



Welcome to 2021, and if you are one of the many House Corporation Boards that participated in last month's 1848 Housing Conference, I am sure that you gleaned many useful pieces of information. I sat in on the round table discussion titled "Renovations, Rebuilds and Fundraising". It was a great session and sparked the idea for this article. I know many of you have heard me talk about food, meal plans, and Upper Crust, but this month I wanted to talk about your Commercial Kitchen.

As you contemplate any type of kitchen upgrade or new build – we only want to have to do this once in our volunteer lifetime. The kitchen cost variables can range all over depending on the extent of your upgrades or new construction; many range in the couple hundred thousand of dollars. I wanted to provide information about your options for commercial kitchen key components, kitchen layout options, and how layout and flow affects food service, plus I hope that when you work with your architect or designer this may help your process.

As we know, the kitchen and the dining room are the heart of the chapter house... or it runs a close second. What comes out of it (and how quickly it comes out) makes or breaks the meal experience for your members. A commercial kitchen's layout and key components can determine how smoothly it functions. When the kitchen is put together haphazardly, it can become an obstacle for the kitchen staff. In a poorly designed kitchen, staff can't be as efficient because they worry about bumping into each other. A successful commercial kitchen layout is easy to use, meets your chapter needs, and enables the kitchen staff to deliver amazing food and a great brotherhood experience.

Strategic design makes a kitchen functional and safe. The right commercial kitchen layout enables your kitchen staff to do their best work safely and efficiently. However, there is no one kitchen layout that's better than the rest. Your ideal kitchen layout is entirely dependent on your kitchen space's size and shape – context is everything. You should never force a kitchen layout type into a space that wasn't designed for it.

Before designing a commercial kitchen space, your architect/designer is going to take into account the needs that the kitchen must fulfill and the equipment associated with those needs. When you know what components need to fit into the space from the beginning of the design process, your architect will be able to design your commercial kitchen layout more effectively.

The 5 components of a commercial kitchen are:

1. **Storage**
2. **Washing Station**
3. **Food Preparation**
4. **Cooking Station**
5. **Service area**

Storage

Your kitchen will store a variety of items including cooking tools (utensils, sheet pans, pots, etc.), food (produce, dairy, meat, frozen, dry goods), place settings (glasses, bowls, plates, silverware, etc.), and chemicals/cleaning. Your kitchen will need separate storage units for each of these needs, such as a refrigerator for perishable foods, a pantry, etc.

Washing Station

A lot of cleaning goes on in a commercial kitchen to ensure the safety of the food that's being served and the dishes that it's served on. It is recommended and, depending on your health codes, required, to create a separate washing station for food and for dishes. Your washing station will need a commercial dishwashing machine, sinks and drying racks.

Food Preparation

A commercial kitchen may have several food preparation areas depending on what kind of food you are serving and the space that you have in the kitchen. The food prep section of your kitchen consists of counter space, cutting tools, and storage containers. Place food prep zones near a refrigerator so your staff can quickly and safely store raw ingredients until they are ready to be used.

Cooking Station

Your kitchen will need quite a bit of cooking equipment to execute your menu (once again a great time to bring in your food provider as they are cooking the meals). Most kitchens have gas range-oven combinations, commercial fryers, commercial hood systems, and some specialized cooking appliances.

Serving Area

A commercial kitchen's service area is used for plating dishes (in our COVID world), placing food in serving buffets, etc. Place your service area as close to the kitchen as possible so the staff is able to refill as needed quickly and efficiently.

There are **4** basic types of commercial kitchen layouts in a fraternity or sorority house, and many are a combination of 1 or more of the layouts. The commercial kitchen layout types are:

1. **Assembly line layout**
2. **Island layout**
3. **Zone-style layout**
4. **Galley layout**

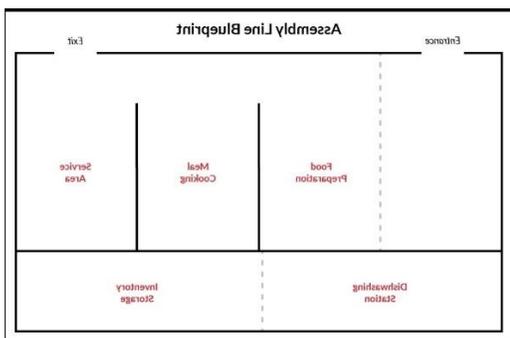
Assembly line layout

The assembly line configuration consists of a central row or island that starts with food prep and ends with a completed item that is ready to be served.

The benefits of the assembly line layout:

This commercial kitchen layout facilitates the production of lots of the same type of dish over and over again. The assembly line works best with multiple cooks who are each responsible for one part of the food production process.

Assembly blueprint:



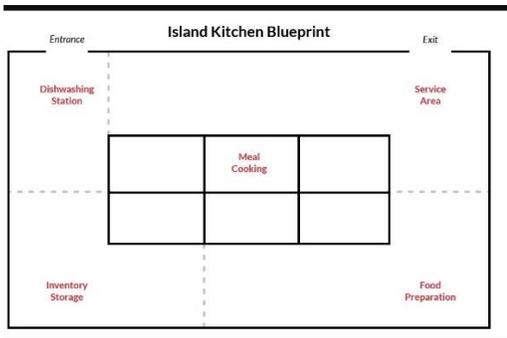
Island layout

The island commercial kitchen layout starts with the ring layout and adds a central preparation or cooking station. For example, a kitchen may have storage units, washing stations, and food prep counters along its perimeter, and cooking equipment in its center.

The benefits of the island layout:

With a central "command center" or passthrough point for all meals, the island configuration facilitates staff communication and executive chef supervision.

Island blueprint



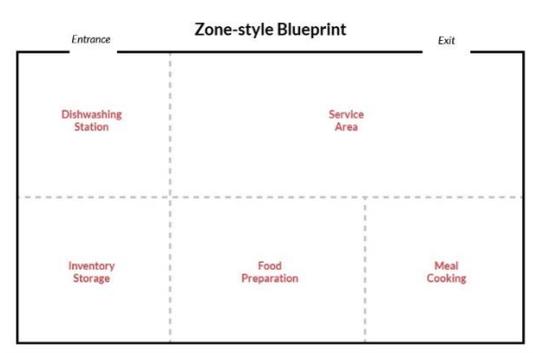
Zone-style layout

The station layout creates separate zones for each type of activity that goes on in the kitchen or for each kind of dish that is prepared in it. For example you could have a soup/salad station, baking station, etc.

The benefits of the zone-style layout:

The station layout keeps the kitchen organized and allows different types of dishes to be prepared at the same time. This layout helps the staff to divide and conquer. However, if your space is small you should avoid the station-based configuration as it doesn't allow for multi-tasking.

Zone-style blueprint



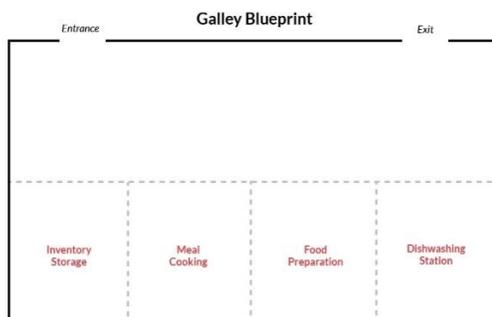
Galley layout

In the galley layout, all stations and equipment are on the perimeter of the kitchen. In a very tight space, kitchen equipment is placed along only parallel walls,

The benefits of the galley layout:

If your kitchen is large enough to have a ring layout with employ space in the center, you can have multiple cooks in the kitchen and they can easily rotate to work multiple stations at once. In a very small space, the galley kitchen is the only option that space allows.

Galley blueprint



If you are renovating, rebuilding or have basic kitchen questions, please join us in **April** for a zoom call, facilitated by Bob Tye, Director of Operations for Upper Crust, where we will discuss the kitchen function in more detail and you can ask questions. In his past, Bob has owned many restaurants and nightclubs, and has helped fraternities and sororities with design question, equipment needs and more. All of this is offered to our Phi Gamma Delta chapters as part of our National Partnership with 1848 Housing.

If you have questions about your kitchen and the current COVID restrictions, feel free to contact Upper Crust Food Service at the information below. If you are interested in receiving a quote about food service for this upcoming Fall 2021, please reach out to Shana Smith at the contact information below, Shana is available via Zoom or phone.

If you want food service COVID-19 information, **please visit our website for more of our COVID-19 resources:**

<https://www.uppercrustfoodservice.com/COVID/>.

Upper Crust Food Service is the preferred food service provider of 1848 Properties and Phi Gamma Delta. For more information and a no obligation proposal, visit www.uppercrustfoodservice.com/phi-gamma-delta/ or email Shana Smith, Director of Strategic Partnerships, at shana@uppercrustfoodservice.com.