



PERFECTING YOUR INDOOR-OUTDOOR SPACES

A strong, seamless connection between the inside of your home and the outside is key to enjoying the best of both. With purposeful planning and clever design cues, blended living is easy – we show you how

Words: **Yvette Filer**

Want to feel a greater connection to the outdoors? After months of staying at home, you wouldn't be the only one. With long days and higher temperatures, all we want to do is fling open the doors and allow the sunlight and fresh air to flood through our interiors. "This year more than ever before, so many of us have been enjoying the connection between the kitchen and the garden and the utter delight of making a little haven where you can grow a few vegetables," says Helen Parker, creative director at Devol. "There is nothing quite like the thrill you get from nurturing your own produce, preparing and eating it, it is one of life's simplest and most wonderful pleasures," she adds.

With many of us dabbling in growing our own herbs, fruits and vegetables at home, or simply pottering in or enjoying the garden, it's no wonder more kitchens are being designed with a deliberate connection to the outside. The best place to start the process is with the location of your scheme – if your kitchen is situated to the back of your house you can very obviously link the two through doors or plenty of glazing. "Installing bi-fold or tri-fold designs can help open up the entire wall for a flawless flow into your garden," suggests Tom Howley, creative director at Tom Howley. "Bi-folds or glass extensions open up your whole home and, let the light flood in all year round, even when they're closed," he adds. But while it may feel like the obvious option, careful planning is needed when adding significant amounts of glazing to your home. The main concern is that while we enjoy the sunshine when it's here, it's not an all-year occurrence in the UK so you'll need to ensure the glazing is of a good standard so your home is well insulated for winter. Likewise, making sure you have enough appropriate shading is worthwhile, otherwise you run the risk of turning

your kitchen into an unbearable greenhouse on hot days – not the type of indoor-outdoor connection any of us are after.

Aside from glazing, there are other ways you can strengthen the link between your kitchen and garden. If you plan on featuring an island, position it so you can face towards the outdoors so you can take in the views while you prepare food. Make sure there's a clear walkway to the patio area where you could set up an al fresco dining space, too. Where possible, having a level step out into the garden will help create a seamless look. You can enhance this further by choosing the same flooring for both the inside and the out – but remember to pick a material that is non-slip and can withstand all weather conditions, such as porcelain. Alternatively a complementary stone or outdoor tile can also work nicely.

Also think about features that may be used both indoors and be exposed to the elements. "As the trend for connecting the indoors and outdoors has increased in popularity, so has our interest in more natural materials," explains Hege Lundh, marketing director at Lundhs Real Stone. "A natural stone worktop, for example, will offer a feeling of organic beauty both indoors and outdoors, and perform just as well in either space. Homeowners are searching to incorporate this feeling of 'raw nature' throughout and want their homes to feel organic and in touch with the outdoors while not compromising on any functionality or style."

More subtle design cues may come in the form of colours – either using the same palette throughout the spaces for a fluid transition, or by using natural tones and textures such as greens and woods that appear outside. Finally, in a more practical manner, don't forget to invest in lighting and heating outside – these will only help you to enjoy those summer nights that little bit longer. Turn over for lots of inspiration... >







In this bespoke space created by Kitchen Design Studio, The Myers Touch and AR Design Studio, warm oak Siematic cabinetry complements the ceiling, as well as the wooded area in full view.

below In this impressive rear extension by architecture and design studio Levitate, bifold doors pull back completely, providing uninterrupted views of the garden from the kitchen.



Photography: David Butler



The layout of this large kitchen in Cheshire using Tom Howley's Hartford range in Nightshade works well, as the island faces out towards the courtyard – so whoever is cooking can appreciate the views and interact with guests sitting in the outdoor dining area. Prices for kitchens from Tom Howley's Hartford range start from £20,000. [KBB](#)