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JUSTIN TSUCALAS



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Closing a passageway to the home's entry hall made space for a pantry, which has a cabinetry-style door and is equipped with electricity inside for small appliances.

Kristen Abrams and her 3-year-old daughter, Kate



Removing a large portion of the wall between the kitchen and dining room created a physical and visual connection between the two spaces. An I beam supports the ceiling above the 9-foot span. "It's not an eat-in kitchen, but feels like an extension," Padilla says. The new counter space doubles as a food prep surface and a bar for serving.

Despite losing 2 feet, the dining room is still ample at 11 feet by 14½ feet. "It's our only table and our everything table," Abrams says of the dining room table, which the family uses for meals as well as kids' crafts. A former breakfast nook beyond the dining room has become a play area for the children. The wall color and built-in storage cabinets are consistent with those in the kitchen and dining room, creating a uniform look throughout the whole open space.

BUILT-IN BEAUTY
Kristen and Ben Abrams loved the location and vintage charm of their 85-year-old semidetached row home in Upper Northwest D.C., but the cramped kitchen wasn't working for their growing family, which includes two small children. The couple lived in the house for five years before remodeling. "I took the time to be thoughtful about what we needed, and the look I wanted," says Kristen, who hired Aidan Design in Silver Spring to help her find creative ways to maximize storage and make her vision a reality.
The old kitchen was small, and had five openings—windows, doors and a hallway—which didn't leave much space for cabinets. The solution was to borrow 2 feet from the dining room and close some of the openings to improve the flow. "If you're short on kitchen space, look to the adjoining rooms," says designer Megan Padilla of Aidan Design. "Built-ins always make sense in a dining room."

 Aidan Design



Abrams' good china and crystal are displayed in glass-front cabinets, while the lower half holds serving pieces and mixing bowls. The coffee maker lives on the counter at the opposite end of the dining room, above the cabinets where the pots and pans are stowed. "Everything is just a few steps away," Abrams says.



Abrams had a very clear vision about the look of her new kitchen—white Shaker-style cabinets, honed Carrara marble countertops, and a white subway tile backsplash. "It's organized, there's a place for everything, and it's easy to keep clean," she says. "It has really changed the way we live."