

Planning a new kitchen extension is an exciting way to add value, functionality, and style to your home. But working out how much extra you should budget specifically for the kitchen add-on can be tricky. After all, your extension will need groundworks, structural work, finishes, and then your kitchen – all with varying costs at play. And if you're based in Rugby or the wider Midlands, your labour costs will differ compared to London, too.

In this guide, I'll break down the key factors affecting kitchen extension costs in 2026, how trade-offs between single-storey and two-storey extensions impact your budget, and give you practical insights on planning permissions, permitted development rules, and conservation areas—particularly relevant to homeowners near Rugby.

Setting Your New Kitchen Extension Budget: The Big Picture

When people ask me, "How much extra should I budget for a new kitchen in an extension?", my first question is always: **Are you including VAT in your quote?** More often than not, quotes come without clear VAT inclusion, and that can cause nasty surprises down the line. Once that's clear, a typical kitchen add-on can cost anywhere between **£15,000 to £35,000**, but it really depends on your quality of fixtures, size, and finish level.

To give you a more structured overview, let's split your budget into two parts:



- **Extension build and construction costs**, including groundwork, structure, and finishes
- **Kitchen fit-out costs**, covering cabinetry, appliances, surfaces, and fittings

Extension Build Costs: What to Expect in 2026

Based on my 12 years estimating in the Midlands, particularly around Rugby, the average per-square-metre construction costs for a residential kitchen extension in 2026 typically range from:

Extension Type	Average Cost per m ² (Labour & Materials)	Notes
Single-storey extension	£1,700 – £2,300	Includes foundations, walls, roof, windows, doors
Two-storey extension	£2,200 – £3,000	Higher structural complexity, extra labour

Remember though, the Midlands labour cost advantage means these prices are typically 15-25% lower than equivalent London projects. Rugby's local trades are competitively priced but still offer great quality—a big plus if you're seeking value without compromising standards.

Single-Storey vs Two-Storey Extensions: Trade-Offs for Your Kitchen Budget

Choosing between a single-storey and two-storey kitchen extension affects not just overall costs, but also how your kitchen is laid out and integrated with the rest of your home.

- **Single-storey extensions** are often preferred when you want to keep a larger garden and don't need extra bedrooms upstairs. They tend to be simpler in design and quicker to build, so the extension build cost per m² is lower, helping your kitchen add-on budget stretch further.
- **Two-storey extensions** allow you to add bedrooms upstairs, but added structural complexity increases build time and cost. This means less room in your budget for a high-end kitchen fit-out unless your overall budget increases accordingly.

Whichever route you choose, you'll want to keep a mental checklist for potential groundworks surprises:

1. Subsoil surprises (clay, clay with shrink/swell potential, or worse)
2. Existing drainage layouts and how they tie into new builds
3. Access constraints—Rugby's interwar and postwar semis often have tight driveways and tricky side access, adding cost
4. Party wall agreements if building close to neighbour boundaries

Planning Permission, Permitted Development & Conservation Areas

Before you fall in love with a design and kitchen showroom, it's vital to check your project's planning status. This impacts your timeline and budget—a refusal can plunge you into redesigns and delays, which always add costs.

Permitted Development vs Full Planning Permission

Many single-storey kitchen extensions fall under *Permitted Development Rights*, meaning you may not need full planning permission if you meet certain size and design criteria. However, you still must notify local planning authorities, and sometimes a **Lawful Development Certificate** (LDC) is advisable. The Rugby Borough Council LDC process is straightforward but requires careful submission to avoid issues. <https://rugbyobserver.co.uk/lifestyle/how-much-does-a-home-extension-cost-the-2026-prices-rugby-homeowners-need-to-know/>

If you live in a conservation area or your property is a listed building, rules tighten considerably. Permitted development rights are curtailed, often requiring full planning permission even for relatively modest kitchen extensions.

How does this impact your kitchen extension budget?

- **Planning cost:** Budget £200 to £400 for submitting planning applications or LDCs, plus architect or planning consultant fees if needed.
- **Design revisions:** Extra costs if permission is conditional
- **Time delays:** Longer waiting periods can increase project management costs

How to Use the HomeOwners Alliance Cost of Moving Calculator for Budgeting

Building a new kitchen extension might be your solution if you're weighing whether to move to a bigger home or improve your current one. The HomeOwners Alliance cost of moving calculator can help you compare the true costs of moving versus extending.

Keep in mind, while moving costs can be substantial, extensions allow you to customise your space. And if you factor in the kitchen add-on budget of around £15,000 to £35,000, it may well compare favourably with those moving costs over time.

Estimating Your Kitchen Add-On: What Does a £15,000 to £35,000 Budget Get You?

Depending on the scale and specification, here's a rough breakdown of what your kitchen add-on budget might cover within your extension:

Budget Range What You Might Expect £15,000 - £20,000

- Standard shaker-style units
- Laminate or basic quartz worktops
- Basic integrated appliances (hob, oven, fridge)
- Modest lighting and tiling

£20,000 - £30,000

- High-quality cabinetry in painted finishes
- Quartz or granite worktops
- Mid to high-end integrated appliances (dishwasher, microwave)
- Feature lighting, under-cabinet lights
- Glass splashbacks or stylish tiling

£30,000 - £35,000+

- Custom or bespoke units
- Luxury worktop materials
- Premium appliances (wine fridge, warming drawers)
- Architect-designed lighting plans
- Designer handles, taps, and bespoke finishes

While exploring kitchen costs online, you might have seen tools like Checkatrade kitchen cost add estimates. These can help you cross-check your quotes but watch out for lump-sum quotations without clear stage breakdowns—that's one pet peeve of mine. Always ask your builder or kitchen fitter for a detailed scope with costs per stage, including VAT clearly stated.

Final Tips for Managing Your Kitchen Extension Budget

- **Get multiple quotes:** At least three separate detailed tenders, avoid lump-sums with no explanation.
- **Confirm VAT inclusion:** Don't talk design before you know if your quote is VAT inclusive.

- **Keep a contingency fund:** But don't spend it all in week one—builders and unforeseen issues will crop up.
- **Check planning matters early:** Especially important near Rugby; submission delays are costly.
- **Plan kitchen design after extension layout:** Ensure your extension design supports optimal kitchen work triangles, lighting, and plumbing/electrics.
- **Consult local professionals:** Midlands-based architects, builders, and kitchen designers understand Rugby-specific challenges like side access and tight drives.

Conclusion

Budgeting for a kitchen in an extension is a balancing act between your extension construction type, local labour costs, planning permissions, and the style of kitchen you want. For homeowners in Rugby and surrounding Midlands areas in 2026, expect kitchen add-on costs between **£15,000 and £35,000**, on top of your per-square-metre build cost of around £1,700–£3,000 depending on single or two-storey designs.

Always start by clarifying VAT in your quotes, understand your planning route (permitted development or full permission, especially in conservation areas), and use tools like the HomeOwners Alliance cost of moving calculator to weigh up all your options. With careful planning and local advice, you can enjoy a stunning kitchen extension without budget blowouts or nasty surprises.

