

## #OneRoomChallenge: Downtown Chicago Urban Kitchen Rejuvenation

**\*\*UPDATE: Our Chicago urban kitchen remodel is complete! Check out the [One Room Challenge reveal post here](#).]**



Downtown Chicago Condo Kitchen BEFORE our Remodel

Good Morning! I've just woken up from a 2 year blog break! While I do feel guilty that I haven't given this creative outlet attention in way to long, I'm excited to share that in that time, I was ramping up my career at an incredible company, Salesforce, meeting and becoming engaged to my soon-to-be husband, traveling, and living life! We all need a break sometimes and looking back now, I'm glad I took it! Luckily, my blog didn't go anywhere and I remembered the login, so here we are! To what do we owe the occasion of coming out of blog hibernation? Well, turns out when it rains it pours, and so, why not remodel a condo while planning a wedding and starting a new job, right?!

Yep, that's right. A recent mishap with a new HVAC installation-gone-wrong resulted in water pooling in said appliance, and subsequently, surfacing up from under our wood floors. If you've ever had a water problem or flood in your home affecting engineered wood floors, or hardwood floors, you know that this must be addressed immediately to prevent all kinds of deterioration and even health problems (no thank you, mold!). And so, our condo with engineered wood floors throughout all rooms needed to have all. of. the. floor. replaced. To do this, we needed to move out all of our belongings, relocate for about 7 weeks. My fiancé and I took this opportunity to replace our kitchen cabinetry, backsplash, expand and level our island for more cooking prep space, and re-arrange some appliances to maximize storage and ventilation above our stove.

While moving out 2 months before our wedding wasn't in our plan, we had some fun remodeling our home to be updated, more our style, and feeling like us.

And while The Rebeccammendations was all about entertaining, it's only fitting that I share what our kitchen, the key entertaining space in our downtown Chicago condo, evolution looks like! And, when I came across the 6-week room makeover blog event: [#OneRoomChallenge](#), hosted by Calling it Home and HouseBeautiful magazine, I knew this was the perfect opportunity to wake up my sleepy blog and give you a peek into what entertaining life looks like today for me and my better half! Stay tuned for a weekly update over the next 6 weeks to the reveal of our final product!



When we learned of our water and floor issue and that we'd need to move out of our condo, we didn't quite know where to begin with our new kitchen design. Overall, I followed the lead of our contractors, did lots of research by visiting home design stores in Chicago and got advice from each employee I talked to, and relied on the experts for each element.

First, I began by looking at cabinetry designs, getting initial inspiration for white shaker cabinets (cabinets with a picture frame-like border) at [Studio 41](#). Here was the sample that sparked that decision.



White shaker cabinet display at Studio 41 gave us an idea of the cabinet look that we wanted.

We ultimately worked with a family-recommended cabinetry expert to land on [Ultracraft](#) soft white shaker cabinets in Melted Brie

color for the wall, and Coastal Grey for the island. We asked for samples everywhere we went so we could match colors with the other kitchen design elements like paint, backsplash tile, and countertops.



We took these Ultracraft cabinet color samples with us to match tile and paint colors.

Our cabinetry expert, [J & D Whirlpool and Bath](#), recommended we take all of our samples and put them together to make sure we liked the color combinations. Pictures don't suffice because colors can look different at different times of day and in different lighting. Ask for samples and take them with you!

Here, we can see the color combo was starting to come together! White cabinetry sample left, wood sample middle, gray island cabinetry bottom. We nixed the top right gray cabinetry sample.



Putting the cabinet and floor color samples together helped us create a cohesive look.

For the floors (the reason we took this project on in the first place!), we found a sample at Home Depot of the color that we wanted. Our contractors color-matched for us and located the engineered wood floors (required in our building for sound control) in the quantities needed.



Here was our first look at the engineered wood floor panels our contractors located for us to match the color of the sample we provided.

So, to recap, for our remodel, Step 1 was finding the basics, picking coordinating colors, gathering samples, and making our selections. Stay tuned for Step 2 next week!