



# Linked in

Connecting the outdoor space to the interior of your home will add bags of light even on the cloudiest of British summer days

Report: Ysanne Brooks

**Previous page (p41):** The use of similar tones both inside and out in this side-return extension helps to give continuity. The designer has cleverly created zones to give definition to the large open-plan space. Shown is the Urbo handleless bespoke kitchen in cream, high-gloss lacquer and walnut veneer. Prices for a Roundhouse kitchen start at £30,000.

**Below:** In this Woodstock kitchen, oak veneer coordinates beautifully with the room's exposed beams, while the expanse of glazing along one side provides excellent views into the garden. Woodstock kitchens start from around £30,000.

**A**rranging a kitchen layout to capitalise on garden views is a common design solution, but those who really want to make the most of their outdoor space are going a step further. New-build extensions that are essentially glass-walled boxes or large expanses of glass doors added to an existing structure are both great ways to bring the outdoors in and vice versa. Using your garden space as an extension of your kitchen in this way will, of course, add light, but the benefits can go much further.

If done well, it will pull the two areas together, creating a seamless flow between the kitchen and

garden and giving the illusion of space. Add a dining space into the mix and you have the perfect open-plan configuration for modern living. For families, it will create a room where everyone can gather and, more importantly, it will help parents keep an eye on the kids whether they're inside or out.

If you're building an extension then your architect will be able to help you plan the most efficient design and will advise whether or not you can build under 'permitted development' rules or if you'll need to obtain planning permission. If you're removing brick and mortar to add glass doors to an existing space, ►





**Above:** Spots above the island and a skylight in the angled ceiling of this kitchen extension by Holloways of Ludlow Professional Building Services help to welcome in the outdoors. The cabinetry, also by Holloways of Ludlow, is lacquer white and is topped with white Corian and contrasting Mink Caesarstone splashbacks and additional work surfaces. A kitchen from Holloways of Ludlow starts at £25,000.



**Left:** This glass and wood garden room has been added to the back of a modest-sized house as part of a total re-modelling scheme. The space serves as a light and spacious kitchen, dining room, summerhouse and sitting room. Projects from Westbury Garden Rooms start at £40,000.

then you'll need to ensure your lintels are strong enough to support the weight. If you're not sure then ask an architect or builder to advise you. As a general rule, the bigger the expanse of doors, the stronger the lintel must be.

### Design tricks

If you have room, a prep island with sink facing the outside is a great solution, as it will help to recreate the traditional 'washing up by the window' scenario. "Turn one end of the island unit into an informal dining or seating area so the view of the garden can also be enjoyed by your guests," says Richard Davonport of Davonport.

Try to coordinate colours and textures so the spaces are linked in some way. Matching work surface tones with your flooring provides a subtle visual link, while using similar fabrics for both outdoor and indoor furniture will give continuity too.

Remember that lots of light coming into the kitchen may mean some surfaces, particularly wooden cabinetry, will fade over time so try to factor this in when designing your space and keep vulnerable materials out of direct sunlight for as much of the time as possible. "When working with large expanses of glass, you need to be careful with how the light changes at different times of the day. It will come into the room at different angles during certain times and may highlight things not normally seen, such as patterns and markings on worktops," reveals John Stephens at Rencraft.

If your garden is overlooked, you might not want to open up the space too much, or you could end up feeling overexposed. In this case, you might want to use freestanding pieces of furniture to screen certain areas.

### Lighting

It's important not to overlook lighting, as it can be a key part of a successful indoor-outdoor scheme and should be planned in from the start. It can help to both link the spaces – by installing outdoor lighting for instance – and separate them, when you want to delineate between 'zones' such as eating, dining and relaxing as well as outdoor seating. Add task lights to illuminate prep areas when you need them and disguise them when you don't. Outdoor lights will help to recreate daylight, illuminating the garden and helping to avoid the common 'wall of black' problem that occurs when using large expanses of glass.

### Flooring

Consider how you want your kitchen to work with the outside. A great way to link the rooms is to use similar flooring both inside and out so that when the doors are open one appears to flow into the other. Make sure you think about tile finishes and thicknesses, though, as floors will need to be flush to avoid tripping hazards. Drainage is another important factor – external slots or grids may need to be fitted depending on the aspect and angle of your garden. It's best to speak to an expert to assess whether this will be necessary.

Outdoor tiles will need to withstand frost and are often thicker than indoor tiles so you'll need to take that into account when laying them to avoid a step up or down. If you want to match wooden flooring with decking, remember that over time sunlight will alter the colour of the planks so you will need to keep them well treated to maintain their colour. KBB

## Case study



**Designer:** (house) Dyer Grimes Architects/  
(kitchen) Matt Higgs of Chamber Furniture.

**Location:** Oxted, Surrey.

**The brief:** To create an open-plan kitchen-dining-living space in an award-winning new-build home.

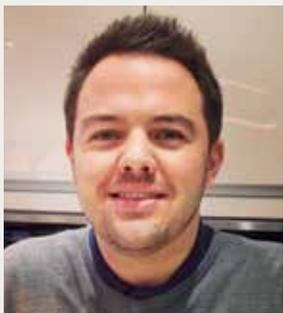
**Cost:** Prices start at £40,000 for a Chamber Furniture design.

**D**yer Grimes Architects was commissioned to create a striking and contemporary – and ultimately award-winning – house that appears to hover above the garden and outdoor swimming pool. Matt Higgs at Chamber Furniture was then asked to design a kitchen that would reflect the style of the house yet still work as a family kitchen. The book-matched American black walnut and pearlescent Mink grey lacquered kitchen is bold yet understated. It perfectly reflects the simplicity of the open space, which flows easily from inside the house to the garden, terrace and swimming pool beyond. "There is almost no distinction between the inside and outside spaces, especially when the doors are pulled right back," reveals Matt. "It's a perfect family and party house!"



Outdoor lights will help to recreate daylight, illuminating the garden and helping to avoid the common ‘wall of black’ problem that occurs when using large expanses of glass.

## Case study



**Kitchen designer:**  
Andrew Moore at  
Rusper Interiors.

**Location:** Purley, Surrey.

**The brief:** To create a clean and contemporary kitchen that uses an expanse of glass to bring the outdoors in.

**Cost of project:** A similar design would cost from £30,000.

The corner site allowed for an elegant solution in the shape of aluminium-framed sliding doors, and the absence of any supporting poles in the corner helps open up the space completely. The couple have two active young children so creating a room that flowed seamlessly was important. The tracks for the sliding glass doors sit flush with the floor so there is no step up for little feet to trip over.

Using similar colours and textures both inside and out helps to create a family living space that flows from the kitchen to a soft seating area and on to outside seating and the garden. Cool worktops in New Diamante Quarella quartz and pale floor tiles sandwich the glossy Magnolia White AlnoArt Pro cabinetry, while stainless-steel appliances match the steel-coloured frame of the glass doors.

“The use of glass in the kitchen gives outstanding reflections to bring the outdoors in,” reveals Andrew Moore at Rusper Interiors. “The stone worktop is very similar in material and colour to that used in the paving outside so again combines the kitchen with the outside area almost seamlessly.”





**Above:** Twinned with timber-framed folding doors, the glass ceiling of this kitchen extension adds heaps of light even on the most gloomy of summer days. Woodmans bespoke bi-fold oak doors are priced from £5900, while a Harvey Jones Shaker-style painted kitchen is priced from £18,000.

**Left:** It's not just smaller kitchens that can be given a sense of space with glass doors. This large open-plan kitchen opens up onto a small decked garden via folding doors that, when opened, make the two areas appear as one and the garden feel larger as a result. Kitchens from Cue & Co start at £25,000.

## Types of doors

From traditional hinged French windows to modern panels of glass that glide open horizontally along tracks recessed into the floor, there are a variety of solutions to link outside and in.

**1 Sliding doors** have been employed across the entire width of this design to let the kitchen and outside space do the talking. The cabinetry colours in a warm and natural palette were selected to complement the flooring, which in turn links beautifully with the garden. Shown is Modulnova Twenty handleless cabinetry in Corda and Tortora satin lacquer. Modulnova kitchens start at £25,000 and are available in the UK from DesignSpaceLondon.

**2 Curved doors** fold out like wings when open and still provide an almost panoramic view of the garden when closed. The white lacquer units and stainless-steel appliances inside not only reflect the modern feel of the extension but also help to bounce light around the space. Glazed doors as part of an extension by Barnaby Gunning Architects would cost around £40,000. Kitchens from Neil Lerner start from £30,000.

**3 Bi-fold doors** that concertina fully to fold to one side of the doorway are a stunning solution. The sleek lines of the white cabinetry in this Molten kitchen draw the eye towards the opening, while the bold blue worktops and splashback are a nod to blue skies on summer days. Price on application.

**4 French windows** work beautifully with the more traditional in-frame style of this 1909 kitchen. Painted in a colour that complements the pale stone colour of the cabinetry and work surfaces, it creates a cohesive yet unobtrusive link with the garden. Adding to the light the doors bring to the room are glass window panels that sit either side of the doorway and a pitched glass ceiling. 1909 kitchens start at £20,000 and are available from 1909 retailers.

**5 Conservatory-style doors** in a simple white finish are an excellent alternative if a whole wall of glass is a little too contemporary for your taste. Leaded panels above the main windows and doors add a decorative touch. By positioning the dining table by the windows, the garden can be enjoyed all year round, whatever the weather. Shown is the Vermont kitchen from Underwood, with prices starting at £30,000.

**6 Pocket doors** slide away into an insulated cavity pocket in the building wall and open up on the corner with no supporting post. This, coupled with the flush floor track at the base of the sliding system, creates a step-free, seamless transition between the contemporary kitchen and the large rear garden. The frames were powder coated black to RAL 9005 to match the dark frames of the windows upstairs. Sliding doors cost from around £18,000 at IQGlass.





**Below:** Opting for sliding glazed doors along an entire wall in the kitchen really brings the outdoors inside. The wood grain of the timber on the cabinetry of this Canterbury kitchen from Davonport adds to the sense of going back to nature. Prices start from £35,000 for a complete kitchen.



**Below:** Continuing the exposed brick feature wall through the glass into the kitchen is a great way to connect the two spaces. It is also a nod to one of this season's most on-trend looks – industrial. Prices start at £21,000 for a Metris Wing Island kitchen.



## SourceBook

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