



How to Install a Complete Kitchen Sink

Modern sinks are made in a variety of materials, including stainless steel, porcelain on cast iron, porcelain on steel, acrylic and composites. Most kitchen sinks are self-rimming, though rim-types still exist and under mount models are popular for use with granite and marble countertops. Standard double bowl units usually measure 33" x 22" overall, the most common single bowl types are 25" x 22".

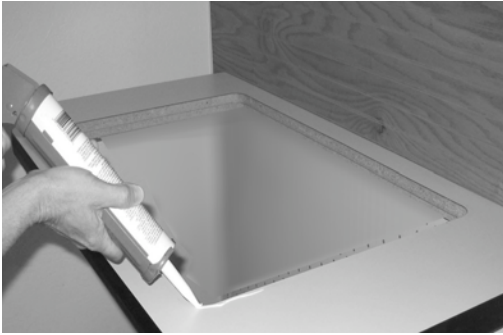


1. To install a self rimming sink in a new countertop, use the template provided with the sink, or turn the sink upside down on the counter top in an area that will permit installation within the cabinet framing. Draw a line around the outside of the sink with a mark that can be easily removed later. Draw a cut-out line $\frac{3}{8}$ " inside this perimeter line (this distance may differ depending on the model of the sink; make sure you check the manufacturer's instructions). Drill a $\frac{3}{8}$ " hole so the outside of it is on the line and make the cut-out using a fine-toothed saber saw or router. Masking tape on the countertop will keep the saw from marring the surface. Support the cut-out section as you near completion of the cut to avoid breaking the counter material. Place the sink into the cut-out to check for proper fit.

2. Now is a good time to mount the faucet, strainer baskets and any accessories to the sink. It is much easier to work on the sink at a table or workbench before installing it in the countertop. Seal strainer baskets in place with plumbers putty if your sink is steel, stainless steel or cast iron. Use silicone caulk for acrylic or composite materials. If available, use a spanner wrench and basket strainer wrench to install these. You can improvise by using a large pipe wrench with the jaws open wide to tighten the large nut and the handles of a pair of pliers to keep the basket from turning. Attach the faucet supply lines to the faucet.



3. Connect the continuous waste assembly to the strainers. If you're installing a food disposal, this step will have to wait until the sink is mounted in the countertop. But if you just have 2 strainers, it's easier to assemble the drainage plumbing interconnecting the two bowls before the sink is installed in the countertop.



4. For stainless steel sinks, run a bead of silicone or acrylic tub caulk on the countertop inside the edge of the sink to seal the sink to the countertop. Place the assembled sink into the hole in the countertop. Attach the rim clips and tighten them evenly to hold the sink tight to the countertop. Avoid over tightening as this can damage the edge of the sink. Cast iron, acrylic and composite sinks are also sealed with a bead of silicone caulk or tub seal. Two people will be required to set the sink if it is a cast iron unit. Feather the caulk out along the edge of the sink with a finger dipped in denatured alcohol or water if using a siliconized acrylic tub sealant. Note that cast iron sinks don't use rim clips to hold them in place, the combination of sealant and sheer weight does the job.

5. Install the food disposal and waste assembly pipes at this time. Insure the pipes meet squarely and are not under undue pressure to connect to each other as this will cause leaks. Connect the faucet supply lines to the shut-off valves under the sink. Modern braided stainless steel flex lines have washers built into them and do not require teflon tape or thread sealing compounds.

6. Align the P-trap to the outlet of the waste assembly. Connect by tightening the slip joint nuts enough to prevent leaking. Proper lengths and angles are important so the fittings won't leak. The trap arm may need to be cut with a fine tooth hacksaw or lengthened with a slip joint extension. All slip joints should fit squarely with no undue pressure on the joints.



7. Remove the aerator from the faucet. Turn the faucet to the full "On" position and open both supply valves fully to flush the lines of any debris. Check for leaks in both the supply lines and drain pipes while the water is running and after it is turned off. Reinstall the faucet aerator.