



Feng Shui

Feng shui (pronounced fung shway) concerns the art of placement—arranging your home in a way that enhances its good energy, or, Ch'i (pronounced chee). Translating to “wind and water,” this ancient Chinese discipline was first used by royals some 15 centuries ago to harness the land's positive energy and bring wealth to the kingdom.

A city constructed on ground that carried positive Ch'i would find its people nourished, while burying an emperor in a place of negative Ch'i would cause catastrophe. From this tradition, feng shui later found its way into the general population as a guide for selecting home plots.

Today, feng shui has entered the castles of the Western world—yours. Your home is your palace and the kitchen is king—and both can be dramatically improved with feng shui. Have you ever rearranged your couch or moved a vase of flowers from your table to the counter and felt like you were in a new, refreshed room? That change in mood, energy, sensation—all components of Ch'i—owes itself to placement, the basis of feng shui.

What does that mean for your kitchen? A lot. The kitchen is one of the most important rooms in the home for generating good Ch'i. Food nourishes us, leading to improved health, which allows us to work harder and achieve greater prosperity. Because its preparation occurs in the kitchen, the room's Ch'i affects your food and, in turn, your overall well-being. Small feng shui changes, like freeing your space of distracting clutter and choosing round dining tables to best circulate mealtime Ch'i, can improve your happiness and functionality within your culinary corner, which, according to feng shui, will bring wealth and health to you and your family.

With those kinds of promises, why not give it a try? At the very least, you'll have experimented with a creative alternative to more traditional design solutions.

Feng Shui: General Principles

Our tip-of-the-iceberg feng shui principles provide a simplified, Westernized take on a very complex discipline. They dive just deep enough to shed a little why and how on the intriguing world of feng shui:

1. Everything—people, places, and things—is alive with Ch'i. That means it's important to evaluate your material possessions. Is the high-backed chair in your living room stylish but uncomfortable? Does your grandmother's jewelry box bring back positive memories?
2. Ch'i connects everything. The memories and associations of people, places, and things affect you in positive and negative ways, as in the chair and the jewelry box.
3. Ch'i is always changing. A simple adjustment, like adding a pillow to the uncomfortable chair, or a more major change, like replacing it all together, can instantly change the Ch'i of your home.
4. Changing one's Ch'i can directly influence the connection between your home and happiness, health, and prosperity. Enhancing your home's Ch'i can lead to stronger relationships, better career opportunities, or a financial boost.
5. You cannot divide your life into isolated components. The quality of each aspect of your life impacts the others.
6. Ch'i is stimulated by change. Feng shui must be accompanied by a willingness to change, ridding yourself of situations, possessions, and arrangements that create negative energy. Similarly, there

is no “end result” to feng shui. Your kitchen’s positive Ch’i could turn stagnant down the road, signaling the need for another change.

7. Safety and comfort trump style. Feng shui is not about Asian-influenced furnishings or an abundance of wind chimes and waterfalls. Finding harmony in your life means creating an environment that you feel welcome and safe in.

Source: The Western Guide to Feng Shui: Room By Room, by Terah Kathryn Collins

Feng Shui: Kitchen Tips

Feng shui masters spend their lives studying the discipline, aligning themselves with various approaches such as black hat sect, traditional, or intuitive feng shui. But you can instantly become a “kitchen master” with our quick and easy feng shui tips for your home:

- Pay attention to your stove. Food nourishes you, affecting your ability to work and earn money, and the Ch’i of your cooking area will affect your meal. Keep the burners clean and use each one equally to illustrate the movement of good fortune in your life.
- The cook’s back should never face the kitchen entrance. If the cook is unaware of who enters and exists, he or she could be startled, transferring negative Ch’i into the food. Place the cooktop on an island so that the cook can face the door. If the cook’s back must turn away from the entrance, hang a mirror on the backsplash or place a reflective object (like a tea kettle or a stainless steel utensil holder) on or beside the stove. This will allow the cook to remain aware of all activity.
- The stove should not be placed under a window. Wind currents could pull the good Ch’i out of your food.
- Elements of fire and water clash, leading to bad Ch’i. Design your kitchen with distance between the two—your stove should not be adjacent to your refrigerator or sink. If such a placement is unavoidable, add a nourishing wood element—like a plant, butcher block, or wooden spoon—to turn the opposition into a cyclical relationship.
- Plentiful food indicates prosperity. Hang pictures of fruits or vegetables on your kitchen’s walls to increase the sensation of abundance. Mirrors by your eating area, stove, or preparation will “double” your food as well, increasing wealth and health.
- Clutter crowds your kitchen’s surfaces, often causing frustration. This inhibits the cook’s ability to prepare nourishing food. Keep all surfaces clear, storing all food and appliances not used on a daily basis out of sight.
- Apply the same order to your pantry and cabinets. Broken items, empty boxes and containers, and unused food should be donated or discarded.
- Keep in mind that Ch’i connects everything. Do you want to be linked to rotting fruit or unvalued knick-knacks? Discard, discard!
- By the same token, surround yourself with meaningful things with positive Ch’i. Keep seashells gathered during a special family vacation on your windowsill, or display fresh flowers in an antique vase.
- Keep trash and recycling centers out of sight. Garbage rarely signifies health and prosperity!
- Don’t forget safety, an important component of feng shui. Knives should always be stored out of sight.
- Sharp corners can be both unsafe and uncomfortable—how often have you banged your leg on a jutting table corner or squirmed in a Ch’i-depleting chair? Choose rounded corners over squared

- ones for tables, countertops, and chairs. Select wood over pointed glass tables. Hide and protect existing corners with plants and cushions.
- When selecting your dining table, choose a softer, safer wood model over a pointed glass one. Oval and round tables are preferred over square and rectangular ones as they promote good Ch'i circulation.
 - Nourishment is as much a product of the cook as the food itself. The cook's focus and spirits are transferred to the food. Make every effort to structure your kitchen (and your life!) in a way that facilitates a relaxed, leisurely, and meditative cooking process.
 - Remember—negative feelings and events tarnish the quality of your life. As a “feng shui rule of thumb,” surround yourself with whatever makes you comfortable and safe.

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