

Kitchens – Type A Units

This Tip Sheet reflects code requirements of the 2021 International Building Code (IBC) and International Code Council A117.1-2017 (ICC) with Washington State Amendments.

Sample Kitchen Layout

This is a sample of a pass-through kitchen layout for a residential Type A unit. Compliance with the following code provisions shall be documented on plans submitted for permit.

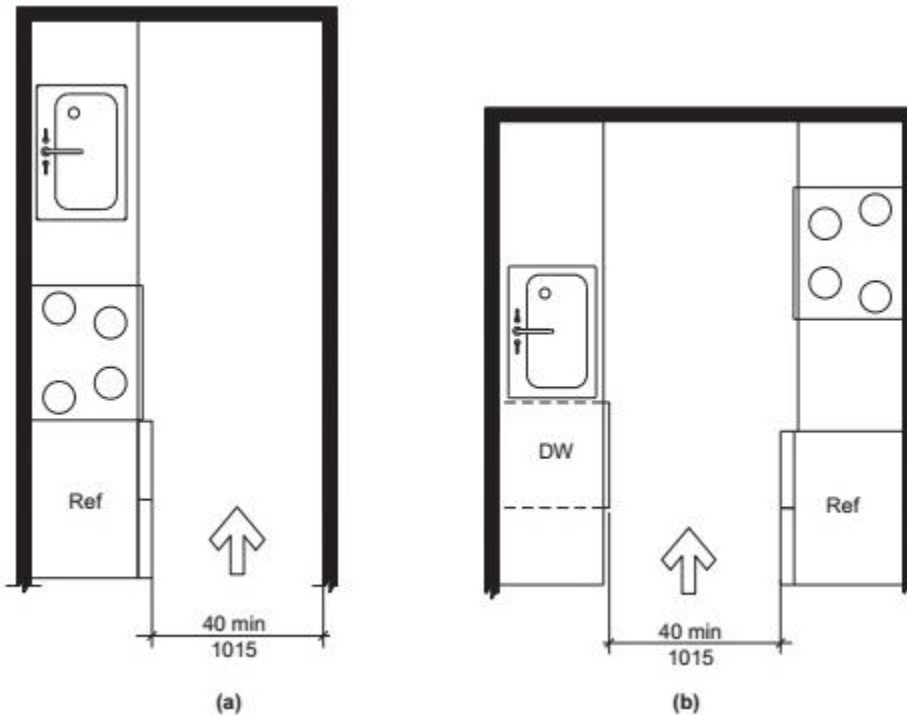


Figure 1: Minimum Kitchen Clearance in Type A Units (from A117.1-2017 Commentary)

Clearances

- The **clearance** between all opposing base cabinets, countertops, appliances, or walls within kitchen work areas shall be:
 - **40 inches** minimum for **pass-through** kitchens. (ICC 1103.12.1.1)
 - **60 inches** minimum for **U-shaped** kitchens. (ICC 1103.12.1.2) Exception: The clearance may be reduced to 40 inches when there is an island, and it complies with ICC 1104.12.1.1.

These measurements do not include cabinet/appliance handles.

Clear Floor Space

- The **clear floor space** shall be **30 inches by 52 inches**. (ICC 305.3, ICC 1103.12.2)

Work Surface

- At least **one** section of counter shall provide an accessible work surface **30 inches minimum** in length (or **36 inches minimum** when using a T-shaped turning space). (ICC 1103.12.3).
Exception: Spaces that do not provide a cooktop or conventional ranges shall not be required to be an accessible work surface.
- The clear floor space shall be positioned for a **forward** approach to the work surface. See applicable exceptions. (ICC 1103.12.3.1)
- The work surface shall be **34 inches** maximum above the floor. See applicable exceptions.
There shall be no sharp or abrasive surfaces under the exposed portions of the work surface counter. (ICC 1103.12.3.2, ICC 1103.12.3.3)

Sinks

- A clear floor space shall be positioned for a **forward** approach to the sink. (ICC 1103.12.4.1)
Exception: A clear floor space may be positioned for a **parallel** approach when it complies with requirements under ICC 1103.12.4.1, Exception 3; the clear floor space shall be centered on the sinks and at a kitchen sink in a space where a cook top or conventional range is not provided.
- The front of the sink shall be **34 inches maximum** above the floor, measured to the higher of the rim or counter surface. See applicable exceptions. (ICC 1103.12.4.2)
- Faucets** shall comply with operable parts requirements per ICC 309 and water supply and drainpipes under the sinks shall be insulated or otherwise configured to protect against contact. There shall be no sharp or abrasive surfaces under sinks. (ICC 1103.12.4.3, ICC 1103.12.4.4.)

Appliances

- A clear floor space, positioned for a **parallel** or **forward** approach, shall be provided at **every** kitchen appliance. (ICC 1103.12.5.2)
- The **dishwasher** door in the open position shall **not obstruct** the clear floor space for the dishwasher or an adjacent sink. (ICC 1103.12.5.3)
- For **cooktops** with a **forward** approach, knee and toe clearance per ICC 306 shall be provided. The underside of the cooktop shall be insulated or otherwise configured to protect from burns, abrasions, or electrical shock. When a **parallel** approach is used, the clear floor space shall be centered on the appliance. (ICC 1103.12.5.4.2)

- The **oven** door in the open position shall **not obstruct** the clear floor space for the oven. (ICC 1103.12.5.5.1)
- Side-hinged door ovens** shall have a countertop positioned adjacent to the latch side of the oven door. **Bottom-hinged door ovens** shall have a countertop positioned adjacent to one side of the door. (ICC 1103.12.5.5.2, ICC 1103.12.5.5.3)
- Combination refrigerators and freezers** shall have at least **50 percent** of the freezer compartment shelves, including the bottom of the freezer **54 inches** maximum above the floor when the shelves are installed at the maximum heights possible. The centerline of the clear floor space shall be offset **24 inches** maximum from the centerline of the appliance. (ICC 1103.12.5.6)

Appliance Controls

- All appliance controls shall comply with operable parts requirements per ICC 309 (ICC 1103.12.5.1, ICC 1103.9)
- For **cooktops** and **ovens**, the location of controls shall not require reaching across burners. (ICC 1103.12.5.4.4, ICC 1103.12.5.5.4)
- All **appliance controls** must be within the typical reach range of **15 inches** minimum to **48 inches** maximum measured from the finished floor. (ICC 308)

Operable Parts

- In a kitchen where **two or more** receptacle outlets are provided above a length of countertop that is **uninterrupted** by a sink or appliance, **only one** receptacle outlet shall be required to comply. (ICC 309.1, Exception 2)
- In a kitchen where a clear floor space for a parallel approach cannot be located at a countertop in a **corner between appliances**, receptacle outlets over the countertop shall **not be required to comply** provided that the countertop does not exceed **9 square feet**. (ICC 309.1, Exception 3)
- Operable parts shall be placed within one or more of the reach ranges specified in ICC 308. (ICC 309.3)
- Operable parts shall be operable with one hand and shall **not require** tight grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist. The force required to activate operable parts shall be **5 pounds** maximum. (ICC 309.4)

Knee and Toe Clearances

Knee and toe clearances are often a “package deal.” Provisions for minimums and maximums for both knee and toe clearances must be addressed when looking for adequate clearance under a plumbing fixture or a kitchen appliance. Refer to the figures that follow for basic requirements.

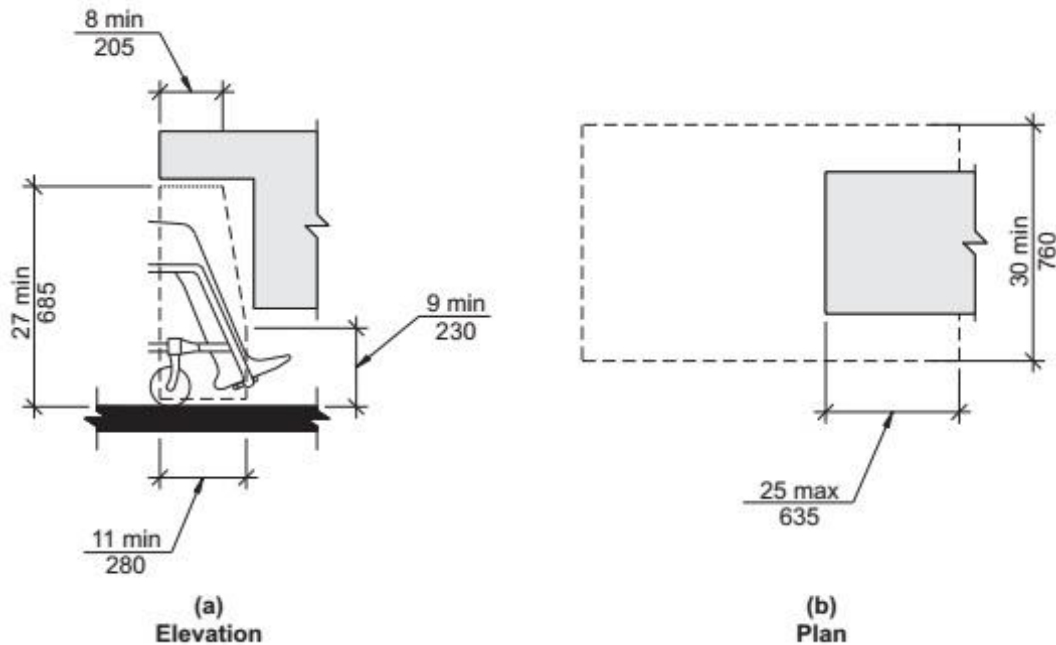


Figure 2: Knee Clearance (from A117.1-2017 Commentary)

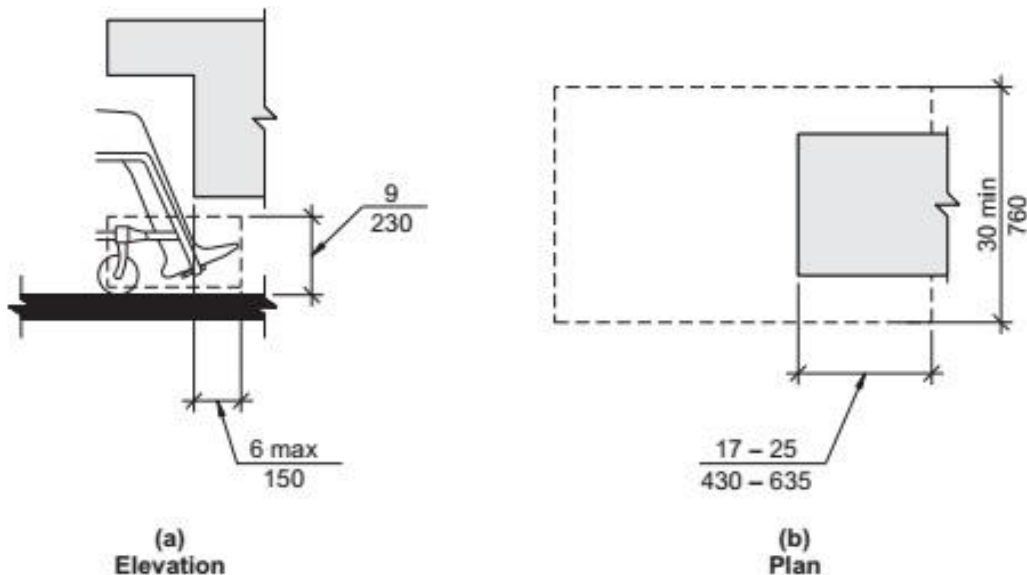


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