GUESS WHAT

you don't need new cabinets!

However meh yours feel, they can get a whole other life with one of these clever ideas.

take some doors off

Score the charm of open shelving, instantly! Just remove the doors—truly as simple as unscrewing the hinges—patch hardware holes, and touch up the paint. Then paint the insides of the cabinets the same color as the exterior (this is Foxhall Green by Sherwin-Williams), or break out with a contrasting hue. For even more of a custom feel, replace existing shelves with ones that are thicker.
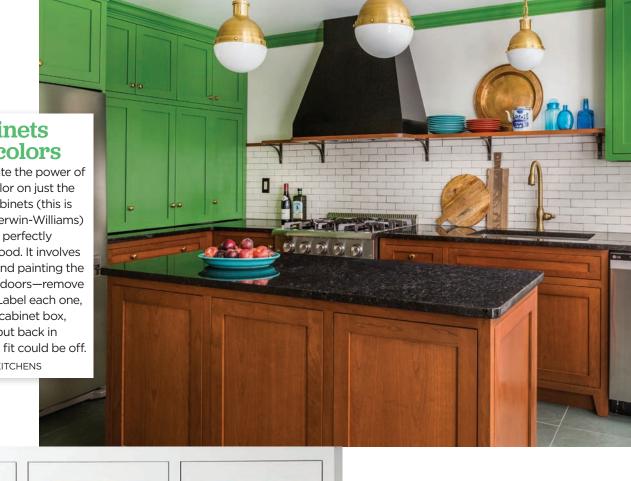
ROOM DESIGN: URBANOLOGY DESIGNS

paint cabinets different colors

Never underestimate the power of paint. A punchy color on just the uppers of wood cabinets (this is Talipot Palm by Sherwin-Williams) takes a space from perfectly pleasant to *sooo* good. It involves sanding, priming, and painting the cabinet boxes and doors—remove the doors for this. Label each one, its hinges, and the cabinet box, because if they're put back in different spots, the fit could be off.
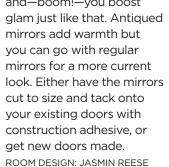
ROOM DESIGN: AIRY KITCHENS

do a mirror overlay

Go for mirrored doors in one section of cabinets and—boom!—you boost glam just like that. Antiqued mirrors add warmth but you can go with regular mirrors for a more current look. Either have the mirrors cut to size and tack onto your existing doors with construction adhesive, or get new doors made.

ROOM DESIGN: JASMIN REESE INTERIORS

THIS SPREAD, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTNEY APPLE; RYAN GARVIN; MICHAEL ALAN KASKEL

A good spot for dishes you use every day— just grab and dine.

try open shelves

For an airier kitchen, tear out a cabinet box or two and hang shelves. You'll have to patch and paint the wall and fill in backsplash tiles, but (reality check) it beats buying all new cabinets, often the priciest part of a reno. These oak shelves match the hood trim and the ceiling beams. If you want to make your shelves fancier, you can always add brackets.

ROOM DESIGN: BROOKE WAGNER DESIGN

swap solid doors for glass ones

In a room with minimal light, glass-front doors turn up brightness. You can find ready-made kinds at a local cabinet shop or home improvement store. Choose a frame color that's different from your other cabinets (these gray doors are from Omega Cabinetry) or paint them yourself. Here, the contrast with the white cabinets plays off the white-and-gray island, while ghost chairs continue the transparent look.

ROOM DESIGN: KAREN B. WOLF INTERIORS

"When you're putting in new cabinet hardware, using an inexpensive plastic installation template from a home improvement store saves time and stress—it has holes that show you exactly where to drill."

—Steve Ford, *Restored by the Fords*

install new knobs and pulls

It's one of the least invasive ways to update cabinets. The most foolproof switcheroo is to replace knobs with knobs and pulls with pulls (these are all from CB2). Consider alternate shapes, like the hexagon knobs here, and a new finish—brass and matte black are hot right now.

ROOM DESIGN: MICHELLE BERWICK DESIGN