KITCHEN REMODEL CHECKLIST

Address: _____

Start date: _____

Plan, budget, choose, hire and finish: 34 steps.

1. Plan and budget

- ☐ Write down what isn't working: storage, counter space, the layout, lighting, or worn-out finishes.
- ☐ Decide whether to keep the layout. Moving the sink, range or walls adds plumbing, gas and electrical work.
- ☐ Price it for your kitchen and your state, then add a cushion for surprises.
- ☐ If the house was built before 1978, painted surfaces may contain lead: hire a firm that is EPA lead-safe certified.
- ☐ Check HOA or condo rules for approvals, working hours and deliveries.

2. Design and choices

- ☐ Measure the room, including windows, doors, ceiling height, and where the pipes, vents and outlets are.
- ☐ Choose cabinets (stock, semi-custom or custom), door style and finish.
- ☐ Choose appliances before the cabinets are ordered, and give the cabinet designer their exact sizes and installation sheets.
- ☐ Choose countertops. Stone and quartz are usually measured after the cabinets are in, so allow for that wait.
- ☐ Plan the range hood and where it vents.
- ☐ Plan the lighting: ceiling, under the wall cabinets, and over the sink and island.
- ☐ Plan outlets where you'll use small appliances, including on the island.
- ☐ Choose the sink, faucet, backsplash, flooring and hardware, or agree allowances for them in the contract.

3. Hire a contractor

- ☐ Get at least three written quotes for the same scope and the same finishes, so they can be compared line by line.
- ☐ Check each contractor's license with your state's licensing board, and ask for proof of liability insurance and workers' compensation.
- ☐ Ask for references from recent kitchen jobs, and look at photos of finished work.
- ☐ Read the contract before signing: the full scope, model numbers or allowances for anything not yet chosen, start and finish dates, the payment schedule, how changes are handled, and the warranty.
- ☐ Keep the deposit modest and check your state's rules; some states cap it.
- ☐ Confirm in writing who pulls the permits and books the inspections.

4. Before work starts

- ☐ Set up a temporary kitchen somewhere else: fridge, microwave, kettle, a table, and a plan for washing up.
- ☐ Empty the cabinets and pack away what you won't need for a while.
- ☐ Agree working hours, where the crew parks, which bathroom they use and where the dumpster goes.
- ☐ Agree how the rest of the house is protected: dust barriers, and floor covering on the way in.
- ☐ Order cabinets and special-order appliances early; they can take weeks to arrive.

5. While the work is going on

- ☐ Walk the job with the contractor regularly, and keep notes and photos.
- ☐ Check the cabinets and the appliance openings before the countertops are measured.
- ☐ Put every change in writing, with its price, and sign it before the work is done.
- ☐ Pay by the schedule as each stage is finished, not ahead of it.
- ☐ Keep receipts, model numbers, paint colors and tile names together for later repairs.

6. Finishing up

- ☐ Do a final walk-through together and list everything that still needs fixing.
- ☐ Run every appliance, tap and the dishwasher, and check under the sink for drips.
- ☐ Make sure the permit passed its final inspection, and keep the paperwork.
- ☐ Collect warranties and manuals, and register anything that needs registering.
- ☐ Make the final payment once the punch list is done, as the contract says.

Notes