



INSTALLATION GUIDE

Kitchen Cabinet Installation Guide

Brushhollow Shaker ready-to-paint cabinets: base, wall, sink base, blind corner, drawer bank and filler.

APPLIES TO

Base cabinets

Wall cabinets

Sink bases

Blind corner bases

Drawer banks

3" blind corner filler

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This guide walks you through installing Brushhollow kitchen cabinets. It follows common professional practice for face-frame cabinets and points out the details that are specific to RTP Cabinets. Read it through once before you begin, and keep the Brushhollow spec sheet and your order list nearby.

1 Your cabinets at a glance

Cabinet box	3/4" nominal Baltic birch plywood (18 mm actual), tops and bottoms secured with pocket holes
Back	1/4" birch plywood set in grooves (dados) 3/4" in from the rear edge. Two hidden rear nailers (upper and lower, 3" minimum) sit behind the back, flush with the rear edge of the box. You fasten through the back into these nailers.
Face frame	Solid poplar, 1-1/2" rails and stiles. Flush with the inside of the box sides, with a 25/32" overhang past the outside of each side.
Base cabinets	34-1/2" tall, 24" deep to the front of the face frame, designed for a 1-1/2" countertop. Toe kick 4" high and 3-1/2" deep.
Wall cabinets	12" deep to the front of the face frame; 30", 36" and 42" tall
Doors	Shaker 5-piece doors, about 3/4" thick, 1/2" overlay, 1/8" gap between pairs. Flat, raised or glass-ready panels (glass not included).
Hinges	Screw-on, 3-way adjustable face-frame hinges, per the option you selected. Single-door cabinets are built hinged left or right as ordered. Blind corners hinge on the blind side.
Drawers	Undermount slides only (contractor-grade or luxury soft-close, per your option), with release levers at the front and rear hooks. 1/2" Baltic birch drawer boxes.
Lead time	Built to order. See website for current lead times.
Hardware	Pulls and knobs are not included. Doors and drawer fronts ship undrilled.
Surface	Rough-sanded flat to 120 grit with major blemishes filled. You finish-sand before priming and painting.

i WHEN TO PAINT

Remove the doors and drawer fronts before you paint, whatever order you choose. Some people finish the cabinet boxes before installing them, which gives easy access. Others install first and paint in place, which lets them fill and caulk the joints between cabinets and walls. See the **Painting & Finishing Guide** for the full process.

2 Safety

⚠ READ BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Cabinets are heavy and awkward, and a wall cabinet that is not fastened into studs can fall. Fasten every cabinet into wall framing with cabinet screws. Never rely on drywall alone or on drywall anchors to hold a cabinet.

- Wear safety glasses when drilling, driving screws or cutting, and hearing protection with power saws. Wear a dust mask or respirator when sanding.
- Use two people to lift and hold wall cabinets, and use a ledger board or cabinet jack for support.
- Before you drill or cut into a wall, find pipes, wires and ducts. Turn off power to any circuit you work near, and shut off the water before you work on plumbing.
- Use a stable step ladder rated for your weight. Do not stand on base cabinets or countertops.
- Plumbing, electrical and gas work (including moving outlets, sink drains, supply lines and appliance connections) should be done to local code, and by a licensed professional where your jurisdiction requires it.

3 Tools and materials

Tools

- 4' level and a 2' level (or a self-leveling laser)
- Tape measure, pencil, straightedge
- Stud finder
- Cordless drill and impact driver
- Countersink drill bit and pilot bits
- Face-frame clamps or bar clamps (at least 2)
- Jigsaw or oscillating tool; hole saws for plumbing
- Block plane, belt sander or sanding block for scribing
- Scribing compass
- Utility knife, screwdrivers (#2 Phillips)
- Safety glasses, hearing and dust protection

Materials

- #10 cabinet screws (washer head), 3" long, for fastening into studs
- 2-1/2" cabinet or face-frame screws for joining face frames
- 1-1/4" screws for joining box sides
- Composite or wood shims
- Straight 1x3 or 1x4 board for a temporary ledger
- Filler strips as needed (the 3" blind corner filler is sold separately)
- Toe-kick board to cover shims (a toe-kick cover is not included)
- Painter's tape and a marker for labeling parts

4 Before you start

- 1 Inspect your delivery.** Check every carton and cabinet against your order within 72 hours of delivery. Photograph any shipping damage and contact us with your order number. Report any defect before you paint or install.

- 2 **Let the cabinets acclimate.** Store them indoors in the room where they will be installed, off the floor and away from moisture, wet plaster or fresh drywall mud. Letting them sit for at least 48 to 72 hours at normal living temperature and humidity is common practice.
- 3 **Check your layout.** Compare your plan with the room. Confirm each cabinet's location, hinge side (single-door cabinets are built hinged left or right as ordered) and blind side on blind corners. Use the room labels from your order.
- 4 **Prepare the room.** Remove old cabinets, trim and baseboard where cabinets will go. Repair the walls and floor, and finish any flooring that will run under the cabinets.
- 5 **Remove doors, drawers and shelves.** This makes each cabinet lighter and protects the parts. Label each door and drawer front with its cabinet location on a piece of painter's tape (for example, "B3 left door") and put shelf pins in a labeled bag. For removal steps, see sections 13 and 14 and the **Hardware & Hinge Adjustment Guide**.

5 Layout and level lines

Good installations start with accurate lines. Floors are rarely level, so you set all heights from the highest point of the floor where cabinets will sit.

- 1 **Mark the studs.** Use a stud finder and confirm with a small finish nail in an area the cabinets will cover. Mark each stud's center with a vertical line from the floor to above the wall cabinet height.
- 2 **Find the high spot.** Hold a long level or a laser along the floor where the base cabinets will stand, including at the back wall and about 24" out. Mark the highest point.
- 3 **Draw the base top line.** Measure 34-1/2" up from the high spot and draw a level line around every wall that will get base cabinets. This is the top of the base cabinets.
- 4 **Draw the wall cabinet bottom line.** A common height is 18" above the countertop. With a 1-1/2" countertop on 34-1/2" bases (36" total), that puts the bottom of the wall cabinets 54" above the high spot, or 19-1/2" above the base line. Adjust for your design, range hood, window trim and appliance requirements.
- 5 **Mark cabinet positions.** Mark the edges of each cabinet on the wall. The listed cabinet width is the face-frame width. Because each face frame overhangs its box by 25/32", the box sides sit inside these marks.

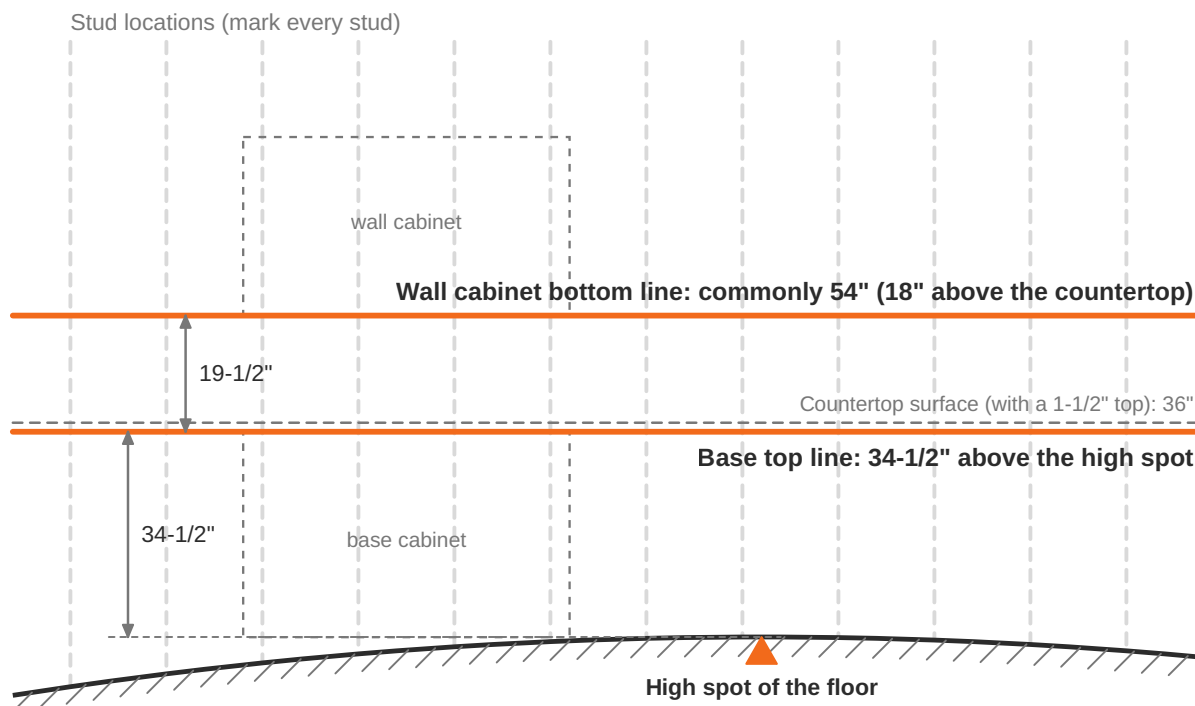


Figure 1. Set every height from the high spot of the floor. The 54" wall cabinet line is common practice; confirm it against your appliances and range hood instructions.

✓ TIP

Check that the wall is flat by sliding a long straightedge along it. Mark bulges and dips. You will shim behind the cabinets at dips so that screws do not pull the cabinets out of line.

6 Installation order

Start in a corner, usually with the blind corner cabinet, and work outward so that small errors do not pile up at a corner.

Wall cabinets first or bases first? Many installers hang the wall cabinets first, because they can stand close to the wall without reaching over the base cabinets, and a ledger board can support the cabinets while they fasten them. Others set the bases first and use them to support a cabinet jack or spacer blocks. Both methods work. If you are working with only one helper, hanging the wall cabinets first on a ledger is often easier.

7 Hanging wall cabinets

- 1 **Fasten a temporary ledger.** Screw a straight board to the studs with its top edge on the wall cabinet bottom line. It holds the cabinets at the right height while you fasten them.
- 2 **Join pairs on the floor (optional).** It is often easier to clamp and join two or three adjacent wall cabinets face down on a padded floor, then lift them as a unit. See section 11 for joining.

- 3 **Lift and set the first cabinet.** With a helper, set the cabinet on the ledger at its marks. Check that the face frame is plumb and the sides are level. Slip shims behind the cabinet at any wall dips, at the nailer locations.
- 4 **Fasten into studs.** Drive #10 x 3" cabinet screws through the back and the hidden upper nailer into each stud, and repeat at the lower nailer. The nailers are 3" tall strips behind the back at the top and bottom of the box. Use at least two studs per cabinet and two screws per stud per nailer where the width allows. Snug the screws; do not overtighten into a dip.
- 5 **Add the next cabinets.** Set each one on the ledger, clamp its face frame to the one before it with the faces flush, join them (section 11), check level and plumb, and then fasten to the studs.
- 6 **Remove the ledger.** When all cabinets are fastened and joined, remove the ledger and fill its screw holes.

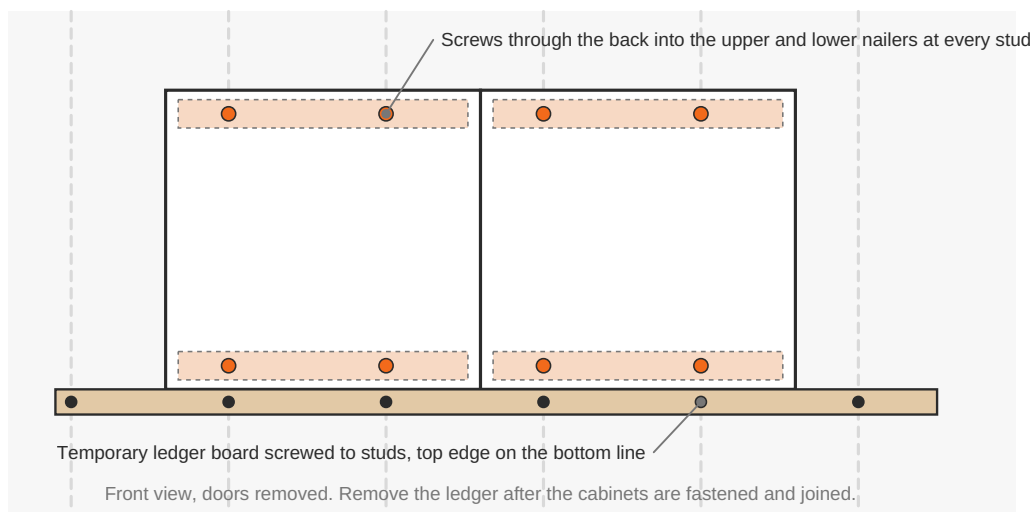


Figure 2. A ledger board holds wall cabinets at the bottom line while you screw through the upper and lower nailers into the studs.

⚠ CAUTION

For outlets, switches or vents behind a cabinet, measure carefully and cut a neat opening in the back with an oscillating tool or jigsaw. Turn off the power first. Do not cut away a whole nailer; keep enough of each nailer to fasten into studs.

8 Setting base cabinets

- 1 **Start at the corner or the high spot.** Set the first cabinet (often the blind corner) at its marks with its top on the base line.
- 2 **Shim to level.** Slide shims under the box sides at the front and back until the cabinet is level side to side and front to back and its top meets the base line. The box sides are notched for the toe kick, so place front shims just behind the toe-kick notch.
- 3 **Check plumb.** Hold a level on the face frame. Shim behind the cabinet at the upper nailer if the wall is out of plumb or has a dip.

- 4 **Fasten to the wall.** Drive #10 x 3" cabinet screws through the back and the hidden upper nailer through the upper nailer (top 3" of the box) into the studs. Shims must be behind every screw location where there is a gap.
- 5 **Set the next cabinet.** Shim it level to the base line, clamp the face frames together with the faces and tops flush, join them (section 11), then fasten to the wall.
- 6 **Check drawers as you go.** Undermount drawers need a square, level box to run smoothly. After each drawer bank or drawer cabinet is fastened, test the drawers. If one drags or will not close, re-check level and shims before you go on.

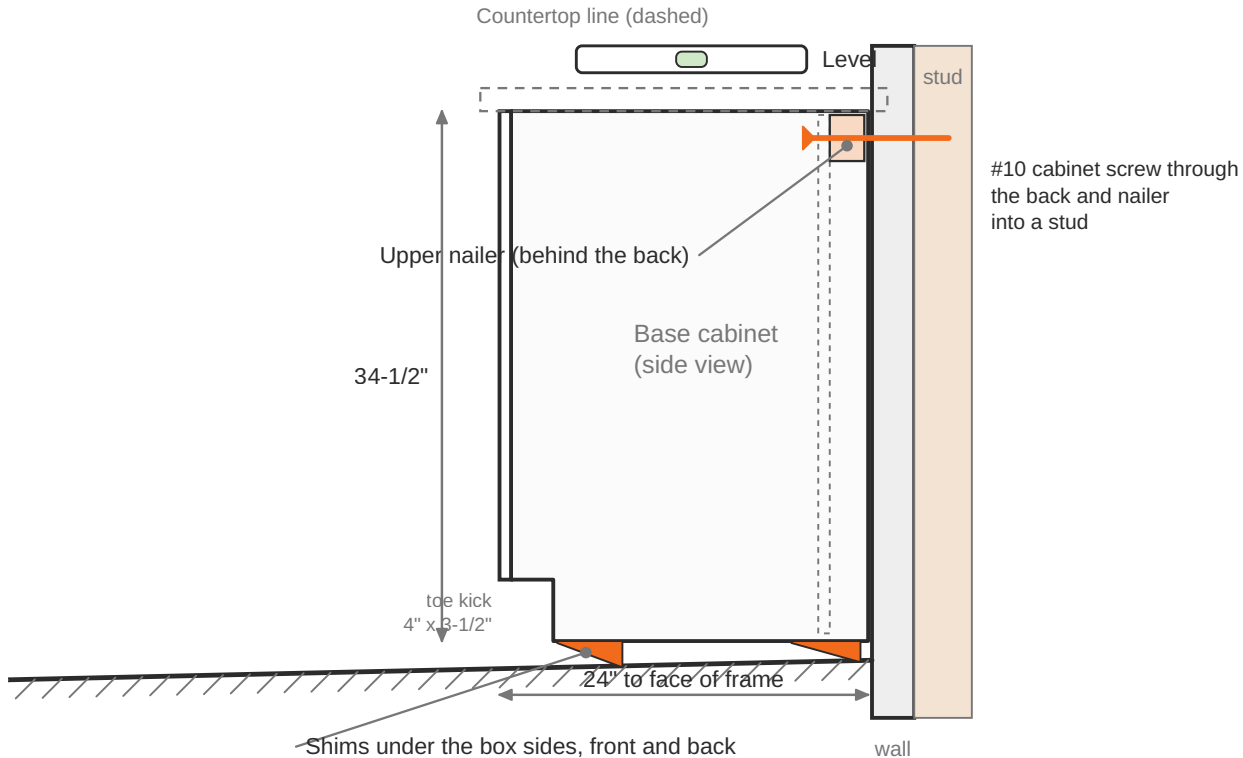


Figure 3. Shim under the box sides, front and back, until the top is level and on the base line. Then screw through the back and upper nailer into the studs.

✓ TIP

Before you set a run, lay a long level across the tops of the cabinets you have already set. Correcting a high or low cabinet now is much easier than after the countertop is templated. Most countertop installers ask for bases within about 1/8" of level over the run; ask yours.

9 Sink bases

Sink bases (33" and 36") have a fixed 5" false front instead of a drawer, two doors, and no shelf.

- 1 **Mark the plumbing.** Before you set the cabinet, measure the supply lines and drain from the floor and from the cabinet's side position. Transfer the locations to the back of the cabinet.

- 2 **Cut the back.** The installer cuts through the 1/4" back for plumbing. Use a hole saw for supply lines and a jigsaw or hole saw for the drain. Keep cuts neat and only as large as needed, and avoid the nailers.
- 3 **Set, level and fasten** the sink base as described in section 8.
- 4 **Check sink clearance.** Before the countertop is cut, confirm with your countertop installer that the sink bowl and faucet fit within the cabinet, behind the false front. Follow the sink maker's instructions.

⚠ CAUTION

The sink false front is fixed and is designed with no knob or pull. Do not drill it for hardware.

10 Blind corners and the 3" filler

A blind corner base (39", 42", 45" or 48" overall; 12", 15", 18" or 21" usable) has a blind section that is covered by the cabinet on the adjoining wall. It is built blind left or blind right, and the door hinges on the blind side: blind left hinges left, and blind right hinges right.

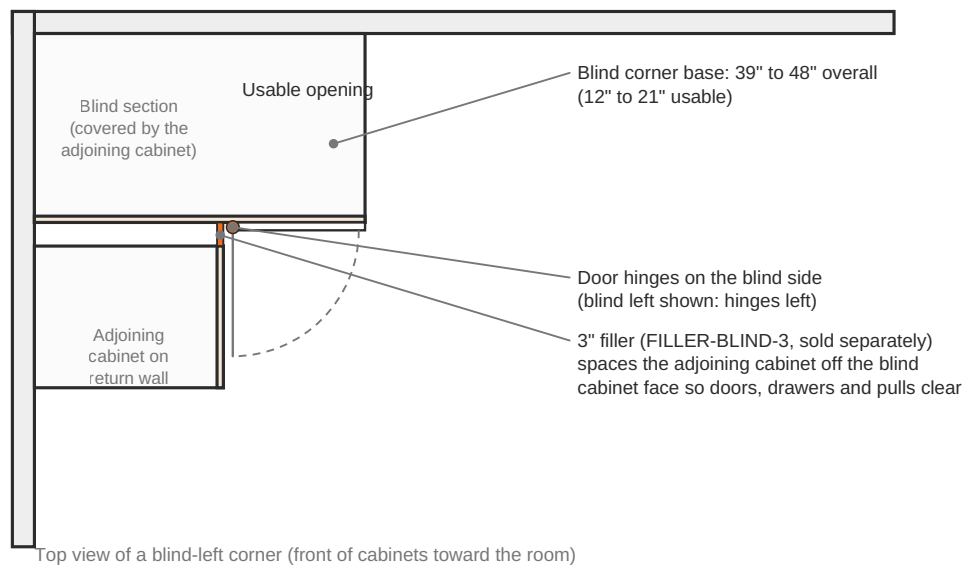


Figure 4. The 3" filler sits between the blind corner face and the adjoining cabinet so that doors, drawers and pulls on both runs can open without hitting each other.

- 1 **Set the blind corner first.** Position it along its wall according to your layout, with its blind section toward the corner. Shim it level to the base line and fasten it to the studs.
- 2 **Fit the filler.** The 3" blind corner filler (poplar, 3" wide x 34-1/2" tall x 3/4" thick, sold separately) is commonly fastened to the face-frame stile of the adjoining cabinet with screws driven from inside that cabinet, or with pocket screws from behind, so no fasteners show.
- 3 **Set the adjoining cabinet.** Push it into the corner so that the filler meets the face of the blind corner cabinet. Shim, level and fasten it.

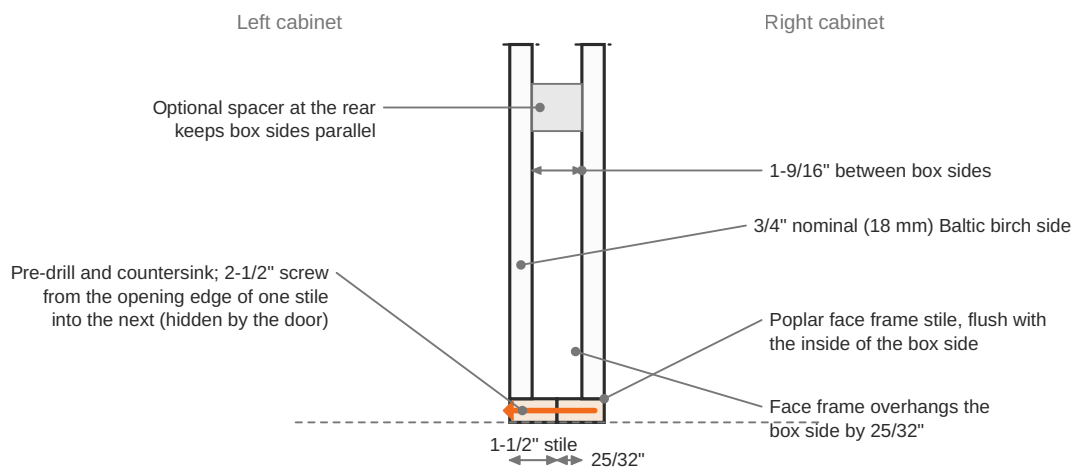
- 4 Check clearances.** Open the blind corner door and the nearest door and drawers on the adjoining cabinet. Picture the pulls you plan to use. Nothing should collide. Adjust before fastening the cabinets together.

NOTE

If your blind corner includes the lazy susan upgrade, follow the instructions supplied with that hardware.

11 Joining face frames

Each face frame is flush with the inside of its box side and overhangs the outside by $25/32$ ". When two cabinets sit side by side, their face frames meet, and there is a space of about $1-9/16$ " between the two box sides behind them. You join the cabinets through the face frames. You can also join them through the sides with a spacer.



Top view at the joint between two cabinets (front at bottom)

Figure 5. Top view of the joint. Drive the screws from the opening edge of one stile into the next, where the door will cover the screw heads.

- 1 Align and clamp.** Line up the two face frames so that the front faces and tops are flush. Clamp them at the top and bottom with face-frame clamps or bar clamps.
- 2 Pre-drill and countersink.** Drill a pilot hole with a countersink bit through the stile from its opening edge, near the top, middle and bottom. Place the holes where the door or hinge will cover them.
- 3 Drive the screws.** Use 2-1/2" screws. They pass through the 1-1/2" stile and into the next stile. Do not overtighten, which can split the poplar or pull the faces out of flush.
- 4 Tie the boxes together at the back (optional).** Place a 1-9/16" spacer block between the box sides near the rear, and screw through one side and the spacer into the other side with screws short enough not to come through.

✓ TIP

Where two cabinets meet, the installer can trim the face-frame overhang if needed for a tight fit, for example where a wall bows into a run. In most runs no trimming is needed.

12 Scribing, fillers and toe kicks

Scribing to a wall

Walls are rarely straight or plumb. Where a cabinet meets a side wall, a filler strip, scribed to the wall, closes the gap and gives doors and drawers room to open.

- 1 **Hold the filler in place.** Set it plumb, overlapping the wall slightly, and tape it in position.
- 2 **Scribe the line.** Run a scribing compass down the wall so the pencil traces the wall's shape onto the filler.
- 3 **Trim to the line.** Cut or plane to the line with a slight back-bevel so that only the front edge touches the wall. Test fit and repeat until the gap is closed.
- 4 **Fasten the filler** to the cabinet face frame from inside the cabinet, then set and fasten the cabinet.

i NOTE

The only filler currently offered is the 3" blind corner filler. For other filler strips, use paint-grade hardwood such as poplar, 3/4" thick to match the face frame.

Exposed ends

At an exposed end, the 3/4" Baltic birch box side shows, with the face frame overhanging it by 25/32". The side is sanded and ready to finish like the rest of the cabinet.

Toe kicks

The base cabinet sides are notched for a 4" high, 3-1/2" deep toe kick. Kitchen bases do not include a toe-kick cover. After the bases are set, cover the shims and the toe space with a toe-kick board cut to fit, and finish it to match.

13 Doors and hinges

Your doors hang on screw-on, 3-way adjustable face-frame hinges. After painting, or if you removed them for installation, reinstall them in their labeled locations.

- 1 **Reattach each door.** Return each door to the cabinet and side it came from. Set each hinge arm on its mounting plate on the face frame and drive the arm screw back into its original hole.
- 2 **Adjust the hinges.** Each hinge adjusts three ways: side to side, in and out (depth), and up and down (height). Adjust in small steps, a quarter turn at a time, and adjust both hinges on a door evenly. Step-by-step instructions are in the Hardware & Hinge Adjustment Guide.

- 3 Check the gaps.** Pairs of doors should have an even 1/8" gap between them. Tops of neighboring doors should line up, and each door should close flat against the face frame.

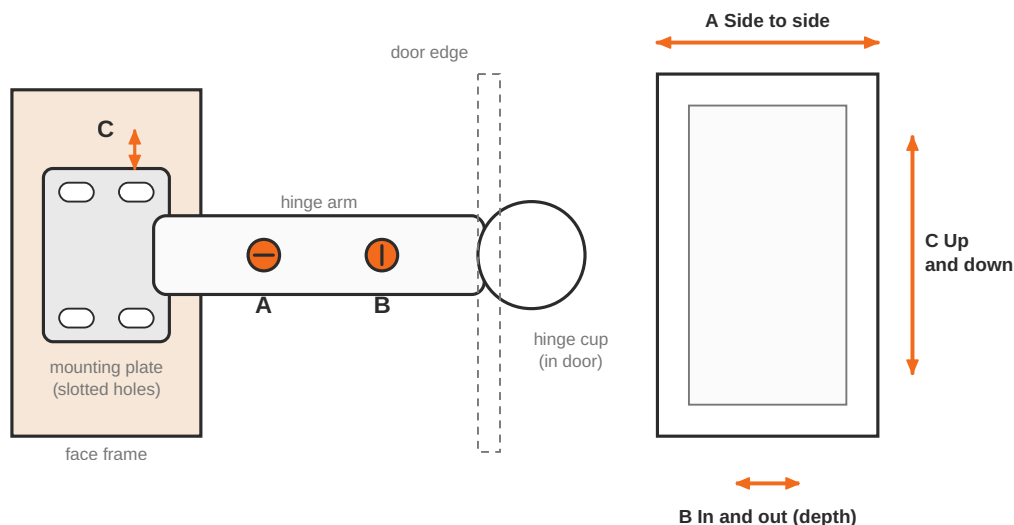


Figure 6. Three-way adjustment: A, side to side; B, depth; C, height (through the slotted holes in the mounting plate). See the Hardware & Hinge Adjustment Guide.

14 Drawer fronts on undermount drawers

All Brushhollow drawers run on undermount slides only, contractor-grade or luxury soft-close depending on your option. The slides are hidden under the drawer box; release levers at the front lock the drawer to the slides, and rear hooks hold the back of the drawer box.

- 1 Remove a drawer.** Open it fully. Press or squeeze the release levers under the front of the drawer box on both sides, lift the front of the drawer, and pull it off the slides.
- 2 Reinstall a drawer.** Pull the slides out fully. Set the drawer on the runners, slide it back until the rear notches seat on the slide hooks, and push it closed until both levers click.
- 3 Remove and replace a drawer front (for painting).** Before removing, mark which drawer box the front belongs to and note its position. The front is held by two screws driven from inside the drawer box. Remove them and keep them with the front. Reattach the front with the same two screws and holes.
- 4 Align the front.** Each front should cover its opening evenly, with even gaps to the fronts and doors around it. If your slides have height or side adjustment at the release levers, use it for fine alignment.

✓ TIP

Photograph each cabinet with its doors and fronts in place before you take anything apart. The photos make it easy to put every part back in the same place.

15 Final checks

- Every cabinet is fastened into studs, and every joint between cabinets is screwed.
- Base tops are level along each run and on the base line, ready for the countertop.
- Doors open and close freely, with even gaps; drawers glide and close fully.
- Shelves are on all four pins, and the pins are fully seated.
- Shims are trimmed flush and hidden; toe kicks and fillers are fitted.
- Screw holes, ledger holes and dents are filled and touched up before final paint.

Questions? Contact RTP Cabinets: RTPCabinets.com/contact

Please include your order number, and photos if your question is about a specific cabinet.

Disclaimer. This guide gives general information for installing RTP Cabinets products. It does not replace the instructions supplied with hinges, slides, fasteners, tools, sinks or appliances, which you should always follow. Local building, plumbing and electrical codes apply and take precedence over this guide. Conditions in every home are different; if you are unsure about any step, consult a qualified professional. Specifications are as of October 2026 and may change. See the Brushhollow spec sheet and each product page at RTPCabinets.com for current details.