

Kitchen classic ▶

Interior designer Kathleen Navarra designed this elegant workstation to blend into the kitchen without giving it an "office" feel. "This space is near the entrance to the kitchen, so we wanted to make it a pleasant place to pass by," Navarra says.

To achieve this, she made the built-in desk and shelves look as much like furniture as possible, using molding at the top of the cabinets and staining the natural wood. She included open shelves for displaying books and art, as well as closed storage for papers and files.

Although compact, there is enough room for two people to sit at the desk and review assignments together. The desk functions as a family center where kids can catch up on homework and have easy access to the Internet. "This is where anyone in the family can use the computer or the phone," Navarra says. "We included a large blackboard. I think that in a busy family, that's a great way to communicate."

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