

Renovation dimensions cheat sheet

Common North American sizes and clearances, imperial and metric



Kitchen

ELEMENT	TYPICAL SIZE	NOTES
Counter height	36 in (91 cm)	Some cooks prefer 34 to 38 in. Bar counters are usually 42 in (107 cm).
Counter depth	25 to 25.5 in (64 cm)	Base cabinets are 24 in deep plus the counter overhang.
Upper cabinets above counter	18 in (46 cm)	15 in is the usual minimum. Allow more under a range hood.
Work aisle, one cook	42 in (107 cm)	Measured between counters, islands or tall appliances.
Work aisle, two cooks	48 in (122 cm)	Worth the space in a kitchen where people cook together.
Walkway past a kitchen	36 in (91 cm)	Keep through traffic out of the cooking zone where you can.
Island seating overhang	12 to 15 in (30 to 38 cm)	At counter height. Allow about 24 in (61 cm) of width per stool.
Prep space beside the sink	36 in wide (91 cm)	One continuous stretch of counter is the most useful single feature.
Landing space beside the fridge	15 in (38 cm)	On the handle side, or across the aisle on an island.
Range hood above cooktop	24 to 30 in (61 to 76 cm)	Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the model.
Pendants above an island	30 to 36 in (76 to 91 cm)	Measured from the counter to the bottom of the fixture.
Work triangle legs	4 to 9 ft each	A guide only. Many kitchens now plan by work zones.

Bathroom

ELEMENT	TYPICAL SIZE	NOTES
Vanity height	34 to 36 in (86 to 91 cm)	Older vanities were often 30 to 32 in. Two-sink vanities can be split heights.
Toilet centre to side wall	15 in minimum, 18 in comfortable (38 to 46 cm)	Code minimums are often 15 in. Designers prefer more.
Clear space in front of toilet	21 in minimum, 30 in comfortable (53 to 76 cm)	
Clear space in front of vanity	30 in (76 cm)	More if a door swings into the space.
Sink centre to sink centre	30 to 36 in (76 to 91 cm)	On a double vanity.
Shower size	36 by 36 in comfortable (91 by 91 cm)	Codes often allow 30 by 30 in. A bench needs more.
Showerhead height	About 80 in (203 cm)	Higher for tall households. Handheld wands add flexibility.
Grab bar blocking	33 to 36 in high (84 to 91 cm)	Add solid blocking in the walls now, even if bars come later.
Vanity wall sconces	60 to 66 in high (152 to 168 cm)	Placed on each side of the mirror for even light on the face.

Stairs, halls and doors

ELEMENT	TYPICAL SIZE	NOTES
Stair rise (each step up)	About 7.75 to 7.9 in maximum (about 200 mm)	Canadian and US codes set slightly different limits for homes.
Stair run (tread depth)	About 10 in minimum (about 255 mm)	Comfortable stairs often use 7 in rise and 11 in run.
Stair width	About 34 to 36 in minimum (860 to 914 mm)	Wider stairs are easier for moving furniture.

ELEMENT	TYPICAL SIZE	NOTES
Headroom over stairs	About 6 ft 5 in to 6 ft 8 in (1950 to 2030 mm)	Canadian codes are typically lower than US codes.
Handrail height	34 to 38 in (865 to 965 mm)	Canadian codes allow up to about 42 in (1070 mm).
Hallway width	36 in minimum, 42 in comfortable (91 to 107 cm)	Wider halls matter for wheelchairs and aging in place.
Interior doors	30 to 32 in (76 to 81 cm)	Use 36 in (91 cm) where accessibility matters.
Exterior door	36 in (91 cm)	The standard front door width.

Living, dining and bedrooms

ELEMENT	TYPICAL SIZE	NOTES
Ceiling height	8 ft (244 cm) standard, 9 ft (274 cm) common in newer homes	Basements are often lower, which is why some are lowered.
Walkway through a room	30 to 36 in (76 to 91 cm)	
Coffee table from sofa	14 to 18 in (36 to 46 cm)	Close enough to reach, far enough for legs.
TV viewing distance	About 1.5 to 2.5 times the screen diagonal	Closer for 4K screens.
Dining table to wall	36 in minimum, 42 to 48 in to walk behind seated guests (91 to 122 cm)	
Space per dining chair	24 in (61 cm) of table length	
Chandelier above dining table	30 to 36 in (76 to 91 cm)	Raise it a few inches for high ceilings.
Space around a bed	24 to 36 in (61 to 91 cm)	On each side you walk or make the bed from.
Bedroom egress window	Varies by code	In Canada, typically at least 0.35 m ² of opening with no side under 380 mm. Check local rules.

Closets, laundry and storage

ELEMENT	TYPICAL SIZE	NOTES
Reach-in closet depth	24 in (61 cm)	Enough for hangers to clear the back wall.
Walk-in closet aisle	36 in minimum (91 cm)	42 in or more if both sides have hanging.
Single hanging rod	About 66 in high (168 cm)	For long dresses and coats.
Double hanging rods	About 40 and 80 in high (102 and 203 cm)	Doubles the space for shirts and trousers.
Shelf depth	12 to 16 in (30 to 41 cm)	Deeper shelves lose things at the back.
Space in front of washer and dryer	36 to 42 in (91 to 107 cm)	Enough to load, unload and fold.
Mudroom bench seat	17 to 19 in high (43 to 48 cm)	About 16 to 18 in deep.

My measurements

Room _____ Length _____ Width _____ Ceiling _____

Room _____ Length _____ Width _____ Ceiling _____

Room _____ Length _____ Width _____ Ceiling _____

Room _____ Length _____ Width _____ Ceiling _____

Notes
