



## Lucky Seven

A modest-size addition and brag-worthy amenities adapt an older home's kitchen for a family of seven.

Mary Beth and Joseph Wyllie enjoy a kitchen that maintains the charm and intimacy of their 1930s home.

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**FROM TWO TO SEVEN IN FOUR YEARS.** That was the rate of growth in Mary Beth and Joseph Wyllie's family. Two sets of twin boys—and a girl in the middle—called for an upgrade to the couple's 1930s home in Rhode Island.

Though the former owners had remodeled the kitchen, the space was too dark and segmented to comfortably fit the whole clan. The Wyllies worked with architect Mary Dorsey Brewster on a modest addition that expanded the kitchen, allowed for an eating area, and created a family room, all while maintaining the proportion and continuity of the home.

"We decided to have a modestly sized kitchen, and that allowed me to spend more of my budget on the cabinetry, appliances, countertops, and all the other finishing touches," Mary Beth says. "I have a smaller kitchen with a lot of personality."

The floor plan maximizes the utility and the beauty of the space. "We like to designate areas on the interior walls for tall appliances and dense storage," Brewster says. "This leaves the exterior walls free for windows and views."

It's a family-friendly layout, too. "We put a great deal of thought into designing a space for

# small kitchen



a large family,” Mary Beth says. “We made sure that areas the children would mostly use, such as the refrigerator, microwave, snack drawer, and table, had an independent pathway from the main cooking area. This way I can get meals ready without having the kids underfoot.”

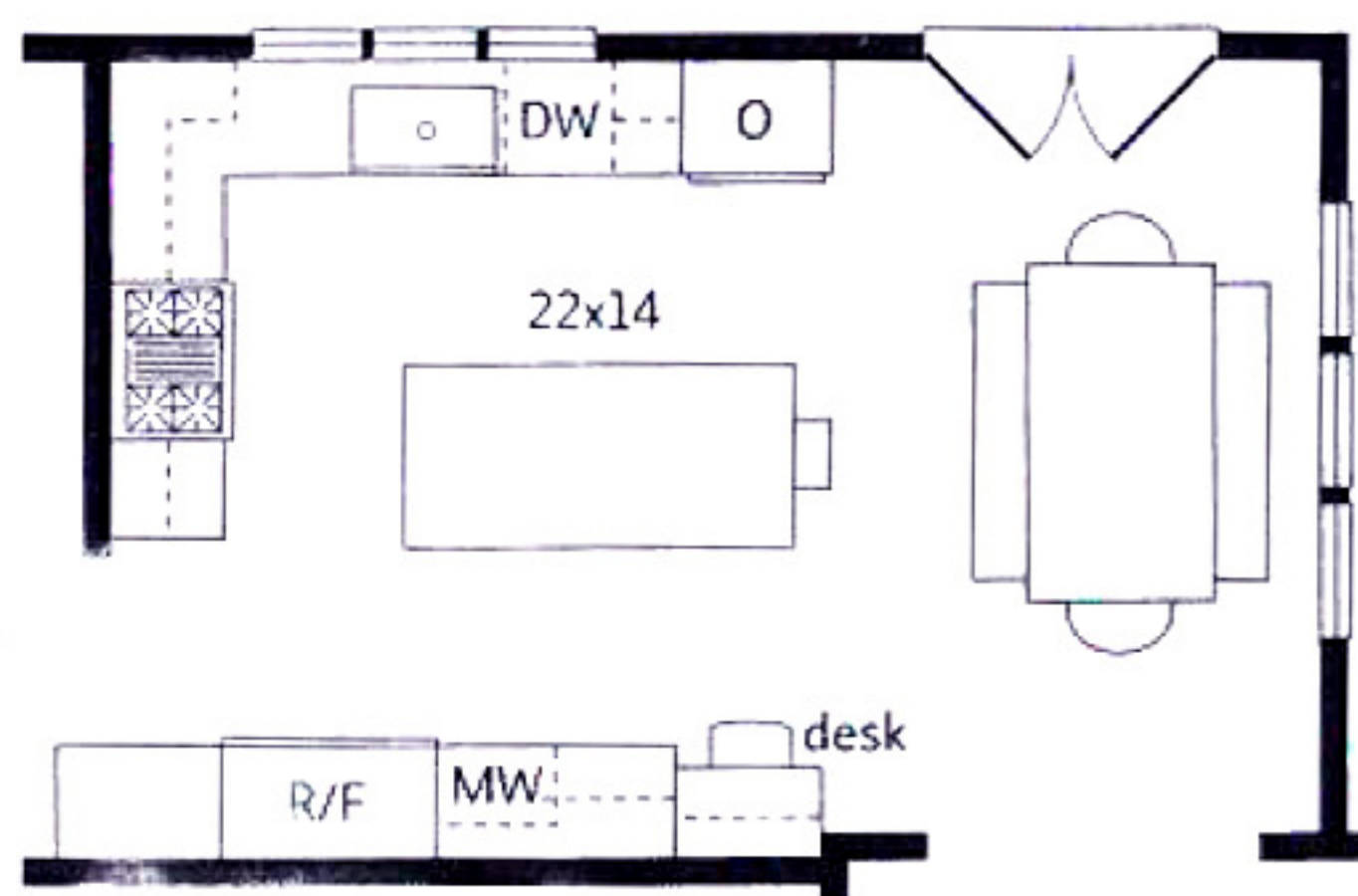
The new eating area fosters togetherness. It consists of a custom maple-finish trestle table with matching benches and black Windsor chairs. “I specifically chose not to have seating at the island because I wanted us to sit together for meals,” Mary Beth says. “Instead of feeding the children quickly at the island, and probably doing chores at the same time, they have our undivided attention at the table. In this busy world we live in, sitting for meals together is great family time.”

Benches let the children slide in and out safely without moving chairs. “Also, benches are so easy to clean,” Mary Beth says. “And you can imagine how often I am wiping them up.”

But such practicality doesn’t come at the expense of beauty. Interior designer Cindy Hayes says the kitchen follows the lead of the adjoining family room, where furnishings are traditional and stylish yet kid-tough.

The mix, which includes soapstone counters, subway tile, and hardwood flooring, also fits the home’s 1930s vintage. “I chose materials that might have been used during the time our house was built,” Mary Beth says. **KBI**

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**ABOVE:** Distressed-look cabinetry, soapstone countertops, and a subway-tile backsplash provide durable surfaces with a vintage look. **BELOW:** A desk with a message board and a microwave-equipped snack station by the refrigerator are two family-friendly amenities. **BELOW RIGHT:** Eating-area benches make it easy for five kids to slide in and out at meals.

