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Full Kitchen Renovation

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30 Expert Answers from Kitchen IQ

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How should a New Brunswick homeowner sequence a full kitchen renovation to avoid delays between trades, and what is the realistic total calendar time from demolition to final inspection including wait times?

A full kitchen renovation in New Brunswick typically takes 8-12 weeks from demolition to final inspection, with proper sequencing being critical to avoid costly delays between trades. The key is coordinating material deliveries with trade schedules, as NB's smaller contractor pool and seasonal demand create bottlenecks that can extend timelines significantly.

The Optimal Renovation Sequence

Week 1: Demolition and Structural Assessment Start with demolition and any structural work requiring engineering approval. This is when you'll discover hidden issues common in NB's older housing stock — knob-and-tube wiring, galvanized plumbing, or asbestos floor tiles in pre-1980 homes. Address these immediately as they affect all subsequent trades. If removing walls, get your building permit approved first and schedule the structural inspection.

Weeks 2-3: Rough-In Work Complete electrical and plumbing rough-in simultaneously. In NB, this means upgrading that 60-amp panel to 100-amp or 200-amp (found in 70% of pre-1990 homes), running new circuits for appliances, and replacing galvanized supply lines. Schedule your rough-in inspection before any walls are closed — this is mandatory in all NB municipalities and RSCs. Failing this inspection means tearing out finished work.

Weeks 4-5: Insulation, Drywall, and Flooring Prep Install insulation if exterior walls were opened, then drywall and prime. Complete subfloor repairs or leveling compound application. **Critical timing note:** Order your cabinets during demolition week — stock cabinets take 1-2 weeks, semi-custom 4-8 weeks, and custom 8-16 weeks in NB's market.

Weeks 6-7: Flooring and Paint Install flooring before cabinets to ensure proper fit and finish. LVP (most popular in NB) installs quickly, while tile requires additional cure time. Complete all painting while the space is still accessible — painting around installed cabinets is time-consuming and yields poor results.

Weeks 8-9: Cabinet Installation and Templating Install cabinets once flooring is complete and fully cured. This is when precision matters most — cabinets must be perfectly level and plumb or doors won't align properly. Once cabinets are installed and adjusted, schedule countertop templating. **NB-specific delay:** Quartz and granite fabrication takes 3-6 weeks from template, and most fabricators are in Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John — rural areas may face delivery delays.

Weeks 10-11: Countertops, Backsplash, and Appliances Install countertops first, then backsplash to ensure proper fit against the countertop edge. Connect appliances last — your electrician and plumber return for final connections. Order appliances 4-8 weeks ahead as supply chain delays are common in NB due to distribution distances.

Week 12: Final Details and Inspection Install cabinet hardware, under-cabinet lighting, and complete final touch-ups. Schedule your final inspection through your municipality or RSC — allow 1-2 weeks for scheduling in cities, 2-3 weeks in rural areas.

Common Delays and How to Avoid Them

Material Lead Times: The biggest project killer in NB is underestimating lead times. Semi-custom cabinets ordered in March might not arrive until May, pushing your entire timeline into the busy summer season when contractors are hardest to book.

Permit Processing: RSC areas (rural NB) take 2-5 weeks for permit approval versus 1-3 weeks in cities. Submit permits early and don't start work until approved — some contractors will begin demolition "at risk," but you're liable if the permit is denied.

Trade Availability: NB's contractor pool is smaller than urban markets, and everyone wants work done May through October. Book your general contractor by March for a summer start, or consider winter renovations for 10-15% savings and better availability.

Hidden Issues Discovery: Budget 2-3 extra weeks for unexpected problems in homes built before 1990. Electrical panel upgrades alone can add \$1,500-\$4,000 and 1-2 weeks to your timeline.

Realistic Timeline Expectations

Best case scenario: 8 weeks with perfect coordination, no hidden issues, and winter timing when trades are readily available.

Typical timeline: 10-12 weeks accounting for normal delays, material lead times, and inspection scheduling.

Worst case: 16-20 weeks if major structural issues are discovered, permits are delayed, or you're renovating during peak season without advance booking.

Pro tip: Start planning your renovation in January for a spring start, or embrace winter renovations when contractors offer better pricing and availability. The key to staying on schedule is ordering all materials during demolition week and having backup dates scheduled with each trade.

Need help finding a kitchen renovator who understands NB's unique timing challenges? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with experienced local contractors who know how to sequence trades efficiently and avoid the common delays that plague kitchen renovations in our Maritime climate.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

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Q2

What should be on a kitchen renovation punch list before I make final payment to my NB contractor?

A thorough punch list protects your investment and ensures your kitchen renovation meets professional standards before you release final payment. In New Brunswick, this final inspection is crucial because once you pay in full, getting contractors back for warranty work can be challenging, especially during busy renovation season.

Your punch list should cover every surface, function, and detail. Start with **cabinet functionality** — open and close every door and drawer multiple times. Doors should align properly, close completely, and stay closed. Drawers should slide smoothly without binding or gaps. Check that all hinges are properly adjusted and soft-close mechanisms work consistently. In NB's dry winter air, cabinet doors can shift slightly, so ensure everything is properly aligned now.

Countertop inspection requires careful attention to seams, edges, and cutouts. Run your hand along all edges to check for chips or rough spots. Examine seams between slabs — they should be nearly invisible and smooth to the touch. Check that sink and cooktop cutouts are properly finished and sealed. For quartz or granite, verify that all support brackets are installed under overhangs greater than 10 inches.

Electrical systems must be fully functional and code-compliant. Test every outlet, switch, and light fixture. Verify GFCI outlets near the sink reset properly. Check that under-cabinet lighting operates smoothly and all connections are secure. If you had electrical work done, ensure you received the electrical inspection certificate from your municipality or Regional Service Commission.

Plumbing functionality extends beyond just turning taps on and off. Run water at full pressure in the sink and check for leaks under the cabinet. Test the dishwasher through a complete cycle and inspect for leaks around connections. If you have a garburator, test it with water running. Check that all shut-off valves under the sink operate properly — you'll need these for future maintenance.

Flooring and backsplash should be examined for installation quality. Look for loose tiles, uneven grout lines, or gaps where the backsplash meets countertops. Check flooring transitions to adjacent rooms — they should be smooth and properly finished. For LVP flooring (popular in NB kitchens), ensure all planks are fully seated and no edges are lifting.

Paint and trim work often reveals a contractor's attention to detail. Check for missed spots, drips, or uneven coverage. Examine caulking around windows, trim, and where countertops meet walls — it should be smooth and consistent. In NB's humidity changes, proper caulking prevents moisture infiltration behind cabinets.

Appliance installation requires verification that everything is level, connected properly, and functioning. Check that the refrigerator is level and doors seal properly. Ensure the range sits flush against countertops with no gaps. Test all oven and cooktop functions. Verify that range hood ventilation actually exhausts outside — recirculating hoods don't handle NB's cooking moisture effectively.

Documentation completion is often overlooked but essential. Ensure you receive all appliance warranties, cabinet care instructions, and paint color information for future touch-ups. If permits were required, verify you have the final inspection certificates. Get warranty information for all work performed and clarify what's covered and for how long.

Don't release final payment until every item is addressed satisfactorily. Most NB contractors retain 10-15% for final payment, giving you leverage to ensure quality completion. Professional contractors appreciate thorough punch lists because it demonstrates you're a serious client who values quality work.

Take photos of any issues and provide written documentation to your contractor. This protects both parties and ensures clear communication about what needs correction before project completion.

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How do I coordinate and schedule multiple sub-trades during a kitchen renovation in Moncton to avoid costly downtime?

Successful kitchen renovation scheduling requires a detailed timeline with built-in buffers, clear communication between trades, and understanding that each phase must be completed and inspected before the next begins. Most homeowners underestimate the coordination complexity, which is why hiring a general contractor often saves money despite the markup.

The key to avoiding downtime is understanding **trade dependencies** and NB's inspection requirements. Demolition comes first, followed by any structural work that needs engineering approval. Electrical and plumbing rough-in happen simultaneously, but both require inspection before insulation and drywall can begin. In Moncton, building inspections typically take 24-48 hours to schedule, so never assume same-day availability.

Electrical work must be completed and inspected before cabinet installation begins. If you're upgrading from a 60-amp panel (common in older Moncton homes), this adds 1-2 days to the timeline. The electrician needs access to run new circuits for the refrigerator, dishwasher, range, and two 20-amp small appliance circuits required by NB Building Code. Schedule the electrical rough-in inspection immediately after completion — waiting costs you days.

Plumbing rough-in happens alongside electrical work. If you're moving the sink location or adding a dishwasher, the plumber needs to extend supply lines and modify drain connections. This work also requires inspection before closing walls. In Moncton's older neighborhoods (like the North End), galvanized pipes are common and should be replaced during renovation — add 1-2 extra days for this upgrade.

Cabinet installation is the critical milestone that determines your countertop timeline. Cabinets must be fully installed, leveled, and secured before the countertop fabricator can create templates. Quartz and granite fabricators in Moncton typically need 3-4 weeks from template to installation, so any cabinet delays directly impact your completion date.

Flooring installation timing depends on your material choice. Luxury vinyl plank (popular in NB for its humidity resistance) can go in before or after cabinets, giving you flexibility. Tile flooring should be installed before cabinets to ensure proper fit and finish. Hardwood flooring (not recommended near sinks in NB's humid climate) must be installed after cabinets to avoid water damage during construction.

Seasonal considerations significantly impact scheduling in Moncton. Contractors are busiest May through October, so book by March for summer start dates. Winter renovations (November through March) often offer 10-15% savings and better contractor availability, but heating costs increase during construction when exterior doors may be open frequently.

Create buffer time between each phase — plan 1-2 extra days between trades to account for inspection delays, material delivery issues, or unexpected problems. Older Moncton homes often reveal surprises like knob-and-tube wiring, asbestos floor tiles, or plaster-and-lath walls that require additional time and specialized contractors.

Communication is crucial — establish a group text or email chain with all trades, and designate one person (ideally your general contractor) as the coordination point. Each trade should confirm their start date 48 hours in advance and immediately report any delays that might impact the next phase.

When to hire a general contractor: If your renovation involves electrical panel upgrades, plumbing changes, or structural modifications, a GC's coordination expertise typically saves more money than their markup costs. They handle permits, inspections, and trade scheduling while maintaining relationships with reliable subcontractors.

Need help finding a kitchen renovator who can coordinate all trades? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with experienced contractors who understand Moncton's inspection process and seasonal timing challenges.

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How much does it cost per linear foot to install cabinetry in a full kitchen renovation in New Brunswick when sourcing semi-custom versus stock cabinet lines from local suppliers?

Cabinet installation costs in New Brunswick typically run \$150-\$300 per linear foot for semi-custom cabinets versus \$100-\$200 per linear foot for stock cabinets, with the difference reflecting both material quality and installation complexity.

The **total cost per linear foot** breaks down into cabinet cost plus installation labor. For stock cabinets, you're looking at \$75-\$125 per linear foot for the cabinets themselves, plus \$25-\$75 per linear foot for installation. Semi-custom cabinets cost \$125-\$225 per linear foot for materials, with installation running \$25-\$75 per linear foot. The installation labor rate stays relatively consistent because it's primarily about time and skill, not cabinet quality.

Stock cabinet installation moves faster because the boxes come in standard sizes with pre-drilled holes and basic hardware. Your installer can often complete a typical 20-linear-foot kitchen in 2-3 days. However, you're limited to standard heights (30", 36", 42") and depths, which may require filler strips to make everything fit properly. In New Brunswick's older housing stock, where walls are rarely perfectly square, these fillers become more noticeable with stock cabinets.

Semi-custom installation takes longer because these cabinets often feature more complex joinery, soft-close hinges, full-extension drawers, and custom sizing that eliminates gaps. Installation typically takes 3-5 days for the same kitchen, but the end result looks more built-in and professional. Semi-custom cabinets can be sized to your exact measurements, which is particularly valuable in older NB homes where standard dimensions rarely work perfectly.

New Brunswick-specific factors affect these costs significantly. Many homes built in the 1960s-1990s have plaster walls that aren't perfectly plumb, requiring more shimming and adjustment time during installation. If your kitchen has an exterior wall, the installer needs to account for potential settling and temperature-related movement. Additionally, if you're upgrading from a 60-amp electrical panel (common in older NB homes), cabinet installation may need to coordinate with electrical rough-in work, adding complexity.

Local supplier considerations also impact pricing. Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John have multiple cabinet suppliers with competitive pricing, while rural areas may face delivery surcharges of \$200-\$500. Stock cabinets are readily available at Home Depot, Kent, and Rona locations throughout NB, typically with 1-2 week lead times. Semi-custom options come through kitchen specialty dealers like Kitchen Craft, Merillat, or local custom shops, with 4-8 week lead times that require careful project coordination.

Installation complexity varies significantly between the two options. Stock cabinets use standard European hinges and basic drawer slides, making replacement parts readily available. Semi-custom cabinets often feature proprietary hardware that may need special ordering. However, the soft-close mechanisms and full-extension drawers in semi-custom lines handle New Brunswick's humidity swings better than basic hardware, reducing long-term maintenance.

For a typical 20-linear-foot NB kitchen renovation, expect to invest \$2,000-\$4,000 for stock cabinet installation versus \$3,000-\$6,000 for semi-custom installation. The higher upfront cost of semi-custom often pays dividends in functionality, durability, and resale value, particularly important given that kitchen renovations should last 15-20 years in New Brunswick's climate.

Need help finding a kitchen renovator experienced with both stock and semi-custom installations? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local contractors who understand the unique challenges of renovating in Maritime homes.

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Q5

How long does a full kitchen renovation take in Moncton NB?

A full kitchen renovation in Moncton typically takes 6 to 12 weeks from demolition day to final walkthrough, though the total timeline from initial planning to cooking your first meal in the new kitchen can stretch to 4-6 months when you include design, material ordering, and permitting.

The actual construction phase breaks down into distinct stages, each with its own timeline. Demolition and disposal usually takes 2-4 days for a standard Moncton kitchen. If your home was built before the 1980s — and many in Moncton's north end and west end were — your contractor may need an extra day or two to deal with plaster-and-lath walls, galvanized plumbing, or old wiring that needs careful removal. Rough-in work for electrical and plumbing runs 1-2 weeks, followed by inspections from the City of Moncton's building inspection department. These rough-in inspections are mandatory before walls can be closed up, and scheduling them can add 3-7 days of waiting time.

Cabinet installation takes 2-5 days depending on kitchen size and complexity, but the real timeline factor is the lead time before they arrive. Stock cabinets from big box stores in Moncton are available in 1-2 weeks, semi-custom options run 4-8 weeks, and fully custom cabinets from local NB shops take 8-16 weeks. Once cabinets are installed and levelled, your countertop fabricator will come to template — then you are looking at another 3-6 weeks for quartz or granite fabrication and installation. This templating-to-install gap is often the longest single wait in the project.

What Affects the Timeline

Several factors specific to Moncton and the broader NB market can push your timeline longer. Contractor availability is tightest from May through October, so a renovation starting in June might experience slower progress as your crew juggles multiple jobs. Starting in the quieter months of November through March often means more dedicated attention from your contractor and a faster overall timeline. Permit processing through the City of Moncton typically takes 1-3 weeks for residential kitchen work, which is faster than rural areas served by Regional Service Commissions.

If your renovation involves structural changes like removing a wall to create an open-concept layout, add 2-4 weeks for engineering, structural permits, and the additional construction work. Electrical panel upgrades — common in older Moncton homes still running on 60-amp service — add another week and \$1,500-\$4,000 to the project. Appliance delivery is another potential bottleneck; order your appliances 4-8 weeks ahead of when you need them, as supply chain delays are common in New Brunswick due to distribution distances.

To keep your renovation on schedule, finalize all your material selections before demolition begins, have your appliances ordered and confirmed, and build in a 2-week buffer for unexpected issues like hidden water damage or outdated wiring behind walls. A well-planned mid-range kitchen renovation in Moncton running \$25,000-\$45,000 should realistically wrap up in 8-10 weeks of active construction. Need help finding a kitchen renovator in Moncton? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local contractors for free estimates.

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What is the best time of year to renovate a kitchen in New Brunswick?

The best time to start a kitchen renovation in New Brunswick depends on your priorities — summer offers the best working conditions, while winter delivers better pricing and contractor availability. Each season brings distinct advantages, and understanding them helps you plan a smoother, more affordable project.

If you want the widest selection of contractors and the most comfortable working conditions, plan to renovate between **May and October**. Longer daylight hours and mild temperatures make it easier for crews to work, and materials like adhesives and finishes cure properly in warmer conditions. However, this is also peak construction season across New Brunswick, so contractors in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John are at their busiest. To secure a summer start, you should be reaching out to contractors and getting quotes by February or March, locking in your contractor by April at the latest. Waiting until May to start looking usually means a late summer or fall start date.

The Winter Advantage

Renovating between **November and March** is an underrated strategy that many NB homeowners overlook. During the off-season, experienced kitchen contractors often have open schedules and may offer **10-15% lower pricing** to keep their crews working. You will have an easier time scheduling trades like electricians and plumbers, and cabinet suppliers may have shorter lead times since demand drops. The tradeoff is that you are living without a kitchen during the coldest months, which means relying on a temporary setup in your basement or dining room. Winter renovations also require your contractor to manage indoor humidity carefully — NB's dry heated air in winter drops indoor humidity to 15-25%, which can affect how materials like solid wood and finishes behave during installation.

For material ordering, keep in mind that **countertop fabrication** runs 3-6 weeks regardless of season, and **custom cabinets** take 8-16 weeks. If you want custom cabinets installed by summer, you need to finalize your design and place the order by January or February. Appliances should be ordered 4-8 weeks ahead; NB's distance from major distribution centres means delivery timelines can be unpredictable.

The ideal approach for most NB homeowners is to start planning and getting quotes in **January or February**, finalize your design and order materials in **March**, and begin construction in **late April or May**. This gives you the best of both worlds — you are locking in contractors before their schedules fill up, materials arrive on time, and the bulk of the work happens in comfortable conditions. If budget is your primary concern, consider starting in **November** to take advantage of off-season pricing on a \$25,000-\$45,000 mid-range renovation — the savings of 10-15% can easily cover an upgraded countertop or better appliance package. Get matched with a kitchen renovator through New Brunswick Kitchens for free estimates and availability.

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How do I live without a kitchen during a NB renovation?

Set up a temporary kitchen in another room before demolition day — with a microwave, electric kettle, toaster oven, and a small table, you can manage surprisingly well for the 6-12 weeks a typical NB kitchen renovation takes. A little planning before the work begins makes the disruption much more manageable.

The best location for your temporary kitchen is wherever you have access to water and some counter space. A laundry room is ideal since it already has plumbing for a utility sink. A basement with a sink works well too. If neither option is available, set up in your dining room or a corner of the living room. You will need a folding table or sturdy shelf for your prep area, a large plastic bin for washing dishes (if you do not have a nearby sink), and a power bar with enough outlets for your appliances. Avoid plugging too many appliances into the same circuit — older NB homes, especially those built in the 1960s-1990s, may have limited circuits and overloading them trips breakers.

Your essential temporary kitchen appliances should include a **microwave, toaster oven or air fryer, electric kettle, slow cooker or Instant Pot**, and a **single or double burner hot plate**. These will cover the vast majority of your cooking needs. Stock up on disposable plates and utensils for the first week or two until you establish a dishwashing routine. Keep a cooler with ice as a backup if your refrigerator needs to be moved out — though most contractors will try to keep your fridge accessible in an adjacent room.

Practical Tips for the Renovation Period

Meal planning is your best friend during this stretch. Prep freezer meals in the weeks leading up to demolition while you still have your full kitchen. Budget an extra **\$200-\$400 per month** for takeout and restaurant meals — even with the best temporary setup, you will eat out more than usual, and being realistic about this cost prevents budget stress. Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John all have affordable meal options, but if you are in a more rural part of NB, plan more heavily on home cooking with your temporary setup.

Protect the rest of your home from renovation dust by having your contractor seal off the kitchen with **plastic sheeting and zippered doorways**. Construction dust from demolition and drywall work gets into everything — cover furniture in adjacent rooms and change your furnace filter more frequently during the project. If you are renovating in winter, dust in your forced-air heating system is a particular concern in NB homes.

Talk to your contractor about the schedule in advance. Some contractors can phase the work so you have running water or basic appliance access for portions of the project. If your renovation is primarily cosmetic — new countertops, backsplash, and cabinet refacing in the \$12,000-\$20,000 range — you may only be without full use for 2-3 weeks rather than the 6-12 weeks a gut renovation requires. Ask your contractor to give you a realistic day-by-day disruption timeline before work begins so you can plan accordingly.

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Q8

What order should kitchen renovation tasks be done in?

Kitchen renovation tasks must follow a specific sequence — demolition first, then rough-in trades, inspections, drywall, cabinets, countertops, backsplash, flooring, and finally appliances and finishing details. Getting this order wrong leads to costly rework, and understanding the sequence helps you plan material deliveries and make timely decisions.

The renovation begins with **design and planning**, which should be completed well before any demolition. This includes finalizing your layout, selecting all materials (cabinets, countertops, flooring, backsplash, appliances), pulling necessary permits from your municipality, and ordering long-lead items. In NB, permits from cities like Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John take 1-3 weeks; rural areas under Regional Service Commissions can take 2-5 weeks. Custom cabinets need 8-16 weeks lead time, and countertop fabrication adds another 3-6 weeks after templating. Order appliances 4-8 weeks out due to NB's distribution distances.

Demolition is the first physical step. Your contractor removes old cabinets, countertops, flooring, backsplash, and appliances. In older NB homes, this often reveals surprises — galvanized plumbing that should be replaced, knob-and-tube wiring, asbestos in floor tiles (common in homes built before 1980), or water damage behind cabinets. Budget \$1,000-\$3,000 for demolition and disposal, and set aside a 10-15% contingency fund for hidden problems.

Rough-In Through Finishing

After demolition, the **rough-in trades** come in. Electricians run new wiring for circuits, outlets, and lighting — NB Building Code requires minimum two 20-amp small appliance circuits, GFCI protection near sinks, and dedicated circuits for major appliances. Plumbers move or install supply and drain lines. If you are moving the sink location, expect \$1,500-\$4,000 for plumbing rough-in. If your home has a 60-amp electrical panel, this is when the panel upgrade happens (\$1,500-\$4,000). Any structural work like removing a load-bearing wall also happens at this

stage, after engineering approval.

A **rough-in inspection** by your local building department must happen before walls are closed. Skipping this is a code violation and could mean tearing out finished work later. After inspection approval, **drywall and patching** closes up the walls, followed by priming and painting.

Cabinet installation comes next and typically takes 2-5 days. Cabinets must be perfectly level and plumb — this is not a DIY task. Once cabinets are fully installed, the countertop fabricator comes to **template**, measuring precisely for your quartz, granite, or solid surface tops. Fabrication and installation takes 3-6 weeks from this point.

While waiting for countertops, your contractor can install **flooring** (LVP, tile, or hardwood — LVP is the most popular kitchen choice in NB). After countertops are set, the **backsplash** goes in (\$1,000-\$5,000 depending on material), followed by **plumbing fixtures** (sink, faucet, dishwasher connections), **appliance installation**, and finally **trim, hardware, and touch-up painting**. A final inspection closes out any open permits. The entire active construction phase runs 6-12 weeks for a standard NB kitchen renovation.

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Q9

How do I find a reliable kitchen renovation contractor in Fredericton NB?

Finding a reliable kitchen renovation contractor in Fredericton starts with getting at least three detailed quotes, verifying insurance and WorkSafeNB coverage, and checking references from past kitchen projects. The difference between a great renovation and a nightmare often comes down to choosing the right contractor, and Fredericton has a solid pool of experienced kitchen renovators if you know what to look for.

Begin by asking friends, family, and neighbours in Fredericton for recommendations — word-of-mouth referrals from people who have had their own kitchens renovated are the most reliable source. You can also use New Brunswick Kitchens, which matches homeowners with local kitchen renovation contractors at no cost through the New Brunswick Construction Network. However you find potential contractors, the vetting process is the same.

Get at least three quotes and make sure each contractor visits your home to assess the space in person. Phone or email quotes are red flags — a proper estimate requires seeing the kitchen, checking the condition of existing plumbing and electrical, identifying potential issues with older homes (many Fredericton homes date from the 1960s-1990s), and understanding your specific goals. Each quote should break down costs by category: demolition, cabinets, countertops, plumbing, electrical, flooring, backsplash, labour, and permits. If a quote is just one lump number with no breakdown, ask for detail or move on.

What to Verify Before Signing

Insurance is non-negotiable. Ask for proof of general liability insurance (minimum \$2 million is standard) and confirm it is current. **WorkSafeNB coverage** protects you if a worker is injured on your property — without it, you could be liable. Ask for the contractor's WorkSafeNB clearance letter, which confirms they are registered and in good standing. Any contractor who hesitates to provide these documents is not worth the risk.

Ask for **three to five references from kitchen-specific projects** completed in the last two years, ideally in the Fredericton area. Call these references and ask specific questions: Was the project completed on time and on budget? How did the contractor handle unexpected problems? Was the worksite kept clean? Would you hire them again? If possible, ask to see the finished kitchen in person.

Check how long the contractor has been in business and whether they have experience with the type of renovation you are planning. A contractor who excels at cosmetic refreshes (\$12,000-\$20,000) may not have the expertise for a gut renovation with structural changes (\$75,000-\$100,000+). For renovations involving electrical or plumbing changes, confirm that the contractor uses licensed, insured sub-trades and pulls proper permits through the City of Fredericton's building inspection department.

Red flags to watch for include demanding large deposits upfront (10-15% or a materials deposit is reasonable, but 50% before work starts is not), no written contract, unwillingness to pull permits for work that requires them, and pressure to make quick decisions. NB pricing varies 30-40% between contractors for identical scope, so getting multiple quotes protects your budget. A mid-range kitchen renovation in Fredericton runs \$25,000-\$45,000, and the right contractor makes all the difference in the final result.

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What should a kitchen renovation contract include in New Brunswick?

A kitchen renovation contract in New Brunswick should include a detailed scope of work, itemized pricing, payment schedule, timeline with milestones, warranty terms, and clear language about how changes and disputes will be handled. A thorough contract protects both you and your contractor, and skipping this step is one of the most common mistakes NB homeowners make.

The **scope of work** is the most critical section. It should describe every task in specific detail — not just "install new kitchen" but a line-by-line breakdown: demolition of existing cabinets, countertops, flooring, and backsplash; disposal of debris; installation of 14 linear feet of semi-custom maple cabinets in Shaker style with soft-close hinges; installation of 35 square feet of quartz countertop in a specified colour; and so on. Every material should be listed by brand, model, colour, and quantity. If the contract says "quartz countertop" without specifying which quartz, you could end up with the cheapest option while expecting premium. The scope should also clearly state what is **not** included — this prevents misunderstandings about painting, appliance installation, or trim work.

Itemized pricing breaks the total cost into categories: demolition (\$1,000-\$3,000), cabinets (\$5,000-\$25,000+), countertops, flooring, backsplash, plumbing, electrical, labour, permits, and applicable taxes (HST at 15% in NB). This transparency lets you see where your money goes and makes it easier to adjust scope if needed. A single lump-sum price with no breakdown should raise concerns.

Payment, Timeline, and Protections

The **payment schedule** should tie payments to completed milestones, not calendar dates. A reasonable structure for a \$25,000-\$45,000 mid-range NB kitchen renovation might be: 10-15% deposit at contract signing, 25% when demolition is complete and rough-in begins, 25% when cabinets are installed, 25% when countertops are installed, and the final 10-15% upon completion and your walkthrough approval. Never pay the full amount upfront, and always hold back a final payment until you are satisfied with the work.

The **timeline** should include a start date, estimated completion date, and key milestones in between. It should also address what happens if the timeline slips — are there penalties for significant delays caused by the contractor? What about delays caused by material lead times or homeowner decisions? In NB, cabinet lead times (1-16 weeks depending on type) and countertop fabrication (3-6 weeks) are the most common schedule drivers, and the contract should clarify who is responsible for ordering and tracking these.

Your contract should specify **permit responsibilities** — typically the contractor pulls all required permits (electrical, plumbing, building) through your municipality or Regional Service Commission, and the cost (\$75-\$300) is included in the contract price. It should include a **warranty clause** covering workmanship for at least one to two years.

Change order procedures should be spelled out in writing — any additions or changes to the scope must be documented with adjusted pricing and timeline before the work proceeds. This prevents disputes over verbal agreements.

Finally, confirm the contract includes proof of **general liability insurance** and **WorkSafeNB coverage**, a clause about site cleanliness and daily cleanup, and a process for resolving disputes. Keep a signed copy in a safe place. A well-written contract is your best protection on a project that typically represents one of the largest investments you will make in your NB home.

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Q11

How do I manage a kitchen renovation project in NB?

Managing a kitchen renovation project in New Brunswick comes down to thorough planning before the work starts, clear communication with your contractor, and staying on top of material orders and decision deadlines. Even with a great contractor, the homeowner plays an active role in keeping the project on track and on budget.

The foundation of good project management is **completing all your selections before demolition begins**. This means cabinets (style, colour, hardware), countertop material and edge profile, backsplash tile, flooring, paint colours, lighting fixtures, sink, faucet, and appliances. Changing your mind mid-project is the single biggest cause of delays and cost overruns. For a \$25,000-\$45,000 mid-range renovation in NB, even small changes can add \$1,000-\$3,000 in extra costs when you factor in restocking fees, reordering delays, and additional labour. Visit showrooms in Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John to see and touch materials in person — photos on a screen rarely capture how a finish actually looks.

Create a **communication plan** with your contractor before work begins. Agree on how often you will check in (daily updates via text or a brief morning meeting work well), who your main point of contact is, and how decisions will be

documented. Keep a shared document or notebook where you track every decision, change, and cost. When your contractor asks a question or needs a decision, respond quickly — delays in homeowner decisions are a top cause of project slowdowns. If your contractor says they need your backsplash tile on-site by a certain date, treat that deadline seriously.

Budget and Schedule Tracking

Set a realistic budget with a 10-15% contingency and track spending as invoices come in. In older NB homes — and there are plenty of them in every city — hidden problems behind walls are common. Galvanized plumbing that needs replacing, inadequate electrical panels (60-amp service cannot support a modern kitchen), water damage under the sink, or asbestos floor tiles can each add \$1,000-\$5,000 in unplanned costs. Your contingency fund absorbs these without derailing the project.

Keep a **timeline checklist** with key milestones: permit approval, demolition complete, rough-in inspection passed, cabinets delivered, cabinets installed, countertop templated, countertop installed, backsplash done, flooring done, fixtures and appliances installed, final inspection, walkthrough. Check off each milestone and compare progress to the estimated schedule in your contract. If you fall behind, discuss with your contractor immediately — sometimes rescheduling a sub-trade or adjusting the order of tasks can recover lost time.

Order long-lead items early. Custom cabinets need 8-16 weeks, countertop fabrication runs 3-6 weeks after templating, and appliance delivery in NB should be ordered 4-8 weeks ahead due to distribution distances. Missing a delivery window can stall the entire project for weeks. Confirm delivery dates in writing and follow up a week before each expected delivery.

Finally, conduct a thorough **final walkthrough** with your contractor before making the last payment. Check every cabinet door and drawer for smooth operation, inspect countertop seams, test all outlets and light switches, run water in the sink and dishwasher, and look at grout lines and caulking. Create a punch list of any items that need correction and agree on a timeline to complete them. Managing a kitchen renovation takes effort, but the payoff is a beautiful kitchen that serves your family for 15-20 years.

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Can I renovate my NB kitchen in phases to spread out the cost?

Yes, phasing a kitchen renovation is a smart strategy for NB homeowners who want to upgrade their kitchen without taking on \$25,000-\$45,000 all at once. The key is planning the phases in the right order so each stage builds on the last and you are not paying to redo work.

The most logical phasing sequence starts with the work that is hardest and most disruptive to change later. **Phase 1** should tackle anything behind the walls — electrical upgrades, plumbing changes, and any structural modifications. If your NB home has a 60-amp electrical panel (common in homes built before the 1990s), upgrading to 100-amp or 200-amp service (\$1,500-\$4,000) should happen first because it affects everything else. Moving outlets, adding the required two 20-amp small appliance circuits, installing GFCI protection near the sink, and running dedicated circuits for major appliances costs \$500-\$4,000 depending on scope. Getting the infrastructure right first means you will not need to tear into finished walls later.

Phase 2 is typically **flooring**, since it goes under the cabinets (or can be installed up to the cabinet toe kicks depending on the product). LVP at \$2,000-\$4,000 is the most popular kitchen flooring choice in NB and handles the province's humidity swings well. **Phase 3** focuses on **cabinets** — whether new stock (\$5,000-\$10,000), semi-custom (\$10,000-\$18,000), or cabinet refacing (\$5,000-\$12,000) if your existing boxes are in good shape. **Phase 4** is **countertops** (\$20-\$120 per square foot installed depending on material), which must be templated after cabinets are fully installed and levelled. **Phase 5** covers **backsplash** (\$1,000-\$5,000) and finishing touches like hardware, lighting, and paint.

Making Phases Work in Practice

The spacing between phases is flexible — some homeowners do one phase every 3-6 months, others spread it over 1-2 years. The important thing is that each phase leaves you with a functional kitchen in between. A cosmetic-first approach is also valid if your infrastructure is already sound: start with painting cabinets and installing new hardware (\$500-\$1,500 DIY), then replace the countertop, then add a new backsplash, then upgrade flooring. This approach can transform the look of your kitchen for \$12,000-\$20,000 spread over several stages.

There are a few caveats to phasing. You will likely pay **slightly more overall** compared to doing everything at once, because your contractor needs to mobilize, set up, and clean up for each phase separately. Some contractors offer a discount if you commit to all phases upfront with a scheduled timeline. You should also be aware that material availability changes — the specific cabinet finish or tile you selected in Phase 1 might be discontinued by Phase 4, so buy a little extra or confirm long-term availability.

One particularly effective NB-specific strategy is scheduling your most disruptive phase (cabinets and countertops) during the **November-March off-season** when contractors offer 10-15% better pricing and have more availability. Then handle cosmetic phases like backsplash and painting yourself during summer weekends. Need help planning your phased renovation? New Brunswick Kitchens can connect you with contractors who are experienced in staged kitchen projects.

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What are the biggest mistakes homeowners make during kitchen renovations?

The biggest mistakes NB homeowners make during kitchen renovations are **underestimating the budget, skipping the planning phase, choosing the wrong materials for New Brunswick's climate, and not getting enough quotes**. These mistakes are almost entirely avoidable with the right preparation.

Not budgeting for the full cost is the most common error. Homeowners focus on the visible elements — cabinets, countertops, appliances — and forget about demolition and disposal (\$1,000-\$3,000), electrical upgrades (\$500-\$4,000), plumbing changes (\$1,500-\$4,000), permits (\$75-\$300), and the inevitable surprises behind the walls of older NB homes. A mid-range kitchen renovation runs \$25,000-\$45,000 in New Brunswick, and without a 10-15% contingency fund, one unexpected discovery — galvanized plumbing that needs replacing, a 60-amp electrical panel that cannot support modern appliances, or water damage under the subfloor — can blow the budget and stall the project.

Choosing the wrong materials for NB's climate leads to premature failures. Thermofoil cabinet doors are a popular budget choice, but NB's dry winter air (indoor humidity drops to 15-25% with forced-air heating) causes the foil to delaminate and peel within 5-10 years. MDF-core with a painted finish handles humidity swings far better and is the smartest mid-range choice. Hardwood flooring near the sink and dishwasher is another risky choice — water damage is not a question of if but when. LVP is waterproof, handles NB's humidity, and is warmer underfoot than tile. For backsplash, natural stone requires sealing and maintenance in NB's humid summers, while ceramic or porcelain tile is virtually maintenance-free.

Planning and Contractor Mistakes

Not getting at least three quotes costs NB homeowners thousands. Pricing varies 30-40% between contractors for identical scope of work — that is a potential \$10,000+ difference on a \$35,000 renovation. Each contractor should visit your home, assess the existing conditions, and provide an itemized breakdown. One-line quotes with no detail are not acceptable.

Changing your mind during construction is enormously expensive. Every change to cabinets, layout, or materials after work begins triggers change orders, restocking fees, reordering delays, and additional labour. Finalize every single selection — cabinet style, countertop material and colour, backsplash tile, flooring, paint, hardware, sink, faucet, appliances, and lighting — before demolition day.

Skipping permits for electrical and plumbing work is a code violation that can result in failed inspections, forced tearouts, and problems when you sell the home. In NB, any electrical circuit changes, plumbing modifications, or structural changes require permits and inspections through your municipality or Regional Service Commission.

Your contractor should handle this, but confirm it is included in your contract.

Ignoring ventilation is a mistake with real consequences in NB's humid summers. Your range hood should vent to the outside, not just recirculate air through a filter. Recirculating hoods do not remove moisture, and that moisture promotes mold growth behind cabinets and in wall cavities — a serious problem in Maritime climates.

Other common mistakes include measuring for countertops before cabinets are fully installed and levelled (leading to poor fit), not accounting for appliance delivery lead times (4-8 weeks in NB), and choosing trendy finishes over timeless ones for a kitchen that should last 15-20 years. Taking the time to plan properly and vet your contractor thoroughly prevents the vast majority of renovation regrets.

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Q14

How do I handle unexpected problems during a kitchen reno in NB?

The best way to handle unexpected problems during a kitchen renovation in NB is to have a 10-15% contingency fund built into your budget from day one, because surprises behind walls are the rule, not the exception, in New Brunswick's older housing stock. When something comes up — and it likely will — a prepared homeowner handles it calmly and cost-effectively.

The most common hidden problems in NB kitchens are tied to the age of the housing stock. Many homes across Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, and rural New Brunswick were built between the 1960s and 1990s, and their kitchens may have never been fully renovated. Once demolition starts and walls, floors, and ceilings are exposed, your contractor may find **galvanized plumbing** that has corroded internally and needs replacement (add \$2,000-\$4,000), **knob-and-tube or aluminum wiring** that is not safe to build over (add \$1,500-\$5,000 for rewiring), **60-amp electrical panels** that cannot power a modern kitchen (upgrade runs \$1,500-\$4,000), **asbestos in floor tiles or pipe insulation** (professional abatement costs \$1,500-\$5,000), **water damage or mold** behind the sink or dishwasher area (repair costs vary widely), or **structural issues** like a sagging floor or improperly modified load-

bearing wall.

When a Problem Is Discovered

Your contractor should stop work in the affected area, document the issue with photos, and present you with options before proceeding. A good contractor will explain what the problem is, why it matters, what the options are (including minimum vs. ideal fixes), and what each option costs. Get this in writing as a **change order** — a documented amendment to your contract that specifies the additional scope, cost, and any timeline impact. Never approve additional work on a verbal agreement alone.

For **electrical and plumbing issues**, the work must be done to current NB Building Code standards, and there is often no option to defer it. If you have opened up walls and found wiring that does not meet code, you cannot simply close the wall back up — the inspector will require it to be brought up to standard before the rough-in inspection passes. This is non-negotiable and is one reason the contingency fund is so important.

For **cosmetic or non-urgent issues** — like discovering that the subfloor is uneven or that the wall behind the backsplash area needs patching — you have more flexibility. Your contractor can often address these within the existing scope with a modest cost addition. Uneven subfloors may need levelling compound (\$300-\$800) before new flooring goes down, but this is a routine adjustment.

Mold behind cabinets or near plumbing is particularly common in NB due to Maritime humidity. Small areas of surface mold can often be cleaned and treated by your contractor, but extensive mold in wall cavities should be assessed and remediated by a qualified professional before the renovation continues.

To minimize the impact of surprises, communicate openly with your contractor throughout the project. Review the problem together, understand the options, approve the change order in writing, and adjust your timeline expectations. On a \$25,000-\$45,000 mid-range kitchen renovation, a contingency of \$2,500-\$6,750 covers most common issues. If your home is pre-1980, consider budgeting on the higher end of that range. Homeowners who plan for the unexpected finish their renovations with far less stress and far better results.

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Should I hire a general contractor or manage trades myself for my NB kitchen?

For most New Brunswick kitchen renovations, hiring a general contractor is the smarter choice — especially if your project involves layout changes, electrical upgrades, or plumbing work. Managing trades yourself can save 10-15% on overhead, but it requires significant time, construction knowledge, and the ability to coordinate schedules across multiple tradespeople in a market where skilled labour is in high demand from May through October.

A general contractor handles the sequencing that trips up most homeowners: demo first, then structural framing, rough-in electrical and plumbing (which must pass inspection before walls close), insulation, drywall, cabinet installation, countertop templating, backsplash, flooring, and final connections. Getting this order wrong — or missing the rough-in inspection window — can add weeks and thousands of dollars to your project. In New Brunswick, a mid-range kitchen renovation running \$25,000-\$45,000 typically involves four to six separate trades, and a GC keeps them all moving in the right sequence.

When Self-Managing Can Work

If your renovation is primarily cosmetic — new countertops on the existing layout, cabinet refacing, backsplash, and flooring — you may be able to coordinate two or three trades yourself. The risk is lower because there are no permit inspections to schedule and no structural dependencies. In this scenario, you could save \$3,000-\$7,000 by cutting out the GC markup.

However, self-managing becomes risky the moment electrical or plumbing changes enter the picture. In NB, any circuit modification requires a permit and inspection through your local municipality (Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John) or your Regional Service Commission if you are in a rural area. Many homeowners do not realize that older NB homes — particularly those built in the 1960s through 1980s — often have 60-amp electrical panels that simply cannot support a modern kitchen with a dishwasher, range, microwave, and refrigerator all on dedicated circuits. A panel upgrade alone runs \$1,500-\$4,000 and must be done by a licensed electrician.

What to Look For in a GC

When hiring a general contractor in New Brunswick, verify that they carry general liability insurance (minimum \$2 million is standard), confirm their WorkSafeNB coverage is current, and ask for references from at least three recent kitchen projects in your area. Get a detailed written contract that specifies the full scope, materials, payment schedule tied to milestones (never pay more than 10-15% upfront), and a realistic timeline. NB pricing varies 30-40% between contractors for identical scope, so always get at least three quotes.

Book early if you want a summer start — most reputable NB kitchen contractors are fully booked by March or April for the May-October season. If your timeline is flexible, scheduling a winter renovation (November through March) can save 10-15% and give you access to contractors who are less busy. New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local kitchen renovation contractors for free estimates on your project.

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What is the typical timeline for a kitchen renovation in Saint John NB?

A typical kitchen renovation in Saint John takes 4 to 8 weeks for a mid-range project, or 8 to 14 weeks for a full gut renovation with layout changes. These timelines assume materials are ordered in advance and permits are already in hand — two factors that catch many Saint John homeowners off guard.

The timeline breaks down into phases. **Demolition and prep** takes 2-5 days for a standard kitchen teardown, including disposal of old cabinets, countertops, flooring, and appliances. Expect to pay \$1,000-\$3,000 for demo and hauling in the Saint John area. If your home was built before 1990, factor in an extra day or two for potential asbestos testing of floor tiles or pipe insulation — this is common in Saint John's older housing stock, particularly in the South End and West Side neighbourhoods.

Rough-in work — electrical and plumbing modifications — typically takes 3-7 days. In Saint John, building permits are handled through the city's building inspection department, and residential kitchen permits usually take 1-3 weeks to process. If you are moving the sink location, extending supply and drain lines adds \$1,500-\$4,000 to the budget. Many older Saint John homes have galvanized plumbing that should be replaced during renovation, as it corrodes internally and reduces water pressure. The rough-in inspection must happen before any walls are closed — skipping this is a code violation that will require tear-out later.

Cabinet installation is the critical-path item. Stock cabinets are available in 1-2 weeks, semi-custom takes 4-8 weeks, and custom cabinets run 8-16 weeks from order to delivery. Once cabinets are installed and levelled, your countertop fabricator will template, which adds another 3-6 weeks for quartz or granite fabrication and installation. This templating-to-installation gap is the single biggest timeline surprise for homeowners.

Factors That Extend the Timeline

Saint John's Maritime climate adds considerations that inland cities do not face. Higher humidity levels mean drywall mud and paint take longer to cure properly — rushing this step leads to cracking and peeling. If your renovation falls between November and March, winter weather can delay material deliveries, though you may benefit from 10-15% savings and better contractor availability.

Appliance lead times are another factor. Order appliances 4-8 weeks before you need them — supply chain delays are common in New Brunswick because of distribution distance from major centres. A missing dishwasher or range can stall your entire project at the finish line.

To keep your Saint John kitchen renovation on schedule, book your contractor by March or April for a summer start, order cabinets and appliances early, and get permits submitted before demo day. Get matched with a local kitchen renovator through New Brunswick Kitchens for a free estimate and realistic project timeline.

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Q17

How do I prepare my NB home for a kitchen renovation?

Preparing your New Brunswick home for a kitchen renovation starts 2-4 weeks before demo day and involves protecting your living spaces, setting up a temporary kitchen, and making sure your contractor has clear access to work. Proper preparation prevents damage to the rest of your home and keeps the project moving efficiently once work begins.

Clear out everything from the kitchen at least two days before demolition starts. Remove all dishes, small appliances, food from pantries and cabinets, and anything stored on countertops. This sounds obvious, but many homeowners underestimate how much they have packed into kitchen drawers and cupboards. Box it all up and store it in a spare bedroom or basement — you will not have access to your kitchen for 4-8 weeks on a mid-range renovation.

Set up a temporary kitchen in another room. At minimum, you need a microwave, a kettle, a small table, and access to a bathroom sink for washing dishes. Many NB families set up in a basement or dining room with a folding table, a mini-fridge, and a portable induction burner (about \$60-\$80 at any NB retailer). Budget an extra \$50-\$100 per week for takeout — even the most prepared homeowners eat out more during a renovation.

Protect adjacent rooms from dust. Kitchen demolition generates enormous amounts of fine dust, especially when removing drywall, old tile, or plaster-and-lath walls (very common in older NB homes built before the 1980s). Hang heavy-duty plastic sheeting over every doorway leading out of the kitchen and tape it securely at the top and sides. A \$25 zip-wall kit with a zipper door makes life much easier for daily access. Lay drop cloths or heavy paper on hallway floors between the kitchen and the nearest exterior door.

Practical Steps Before Demo Day

Check your electrical panel. If your NB home has a 60-amp panel — common in homes built through the 1980s — discuss a panel upgrade with your contractor before work begins. A modern kitchen needs dedicated 20-amp circuits for countertop outlets, plus individual circuits for the range, dishwasher, refrigerator, and microwave. An upgrade to 100 or 200 amps runs \$1,500-\$4,000 and must be done by a licensed electrician with a permit.

Locate your water shut-off valve and make sure it actually works. In many older NB homes, the main shut-off valve has not been turned in decades and may be seized. Your plumber will need to shut off water when disconnecting the sink and dishwasher.

Confirm permits are in place. If your renovation involves any electrical changes, plumbing relocation, or structural modifications, your contractor should have pulled permits before starting. In Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John, residential kitchen permits typically take 1-3 weeks; rural areas under Regional Service Commissions may take 2-5 weeks.

Finally, talk to your neighbours if you share walls (duplexes and row houses are common in Saint John and Moncton) — demolition noise starts early and lasts several days. A quick heads-up goes a long way.

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Q18

What causes kitchen renovation delays in New Brunswick?

The most common causes of kitchen renovation delays in New Brunswick are custom cabinet lead times, appliance delivery backlogs, permit processing waits, and unexpected conditions hidden behind old walls. Understanding these factors upfront lets you plan around them rather than being caught off guard once your kitchen is torn apart.

Cabinet lead times are the single biggest schedule driver. Stock cabinets are available in 1-2 weeks, but semi-custom cabinets take 4-8 weeks and fully custom cabinets run 8-16 weeks from order to delivery. Many NB homeowners choose semi-custom or custom because older homes often have non-standard dimensions that stock

cabinets cannot accommodate. Once cabinets arrive and are installed, countertop fabricators need to template on-site, then fabricate and install — that adds another 3-6 weeks for quartz or granite. If your cabinets are delayed even one week, it pushes the entire countertop timeline forward by at least that much.

Appliance delivery delays are particularly common in New Brunswick because the province sits at the end of most Canadian distribution chains. Order appliances 4-8 weeks before you need them. A missing range or dishwasher at the finish line can leave your kitchen 95% complete but unusable for weeks. Always confirm delivery dates in writing and have your contractor plan the installation sequence around the confirmed delivery window.

Permit and inspection timing catches homeowners off guard, especially in rural areas. Cities like Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John typically process residential kitchen permits within 1-3 weeks, but if your property falls under a Regional Service Commission, expect 2-5 weeks. Once rough-in electrical and plumbing work is done, you must schedule an inspection before walls can be closed — and inspectors have their own availability constraints. Missing an inspection slot can add a week to your timeline.

Hidden Conditions in Older NB Homes

This is where timelines really blow up. New Brunswick has a large stock of homes built in the 1960s through 1990s, and opening walls during a kitchen renovation frequently reveals surprises: **galvanized plumbing** that needs replacement (corroded pipes reduce water pressure and can leach lead), **knob-and-tube wiring** that must be updated before new circuits can be added, **asbestos in floor tiles** requiring professional abatement (\$1,500-\$4,000), or **inadequate insulation on exterior walls** that should be addressed while walls are open.

Each of these discoveries adds time and cost. A good contractor builds 1-2 weeks of contingency into the schedule and recommends a 10-15% cost contingency for exactly these situations.

Seasonal factors also play a role. Contractors are busiest May through October in NB, so scheduling subtrades (electricians, plumbers, tilers) can involve wait times of days or even weeks during peak season. Winter renovations (November through March) generally move faster because tradespeople have more availability, though material deliveries may face weather-related delays. To minimize delays, book your contractor by March or April, order long-lead items immediately, and submit permits early.

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How do I get accurate quotes from NB kitchen renovation contractors?

To get accurate quotes from New Brunswick kitchen renovation contractors, you need a clearly defined scope of work, consistent specifications shared with every bidder, and at least three detailed written estimates to compare. NB pricing varies 30-40% between contractors for identical scope, so the quoting process directly determines whether you get fair value.

Start by defining exactly what you want done before contacting any contractors. Walk through your kitchen and write down every change: Are you keeping the existing layout or moving the sink, stove, or refrigerator? Are you replacing cabinets entirely or refacing them? What countertop material do you want — laminate at \$20-45/sq ft or quartz at \$60-120/sq ft? Will you need new flooring, backsplash, lighting, or appliances? The more specific you are, the more accurate and comparable your quotes will be.

Create a simple document listing your scope, preferred materials, and any must-haves. Share this identical document with every contractor you invite to quote. If one contractor quotes stock cabinets at \$5,000-\$10,000 and another quotes semi-custom at \$10,000-\$18,000, you are not comparing apples to apples — and the "cheaper" quote is not actually cheaper for the same product.

What a Good Quote Should Include

A professional NB kitchen contractor's quote should break down costs by category: demolition and disposal, cabinets (brand, line, and door style specified), countertops (material, edge profile, and square footage), plumbing labour and materials, electrical labour and materials, backsplash, flooring, painting, hardware, and any appliance installation. It should also include a projected timeline with start and completion dates, a payment schedule tied to milestones (never pay more than 10-15% upfront as a deposit), and clarity on what is and is not included.

Watch out for quotes that give a single lump-sum number with no breakdown. These make it impossible to understand where your money is going and impossible to compare against other bids. A vague quote is a red flag.

When the contractor visits your home — and they must visit before quoting; never accept a quote from a phone call alone — point out anything that might affect the project. Older NB homes frequently have 60-amp electrical panels (upgrade to 100-200 amps costs \$1,500-\$4,000), galvanized plumbing that should be replaced, or plaster-and-lath walls that are more labour-intensive to modify than modern drywall. A contractor who sees these conditions in person can account for them; one who does not will hit you with change orders later.

Verify credentials before comparing quotes. Confirm each contractor carries general liability insurance (minimum \$2 million), has current WorkSafeNB coverage, and will pull all required permits. A contractor who skips permits may quote lower, but you assume all the risk if work does not meet NB Building Code — and you may face

problems when selling your home.

Finally, be upfront about your budget range. If you have \$35,000 for a mid-range renovation, telling contractors allows them to recommend materials and approaches that fit rather than quoting a dream kitchen you cannot afford. New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local kitchen renovators for free estimates, making it easy to get multiple quotes from qualified professionals.

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Q20

How do I deal with asbestos floor tiles during a kitchen reno in NB?

If your NB home was built or renovated between the 1940s and early 1990s, there is a real chance your kitchen floor tiles contain asbestos, and you must handle them properly to protect your family's health and comply with New Brunswick regulations. Never sand, grind, break, or dry-sweep suspected asbestos tiles, as disturbing them releases microscopic fibres that cause serious lung disease.

The **first step** is identification. Asbestos was commonly used in 9"x9" vinyl floor tiles (the most telltale sign is that odd size, since modern tiles are 12"x12"), as well as in some 12"x12" tiles and the black mastic adhesive underneath. You cannot confirm asbestos by looking at it. You need to have a sample tested by an accredited lab. In New Brunswick, you can collect a small sample yourself (wearing an N100 respirator and gloves, misting the area with water first, cutting a small piece with a utility knife, and sealing it in a zip-lock bag) and send it to a lab for analysis. Testing typically costs \$30-\$75 per sample with results in 3-7 business days.

Your Options Once Confirmed

Encapsulation (covering over) is the safest and most cost-effective approach, and it is what most NB kitchen renovators recommend when the existing floor is in decent condition. You install new flooring directly over the asbestos tiles without disturbing them. Luxury vinyl plank (LVP) is ideal for this since it can go right over the old tiles with minimal subfloor prep, adding only about 5mm of height. You may need to adjust door clearances and

transition strips, but this approach avoids the cost and risk of removal entirely. Budget \$2,000-\$4,000 for new LVP flooring over existing tiles in a typical NB kitchen.

Professional removal is necessary if the tiles are crumbling, water-damaged, or if you need to access the subfloor for structural work or levelling. In New Brunswick, asbestos removal must be done by a qualified abatement contractor following WorkSafeNB regulations. The contractor must contain the area with poly sheeting and negative air pressure, use HEPA filtration, wet-strip the tiles, and dispose of the material at an approved facility. Professional asbestos tile removal in an NB kitchen typically costs \$2,000-\$6,000 depending on the area and complexity. This is on top of your new flooring costs.

Never attempt removal yourself. New Brunswick's Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission regulations classify asbestos work by risk level, and floor tile removal generally falls under moderate-risk procedures that require trained workers and specific controls. Fines for improper asbestos handling are significant, and the health risks are not worth any savings.

When getting quotes for your kitchen renovation, tell contractors upfront that you suspect asbestos flooring. Experienced NB renovators deal with this regularly, especially in homes in Moncton, Saint John, and Fredericton built during the 1950s-1980s. A good contractor will factor testing and either encapsulation or professional removal into your project timeline and budget from the start, rather than discovering it mid-renovation and causing costly delays.

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Q21

What is the best way to demo an old kitchen in New Brunswick?

Kitchen demolition in New Brunswick requires careful planning before you swing a single hammer, because older NB homes frequently contain hazards like asbestos floor tiles, galvanized plumbing, knob-and-tube wiring, and load-bearing walls that can turn a straightforward demo into a dangerous and expensive problem. Budget \$1,000-\$3,000 for professional demolition and disposal of a typical NB kitchen.

Before any demolition begins, **identify hidden hazards**. In homes built before 1990, have floor tiles and any suspect materials tested for asbestos (\$30-\$75 per sample). Check whether your home has knob-and-tube wiring or aluminum wiring, both common in older NB housing stock. Locate your main water shut-off, electrical panel, and gas shut-off (if applicable). If you are removing or modifying any walls, have a contractor or structural engineer confirm whether they are load-bearing. In many NB homes, the kitchen wall separating it from the dining room is load-bearing, and removing it without proper support will compromise your home's structure.

Turn off utilities to the kitchen before starting. Shut off the water supply to the kitchen sink and dishwasher at the shut-off valves (or the main if there are no local shut-offs). Turn off the electrical breakers serving the kitchen circuits. If you have a gas range, shut off the gas valve and do not disconnect the gas line yourself; that requires a licensed gas fitter. Cap any disconnected water lines to prevent leaks.

For the **demolition sequence**, work from top to bottom. Remove cabinet contents, then take off cabinet doors and drawers. Unscrew upper cabinets from the wall (have a helper support them so they do not fall). Remove countertops next; laminate countertops can usually be pried up, while granite or quartz requires careful handling due to weight (a 10-foot quartz counter can weigh 300-400 pounds). Remove base cabinets, then tackle flooring, backsplash, and any fixtures.

Disposal is a significant consideration in NB. Most municipalities in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John have specific rules about construction waste. You cannot put demo materials in regular garbage pickup. Your options include renting a dumpster (\$350-\$600 for a 10-yard bin, which handles most kitchen demos), making multiple trips to your local landfill or transfer station, or having your contractor handle disposal as part of their scope. Old appliances can often be picked up by scrap metal recyclers at no charge.

While some NB homeowners handle basic demolition as a DIY project to save \$500-\$1,500 on labour, be realistic about what you should and should not do yourself. Removing cabinet doors, hardware, and countertops is reasonable DIY work. Disconnecting plumbing, removing electrical fixtures, and dealing with any structural elements should be left to licensed professionals. Any work involving asbestos must be done by a certified abatement contractor following WorkSafeNB regulations.

If your contractor is handling the full renovation, many prefer to do the demo themselves so they can inspect the condition of walls, subfloor, plumbing, and wiring as they go. This often catches hidden issues early, before new materials are installed. Ask your contractor whether they prefer to handle demo or if they are comfortable with you doing it to save on costs.

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How do I choose a kitchen renovation contractor in Bathurst NB?

Choosing a kitchen renovation contractor in Bathurst requires the same due diligence as anywhere in New Brunswick, but with a few extra considerations unique to northern NB's smaller contractor pool and the logistics of material delivery to the Chaleur region. Start by getting at least three detailed quotes from contractors who have completed kitchen projects in the Bathurst area.

The **contractor pool in Bathurst** is smaller than in Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John, which means the best renovators book up quickly. Start your search early, ideally 3-6 months before your desired start date. If you are planning a summer renovation, reach out to contractors by February or March. Some Bathurst-area homeowners also consider contractors from Miramichi or the Acadian Peninsula who are willing to travel, which can expand your options.

When evaluating contractors, **verify the essentials**. Ask for proof of general liability insurance (minimum \$2 million is standard in NB). Confirm they carry WorkSafeNB coverage, which protects you from liability if a worker is injured on your property. Request references from at least two or three recent kitchen projects, and actually call those references. Ask about timelines, communication, cleanliness, and whether the final cost matched the quote. If possible, visit a completed kitchen in person.

Get detailed written quotes, not verbal estimates. A proper quote should break down costs by category: cabinets, countertops, flooring, backsplash, plumbing, electrical, labour, demolition, and disposal. This lets you compare quotes accurately. Be cautious of any quote that is dramatically lower than the others. In NB, pricing varies 30-40% between contractors for identical scope, but a quote that is 50% lower often means corners will be cut or change orders will inflate the final price.

For Bathurst specifically, **ask about material sourcing and lead times**. Most countertop fabricators and specialty cabinet suppliers are based in Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John, which means longer delivery times and potential delivery surcharges for the Bathurst area. A contractor experienced in the region will already have relationships with suppliers and will account for these logistics in your project timeline. Cabinet lead times for semi-custom are 4-8 weeks, and countertop fabrication runs 3-6 weeks after templating.

Since Bathurst falls under a **Regional Service Commission (RSC)** rather than a city building department, permit processing can take 2-5 weeks, longer than in the major cities. If your renovation involves electrical changes, plumbing modifications, or structural work, make sure your contractor pulls the necessary permits and schedules inspections through the RSC. Never agree to skip permits, even if a contractor suggests it to save time or money.

Payment structure should follow a reasonable schedule. A common and fair arrangement is 10-15% deposit to secure your spot, progress payments tied to milestones (cabinets delivered, rough-in complete, etc.), and a 10% holdback until all punch-list items and final inspection are complete. Never pay the full amount upfront.

New Brunswick Kitchens can help match you with kitchen renovation contractors who serve the Bathurst area. Getting matched is free and gives you a starting point for collecting quotes and comparing your options.

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Q23

How do I renovate a kitchen in a Moncton condo with strata rules?

Renovating a kitchen in a Moncton condo requires approval from your condo corporation (or condo board) before any work begins, and you must understand the distinction between your unit's boundaries and common elements. Failing to get proper approval can result in stop-work orders, fines, and being forced to reverse completed work at your own expense.

New Brunswick's **Condominium Property Act** establishes the legal framework, but your specific condo corporation's **declaration, bylaws, and rules** govern what renovations are permitted and the approval process. Start by requesting a copy of these documents if you don't already have them. Most Moncton condo corporations require written renovation applications submitted to the board 30-60 days before work begins, including detailed scope of work, contractor information, insurance certificates, and sometimes architectural drawings.

What You Can and Cannot Change

Inside your unit boundaries (typically drywall-in), you generally have the right to renovate cosmetically — new cabinets, countertops, backsplash, flooring, and paint. However, most condo bylaws require that you maintain or improve sound transmission ratings, which means your new kitchen flooring must meet minimum STC (Sound Transmission Class) ratings. Luxury vinyl plank with an acoustic underlayment usually satisfies this requirement, while tile directly on concrete subfloor may not without additional sound dampening — check your condo's specific

requirements.

Plumbing stacks, electrical panels, and structural walls are common elements even though they're inside your unit. Moving a kitchen sink in a condo often means connecting to shared drain stacks, which most condo boards restrict or require engineering approval for. Similarly, any structural modifications — such as removing a wall to open up the kitchen — need engineering review and board approval because structural elements are common property. Budget extra time (60-90 days) for these approvals.

Electrical upgrades in older Moncton condos (many built in the 1970s-1990s) face a unique challenge: the building's electrical capacity is shared, and your unit may have a limited panel (often 60-amp) that can't be easily upgraded because the building's main service would need upgrading too. Your contractor's electrician should assess your panel capacity early in the planning process. NB Building Code still requires the same minimum kitchen circuits — two 20-amp small appliance circuits, dedicated appliance circuits, and GFCI protection near sinks.

Practical Steps for a Smooth Condo Renovation

Working hours are typically restricted to 8 AM-5 PM or 9 AM-6 PM weekdays only, with some boards allowing Saturday mornings. No work on Sundays or holidays. This affects your renovation timeline — what might take 3-4 weeks in a house could take 5-6 weeks in a condo due to restricted hours.

Elevator booking is essential for bringing in cabinets, countertops, and appliances. Most Moncton condo buildings require advance booking for service elevator use, and you may need to coordinate with the building manager. Quartz and granite countertops are heavy and require careful planning for hallway and elevator clearance — measure elevator dimensions and hallway widths before your fabricator templates.

Contractor insurance requirements are usually higher for condo work. Most boards require your contractor to carry \$2 million or more in liability insurance and to name the condo corporation as an additional insured on the policy. Get this confirmed before signing a contract with your renovator.

Permits are still required through the City of Moncton for electrical changes, plumbing modifications, and structural work — condo board approval does not replace municipal permits. You need both. Moncton's building inspection department processes residential permits in 1-3 weeks typically.

Budget 10-15% more for a condo kitchen renovation compared to a similar scope in a house, accounting for restricted hours, logistics challenges, and potential requirements like sound-rated flooring. A mid-range condo kitchen renovation in Moncton typically runs \$30,000-\$50,000. Start planning 3-4 months before your desired start date to allow time for board approvals, contractor quotes, and material ordering.

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Q24

How do I plan for kitchen renovation waste disposal in Moncton NB?

Budget \$1,000-\$3,000 for demolition and waste disposal in a Moncton kitchen renovation, with a roll-off dumpster bin being the most practical option for most projects. Waste disposal is one of the most overlooked budget items in NB kitchen renovations, and planning it before demolition day prevents costly delays and bylaw headaches.

For a typical mid-range kitchen renovation in Moncton — removing old cabinets, countertops, flooring, backsplash, and drywall — you will generate roughly 1 to 3 tonnes of mixed construction waste. The most efficient approach is renting a **roll-off dumpster bin** from a local waste hauler. In the Greater Moncton area (including Dieppe and Riverview), a 10-yard bin (suitable for most kitchen renovations) runs \$350-\$500 for a 7-day rental period, while a 20-yard bin (needed for gut renovations with structural demo) costs \$450-\$700. These prices typically include delivery, pickup, and disposal at the Eco360 facility — Moncton's regional waste management centre on Berry Mills Road.

Bin placement requires some planning. Most Moncton residential streets allow a dumpster in your driveway, but you need a permit from the City of Moncton if the bin must sit on the street or sidewalk. Permit fees are modest (\$50-\$100), but you need to apply in advance. Your contractor should handle bin rental as part of the project — if disposal is not included in your quote, ask about it before signing.

Hazardous Materials in Older Moncton Homes

Many Moncton homes built before 1990 have materials that require special handling during kitchen demolition. **Asbestos** may be present in vinyl floor tiles (especially 9x9-inch tiles from the 1960s-1970s), pipe insulation, and some textured ceiling coatings. If your home was built before 1985 and you are removing original flooring or disturbing ceiling materials, you should get an asbestos assessment before demolition begins. Asbestos abatement in a kitchen-sized area costs \$1,500-\$5,000 and must be done by a certified abatement contractor — this is not optional, it is a WorkSafeNB requirement.

Lead paint is possible in homes built before 1978. If old cabinets or trim have multiple layers of paint, treat them as potentially lead-containing. Demolition should include proper containment and dust control. Your contractor should be aware of these hazards — ask about their procedures.

Recycling and Diversion

Moncton's Eco360 facility accepts sorted construction waste, and some materials can be diverted from landfill.

Metal (old sinks, hardware, appliance shells) can go to a scrap metal recycler — several operate in the Moncton area, and they may even pay you for larger quantities. **Appliances** in working condition can be donated to organizations like Habitat for Humanity ReStore, which has a location in Moncton and will often arrange pickup.

Cabinets in good condition are also accepted by ReStore — donating reusable materials keeps them out of the landfill and may provide a tax receipt.

Old countertops (laminated, granite, quartz) and drywall go into the general construction waste stream. Drywall should be kept dry in the bin — wet drywall becomes extremely heavy and can push you into a higher weight tier, adding \$100-\$200 to your disposal bill.

Having your disposal plan in place before the first cabinet comes off the wall keeps the project running smoothly and avoids the scenario of demo waste piling up in your garage while you scramble to arrange a bin.

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What should I look for in a kitchen renovation warranty in NB?

A solid kitchen renovation warranty in New Brunswick should cover workmanship for a minimum of two years, with material warranties passed through from manufacturers — and everything should be documented in writing before work begins. Warranties are one of the most important yet least discussed parts of hiring a kitchen renovator, and understanding what is actually covered protects you from expensive surprises down the road.

Workmanship warranties cover the contractor's labour and installation quality. In New Brunswick, there is no provincially mandated warranty period for renovation work (unlike new home construction), so the warranty you get depends entirely on your contract. A reputable kitchen renovator should offer a minimum of **2 years on workmanship**, with many quality contractors offering 3-5 years. This should cover issues like cabinet doors that fall out of alignment, countertop seams that separate, tiles that crack or pop loose, and flooring that buckles — all problems that point to installation errors rather than material defects. In NB's climate, where Maritime humidity in summer and dry heated air in winter cause significant expansion and contraction cycles, proper installation technique is the difference between a kitchen that ages gracefully and one that develops problems within the first year.

Material and product warranties are separate from workmanship. These come from the manufacturers and should be passed through to you. Typical coverage includes quartz countertops (10-25 years from brands like Caesarstone and Cambria), cabinets (1-5 years for stock, 5-10 years for semi-custom, lifetime for some custom manufacturers), appliances (1 year standard, extendable), and plumbing fixtures (lifetime on many major brands). Your contractor should provide you with all manufacturer warranty documentation, registration cards, and proof of purchase for every major component. Keep these in a dedicated folder — you will need original purchase documentation to make a warranty claim years later.

Red Flags to Watch For

Be cautious of contractors who offer only **verbal warranties**. In New Brunswick, if the warranty is not in writing as part of your signed contract, it is extremely difficult to enforce. The warranty section of your contract should clearly state: what is covered, what is excluded, the duration, and the process for making a claim (who do you call, what is the response time).

Watch out for **exclusion clauses** that gut the warranty's value. Common exclusions include "normal wear and tear" (fair), but some contractors also exclude "moisture-related issues" — which in NB's Maritime climate could let them off the hook for legitimate installation failures. A warranty that excludes moisture damage in a province with 80%+ summer humidity is essentially worthless for issues like cabinet swelling, mould behind walls, and countertop seam

failures.

No-callback contractors are a real risk. Before hiring, ask for references from jobs completed 1-2 years ago and ask those homeowners whether the contractor responded to warranty calls. A 5-year warranty from a contractor who does not return calls is meaningless.

Protecting Yourself

Get **three or more quotes** from NB kitchen renovators and compare warranty terms side by side. Verify that the contractor has **active liability insurance** and **WorkSafeNB coverage** — an uninsured contractor who goes out of business takes your warranty with them. Take **dated photos** of the completed work as a baseline, especially areas that are later hidden (behind appliances, inside cabinets, under the sink). These photos are invaluable if a warranty dispute arises. Keep copies of all permits and inspection reports — passed inspections document that the work met NB Building Code requirements at the time of completion.

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Q26

How do I handle load-bearing walls in an NB kitchen renovation?

Never remove or modify a load-bearing wall without a structural engineer's assessment and a building permit — this is one of the most critical safety requirements in any New Brunswick kitchen renovation.

Load-bearing walls carry the weight of the roof, upper floors, and the structure above down to the foundation.

Removing one without proper support will cause sagging, cracking, and potentially catastrophic structural failure.

Many NB homeowners want to open up their kitchen to the dining or living room for a modern open-concept layout. In older NB homes built in the 1960s through 1990s, the wall between the kitchen and adjacent rooms is frequently load-bearing. Before you start planning an island or a wide-open sightline, you need to determine whether that wall is structural.

Identifying Load-Bearing Walls

There are clues that suggest a wall is load-bearing: it runs **perpendicular to the floor joists** (check from the basement), it sits **directly above a beam or foundation wall** in the basement, or it runs through the **centre of the house** parallel to the ridge line. Exterior walls are almost always load-bearing. However, these are guidelines, not certainties — only a **structural engineer** can definitively confirm whether a wall is load-bearing. An engineering assessment costs \$300-\$800 in New Brunswick and is money extremely well spent before you commit to a layout that depends on removing that wall.

Do not rely on a contractor's visual assessment alone. While experienced contractors can often identify load-bearing walls, the liability and safety stakes are too high for guesswork. If the wall is load-bearing and the engineer confirms it can be removed, they will design a **beam and post system** (typically an LVL — laminated veneer lumber beam or a steel I-beam) to carry the load. The engineer provides stamped drawings that your contractor follows and that the building inspector reviews.

The Process and Costs

Removing a load-bearing wall in an NB kitchen renovation involves several steps and professionals. First, the structural engineer designs the replacement support system (\$300-\$800 for the assessment and stamped drawings). Then you apply for a **building permit** through your municipality — Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John have their own building departments, while rural areas go through Regional Service Commissions. Permit fees run \$150-\$300, and approval takes 1-3 weeks in cities or 2-5 weeks in RSC areas.

The construction work itself involves installing **temporary shoring** (temporary walls that hold the load while the permanent beam is installed), removing the existing wall, installing the engineered beam with proper bearing posts at each end, and then finishing the ceiling and floor where the wall was. Budget **\$5,000-\$15,000** for a load-bearing wall removal depending on the span, beam material (LVL vs steel), and finishing work. A steel beam for a wider span costs more but allows a thinner profile that hides better in the ceiling.

Two inspections are required: a **rough-in inspection** after the beam and posts are installed but before the ceiling is closed up, and a **final inspection** after all finishing work is complete. Skipping the rough-in inspection is a code violation that could require you to tear out finished work so the inspector can see the structural connections.

Common Mistakes

The biggest mistake is **skipping the engineer and permit** to save money. This creates serious problems when you sell your home — a home inspection will flag unpermitted structural modifications, and buyers or their lenders may require proof of engineering or even remediation. The second most common mistake is assuming that a **partial wall removal** (creating a pass-through or half-wall) does not require engineering. Any modification to a

load-bearing wall, even a small opening, needs professional assessment. Get matched with an experienced kitchen renovator through New Brunswick Kitchens who regularly handles structural modifications and understands the NB permit process.

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Q27

What kitchen renovation tasks can I safely DIY in New Brunswick?

You can safely handle cosmetic kitchen upgrades like painting cabinets, replacing hardware, installing peel-and-stick backsplash, swapping a faucet, and adding plug-in under-cabinet lighting — but any electrical, plumbing, structural, or gas work requires a licensed professional and permits in New Brunswick. Knowing which tasks are DIY-friendly and which demand a pro protects both your safety and your wallet.

Painting cabinets is the highest-impact DIY project you can tackle. The key is preparation: remove all doors and drawer fronts, label everything, clean with TSP, sand with 150-grit, apply a bonding primer (Zinsser BIN or STIX), then two coats of quality cabinet paint in satin or semi-gloss finish. Allow a full 2-3 weeks of cure time before reinstalling — NB's humid summers can extend cure times, so aim for a dry stretch or use a dehumidifier in your workspace. MDF-core doors take paint beautifully. Budget \$200-\$600 for paint and supplies versus \$5,000-\$12,000 for professional refacing.

Replacing cabinet hardware (knobs, pulls, hinges) is a simple weekend project. If your new hardware has a different hole spacing than the old, you will need to fill and drill — use a jig (\$15-\$25 at any NB hardware store) to ensure consistent placement across all doors and drawers. Soft-close hinge upgrades (\$3-\$8 per hinge) are a satisfying DIY improvement that makes an older kitchen feel modern.

Peel-and-stick backsplash tiles have improved dramatically in quality and are a legitimate DIY option for NB homeowners who want a fresh look without hiring a tile installer. They cost \$5-\$15 per square foot versus \$40-\$100+ per square foot for professionally installed ceramic or glass tile. Clean the wall thoroughly and apply when

the room temperature is above 15 degrees Celsius for best adhesion. They are not as durable or waterproof as real tile, but they look great for 3-5 years.

Replacing a kitchen faucet is manageable if your supply valves are accessible and in good condition. Turn off the supply valves under the sink, disconnect the old faucet, and install the new one following the manufacturer's instructions. Budget 1-2 hours. However, if your shut-off valves are old gate valves that do not fully close (common in pre-1990 NB homes with galvanized plumbing), you may need to shut off the main water supply — and if the valves are corroded, call a plumber rather than risk breaking a supply line.

Plug-in LED under-cabinet lighting transforms how a kitchen looks and functions, and it requires zero electrical work. Strip lights (\$30-\$80 for a full kitchen set) attach with adhesive backing and plug into existing outlets. This is a simple evening project with dramatic results.

What You Must Hire a Professional For

Electrical work of any kind — moving an outlet, adding a circuit, upgrading your panel — requires a permit and inspection in New Brunswick, whether you are in a city like Moncton or Fredericton or a rural area under a Regional Service Commission. NB's older housing stock often has 60-amp panels that cannot support a modern kitchen, and upgrading to 100 or 200-amp service (\$1,500-\$4,000) is strictly professional territory.

Plumbing changes beyond a simple faucet swap — moving the sink, adding a dishwasher line, replacing galvanized pipes — require a plumbing permit. **Cabinet installation** should be professional because cabinets must be perfectly level and plumb, or doors will never align properly. **Countertop installation** for quartz or granite involves heavy slabs that crack if mishandled and require precise templating. **Structural work** like removing or modifying load-bearing walls requires an engineer, a building permit, and inspections.

The smart approach is to DIY the cosmetic work you are comfortable with and invest the savings into professional quality where it counts — cabinets, countertops, and any work behind the walls.

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How do I find and vet kitchen renovation contractors in Miramichi NB?

Finding and vetting kitchen renovation contractors in Miramichi requires extra diligence because the contractor pool is smaller than in Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John, and the area is served by a **Regional Service Commission (RSC)** rather than a municipal building inspection department, which affects permit timelines. Start by gathering at least three quotes from contractors who regularly work in the Miramichi area to get accurate pricing comparisons.

The first step is building your shortlist. **New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local kitchen renovators for free through the New Brunswick Construction Network**, which is a great starting point. Beyond that, ask neighbours, co-workers, and friends in the Miramichi area for recommendations — word of mouth is particularly valuable in smaller NB communities where contractors build their reputations locally. Check with local building supply stores (not just big box chains) as they know which contractors consistently buy quality materials and maintain active businesses.

Vetting Essentials

Insurance verification is non-negotiable. Ask every contractor for proof of commercial general liability insurance (minimum \$2 million coverage is standard in NB) and make sure the policy is current, not expired. Call the insurance company directly to verify — a surprising number of contractors let policies lapse. This protects you if a contractor damages your home or a worker is injured on your property.

WorkSafeNB coverage is required for any contractor with employees in New Brunswick. Ask for their WorkSafeNB clearance letter, which confirms they're registered and in good standing. You can verify this through WorkSafeNB directly. If a contractor works without coverage and a worker is injured in your home, you could be held liable. Solo operators without employees may be exempt, but they should still carry personal injury coverage.

Check references and completed work. Ask each contractor for 3-5 references from kitchen renovations completed in the past two years, preferably in the Miramichi region. Call these references and ask specific questions: Was the project completed on time and on budget? How did the contractor handle unexpected problems? Was the site kept clean? Would you hire them again? If possible, ask to see a completed kitchen in person — photos only tell part of the story.

Contract and Payment Red Flags

A professional kitchen contractor will provide a **detailed written contract** that includes: full scope of work with specific materials and brands, a realistic timeline with milestones, payment schedule tied to completion milestones

(not calendar dates), warranty terms, and how change orders will be handled. Never sign a vague one-page quote — it's a recipe for disputes.

Payment structure matters. A reasonable deposit is 10-20% to secure your spot on the schedule and order materials. Be wary of any contractor asking for 50% or more upfront. Payments should be tied to project milestones — for example, 20% at demolition completion, 30% when cabinets are installed, and the final balance upon completion and your walkthrough approval. Hold back 10% for 30 days after completion to ensure everything is functioning properly.

Miramichi-Specific Considerations

Miramichi falls under the **RSC Region 5** for building permits and inspections. Permit processing times through RSCs tend to be longer than in cities — expect 2-5 weeks versus 1-3 weeks in Moncton or Fredericton. Your contractor should handle permit applications, but confirm this is included in their scope. Any electrical changes, plumbing modifications, or structural work requires permits and inspections regardless of the project's size.

Because Miramichi's contractor pool is smaller, **booking lead times may be longer** — especially for summer start dates (May through October is peak season across NB). Start your search and vetting process in January or February for a spring/summer project. Winter renovations (November through March) often offer better availability and potential savings of 10-15% as contractors work to fill their off-season schedules.

Some Miramichi kitchen projects bring in contractors from Moncton or Fredericton, which can add travel costs (\$500-\$1,500 depending on project duration) but expands your options. A mid-range full kitchen renovation in the Miramichi area typically runs \$25,000-\$45,000, consistent with NB provincial averages. Get those three quotes, vet thoroughly, and don't automatically choose the cheapest — the contractor who communicates clearly, has verifiable references, and provides a detailed contract is usually worth every dollar.

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Q29

What questions should I ask a kitchen renovation contractor before signing a contract in NB?

Before signing any kitchen renovation contract in New Brunswick, you should ask about licensing, insurance, WorkSafeNB coverage, project timeline, payment schedule, permit responsibility, and warranty terms. Skipping this due diligence is the single biggest mistake NB homeowners make, and it can lead to thousands of dollars in unexpected costs or unfinished work.

Start with the fundamentals. Ask for proof of general liability insurance (minimum \$2 million is standard in NB) and confirm they carry active WorkSafeNB coverage. If a worker is injured on your property without WorkSafeNB coverage, you as the homeowner could be held liable. Ask how long they have been operating in New Brunswick and request references from at least three recent kitchen projects in your area, whether that is Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, or a smaller community.

Contract and Payment Details

Ask who will be pulling the permits. In NB, electrical changes, plumbing modifications, and structural work all require municipal permits and inspections. A reputable contractor handles permit applications and schedules inspections as part of the project. If a contractor suggests skipping permits to save time or money, that is a serious red flag. Permit fees for kitchen renovations typically run \$75 to \$300 depending on your municipality, and cities like Moncton and Fredericton process them faster (1 to 3 weeks) than rural Regional Service Commission areas (2 to 5 weeks).

Discuss the payment schedule in detail. A reasonable structure is 10 to 15 percent deposit to secure your spot, with progress payments tied to completed milestones such as demolition, rough-in, cabinet installation, and final completion. Never pay more than 50 percent before cabinets are installed. Ask whether the quote includes demolition and disposal (\$1,000 to \$3,000 is typical), and clarify who pays for dumpster rental. Get the total price broken down by category: cabinets, countertops, flooring, electrical, plumbing, backsplash, appliances, and labour.

Timeline and Warranty

Ask for a realistic timeline with specific start and completion dates written into the contract. A mid-range NB kitchen renovation typically takes 4 to 8 weeks depending on scope, but custom cabinet orders add 8 to 16 weeks of lead time before work even begins. Ask what happens if the project runs over schedule and whether there are penalties for significant delays.

Inquire about their warranty. Most quality contractors offer a minimum one-year workmanship warranty, and many materials carry manufacturer warranties of 5 to 25 years. Ask specifically about how warranty claims are handled and whether they cover subcontractor work like plumbing and electrical.

Finally, ask about change order procedures. Once demolition begins, surprises are common in NB's older housing stock, including galvanized plumbing, knob-and-tube wiring, asbestos in floor tiles, and inadequate 60-amp electrical panels. A good contract specifies how changes in scope are documented, priced, and approved before additional work proceeds. Always get three or more quotes before committing, as NB pricing can vary 30 to 40 percent between contractors for identical scope. New Brunswick Kitchens can help you connect with qualified local kitchen renovators for free estimates on your project.

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Q30

How do I plan a kitchen renovation around my family schedule in NB?

Planning a kitchen renovation around your family's schedule in New Brunswick means choosing the right season, setting up a temporary kitchen, coordinating the work phases to minimize disruption, and building realistic buffer time into your timeline. Most NB families find that 4 to 8 weeks without a fully functional kitchen is manageable with the right preparation.

The first decision is timing. NB contractors are busiest from May through October, so if you want a summer start date, book your contractor by March or April. However, scheduling your renovation for the winter months between November and March can offer real advantages beyond just 10 to 15 percent cost savings. Fewer competing projects mean your contractor can often dedicate more consistent daily hours to your kitchen, reducing the overall disruption window. If you have school-aged children, starting a renovation during the summer break means less morning chaos when the kitchen is torn apart.

Setting Up a Temporary Kitchen

Before demolition day, set up a functional temporary kitchen in another room. A folding table, a microwave, a toaster oven, an electric kettle, and a mini fridge can handle most family meals. If you have a laundry room with a utility sink, that becomes your dishwashing station. Keep a bin of essential dishes, utensils, and pantry staples

accessible. Families in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John with basements often set up their temporary kitchen downstairs where there is usually a sink and some counter space already.

Talk to your contractor about phasing the work to maintain partial functionality as long as possible. For example, keeping the sink and refrigerator connected while cabinets on the opposite wall are being replaced can make a significant difference. Some contractors will prioritize reconnecting the sink and running water as early as possible during the renovation, which helps enormously for families with young children.

Plan your meals ahead. Stock up on easy-prep foods, plan for more takeout meals in the budget (add \$500 to \$1,000 for dining out during a 4 to 6 week renovation), and batch-cook freezer meals before demolition starts. If you have an outdoor grill, summer renovations let you cook outside during much of the project.

Dust and noise are unavoidable during demolition and drywall work. Hang plastic sheeting over doorways leading from the kitchen to living areas, and seal the bottom edge with painter's tape. If you have family members with respiratory sensitivities, plan to be out of the house during demolition day and any drywall sanding. Older NB homes built before the 1990s may have asbestos in floor tiles or lead paint, so discuss testing with your contractor before demolition begins.

Build buffer time into your expectations. Cabinet lead times run 1 to 2 weeks for stock, 4 to 8 weeks for semi-custom, and 8 to 16 weeks for custom. Appliance deliveries in NB can take 4 to 8 weeks due to distribution distances. Countertop templating happens after cabinets are installed, then fabrication adds another 3 to 6 weeks. Communicate openly with your contractor about hard deadlines, such as holidays or family events, so they can plan the critical-path tasks accordingly. Need help finding a kitchen renovator who works well with families? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local contractors for free.

Looking for experienced contractors? The New Brunswick Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Gionetterenovations
- Thirty Four Renovations

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