

# TRADIE OF THE WEEK



**Russell Burfield, of Benchtop Replacement Services, shares his top tips**

## **MOST COMMON CALL-OUTS?**

People contact us for ideas and solutions to renovate their existing kitchen, with minimum disruption. We are a small family business of some 21 years, providing a total project management service for benchtop and door replacement, oven, hotplate and sink upgrades, as well as modern splashbacks. Our clients are looking for longevity with attention to detail.

Natural granite, engineered stone and stainless steel provide the ultimate work surface, coupled with high-level performance and serviceability. Granite offers a wide range of beautiful colours and classic character, while engineered stone is presented with ultra-modern and consistent compositions. Stainless steel has a tough appeal and minimalist look. They are solid, heat-resistant surfaces, which lets you put hot things directly on them. We organise all the trades including electricians, gasfitters, plumbers and stonemasons so that the job is

done in a timely manner. This approach is highly sought after.

## **YOUR FAVOURITE TOOL?**

My spirit level is a great tool, I'd be lost without it. It's vital for initial assessment, preparation, adjustment, levelling and accurate installation of a beautiful new benchtop. I believe in getting things right the first time, from the foundation to the finishing touches. Rather than just slapping on material, we check and observe how each kitchen was made, then prepare and modify the cabinets for a level benchtop with a wow factor.

## **HOME REMEDY?**

A solution of 50/50 methylated spirits and water in a spray bottle is a great cleanser for your hard benchtop. It's simple, cost-effective and everyone can do it. It's not necessary to be applying other chemical cleansers and substances, as you might get built-up residue of such cleaning products. I like being simple, practical and environmentally friendly, rather than buying hundreds of dollars worth of chemicals to hold in your house.

**1200mm STANLEY Fatmax Level Spirit Beam, \$55.99, B & B Malvern Mitre 10, 321 Unley Rd, Malvern, 8272 8566, [www.mitre10.com.au](http://www.mitre10.com.au)**

## **BIGGEST MISTAKE PEOPLE MAKE?**

Thinking they have to replace the whole kitchen. Often renovators don't want a completely new one - I encourage "transformation not demolition". Customers share photos or sketches of their existing kitchen via email and I respond with an estimation of project costs. This provides people with a ball-park figure before a visit. Step two would be to arrange an appointment for an in-home consultation, where we can detail a contract proposal.

## **BEST THING TO ASK?**

What level of performance and durability do I expect? Would I like to have an "under-mount" sink? The other question people should ask is whether the job can be carried out with all associated trades being scheduled to flow simultaneously, with minimum disruption and with all necessary compliance.

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