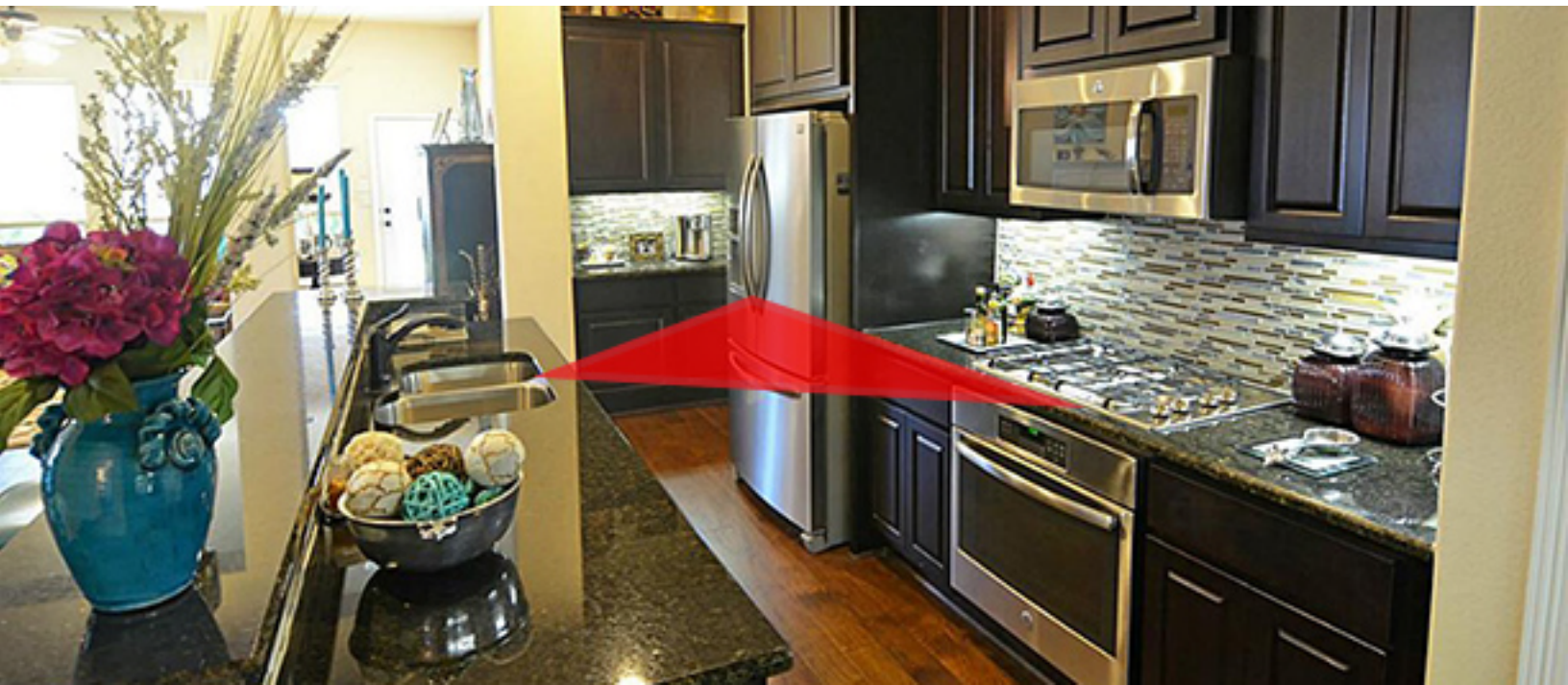


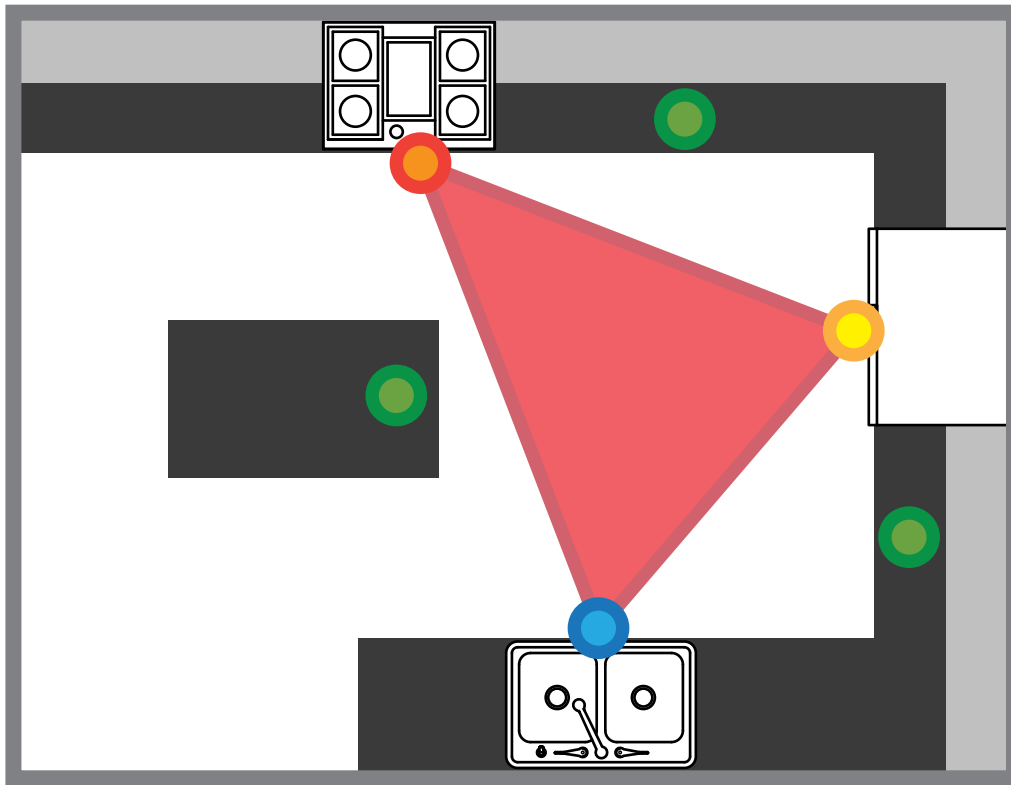






## Work Triangle Basics

As you prepare food, you naturally move between three places where you do three different tasks: cleanup, cooking, and food storage—your sink, cooktop and refrigerator, respectively. Imagine a triangle that connects them. This is your work triangle, and it's the heart of your kitchen design. Ideally, each side should be at least 4 feet long, but less than 9 feet long. Of course, you'll also need a place for food preparation like cutting, and the most efficient place for that is within your work triangle. It could be a countertop on an island, or between the cooking and food storage zones.



These three points and the imaginary lines between them, make up what kitchen experts call the work triangle.



-  **PREPARATION**  
This is where you cut or prepare food.
-  **COOKING**  
Your cooktop and oven are here.
-  **CLEANUP**  
Your sink and dishwasher are here.
-  **FOOD STORAGE**  
Your refrigerator is here.  
Its door should be able to swing wide open.

The kitchen work triangle principle is used by kitchen designers and architects when designing residential kitchens.

- No leg of the triangle should be less than 4 feet (1.2 m) or more than 9 feet (2.7 m).
  - The sum of all three sides of the triangle should be between 13 feet (4.0 m) and 26 feet (7.9 m).
  - Cabinets or other obstacles should not intersect any leg of the triangle by more than 12 inches (30 cm).
  - If possible, there should be no major traffic flow through the triangle.
  - A full-height obstacle, such as a tall cabinet, should not come between any two points of the triangle.
  - Besides the work triangle itself, there are several rules of thumb to consider when planning a kitchen.
  
  - As measured between countertops and cabinets or appliances, work aisles should be no less than 42 inches (110 cm) for one cook, or 48 inches (120 cm) for multiple cooks.
  - A sink should have a clear counter area of at least 24 inches (61 cm) on one side, and at least 18 inches (46 cm) on the other side.
  - A refrigerator should have a clear counter area of at least 15 inches (38 cm) on the handle side; or the same on either side of a side-by-side refrigerator; or the same area on a counter no more than 48 inches (120 cm) across from the refrigerator.
  - A stove or cooktop should have a clear 15 inches (38 cm) area on one side, and at least 12 inches (30 cm) on the other side.
  - At least 36 inches (91 cm) of food preparation area should be located next to the sink.
- In a seating area where no traffic passes behind the diner, allow 32 inches (81 cm) from the wall to the edge of the table or counter; if traffic passes behind the diner, allow 44 inches (110 cm).