewife can speedily and efficiently accomplish all the many tasks which fall to her lot during the course of a day, only when she can do them in one room.

Kitchens in Apartment houses (page 33)

In many countries, women have been put on an equal footing with men; they fill the same jobs and receive the same pay in all branches of production and distribution and occupy the same positions in public life as do their male counterparts. Thus housework has lost much of its appeal. The great majority of housewives and businesswomen accomplish their household tasks with no outside help and are, therefore, quite technically minded when it comes to lightening their jobs, especially when these represent tasks they must attend to after a full day's work in an office or factory.

This state of affairs has led to changes in family habits. Help from children and husbands in washing and cleaning up after meals is being taken more and more for granted as a means of helping the working mother. Such tasks were the sole province of the housewife a few decades ago.

Our social life, too, is undergoing changes. We tend more toward teaparties rather than complicated dinners and not on ascetic grounds. Guests help set the table and aid in clearing it afterwards, without breaking any rules of etiquette. Our food habits are changing. Big-city office hours have brought with them the introduction of the restaurant or canteen meal at noon which, naturally, influences the evening meal. The children's preschool breakfast has been freed of complicated, time-consuming cooking, by the development of quick-cooking oats, cornmeal and similar products and can, to a large extent, be prepared by the children themselves.

The above-described method of preparing meals for family and/or guests makes it clear that the tendency is more and more to bring the dining area and the kitchen together. Family and guests discuss the latest film while putting the bread and cheese on the table, with the same nonchalance as they would while seated in comfortable easychairs. Everyone participates. Life has become more civilized and good breeding can be more realistically shown while eating a dripping pickle than while indulging in polite drawing room conversation.

Aesthetic and social aspects. Beautiful kitchen Equipment (pages 34—36)

Although the kitchen must, of necessity, remain small, it is important that a free area exist, on the wall or elsewhere, to afford the owner the possibility of ex-

pressing his personal ideas of decoration. Of extreme importance, from the aesthetic point of view, are the utensils found in the kitchen. Modern industrial design has done wonders in this field, combining function and materials which, through careful exactitude, have resulted in working tools having the appeal of beauty. Here, education toward appreciation of artistic forms, in other words, simply getting people to notice the advantages of good form and the disadvantages of inharmonious shapes, is important, in order to guide the taste of those who work in these kitchens.

The aesthetic factors, whose importance in the kitchen—which is a central point of the home—we have but briefly sketched, have a strong influence on the general psychological »climate« obtaining in the kitchen. Work in that room is highly repetitious. Despite the pleasures of cooking, the kitchen can be compared to a bottomless barrel. No sooner are garbage and dirt cleaned up, than they reappear and must be disposed of. As a result, the impulses radiated by aesthetically-formed appliances are that much stronger. They are more productive of a positive atmosphere than the continuous blare of the radio which after a time also becomes a habit and has been shown to be a questionable source of relaxation.

Just as in the realm of the aesthetic, the field of social intercourse is difficult to measure. However, many experiences give us material from which we can create a psychological »climate«. When, for example, the relaxed husband helps his wife in the kitchen, as is customary in the United States, the wife no longer feels herself in »exile«. It has often been observed that in such an atmosphere in the kitchen, a special type of intimacy develops, completely natural, leading to uninhibited talk about all sorts of problems, which might otherwise be avoided.

We can, therefore, suppose that the kitchen, where food is prepared for the physical nourishment of man, becomes, in a sense, a small center of life within the home. For thousands of years the stove was the focal point, about which people sat, exchanged ideas and spoke of their feelings; where they made plans and where, in former days, the housewife was more than merely a cook. The modern kitchen, as well, with all its technical installations, all its rationally-conceived planning, all the appliances of our highly-scientific era, can be the heart of the home, whence not only our bodies, but also our souls and spirits can derive nourishment.

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