



# Design Build 201

Cabinets and Millwork



## A quick review:

- Be especially aware of transitions
- Be impeccable with your word
- Don't take anything personally
- Don't make assumptions
- Always do your best



# A quick review:

*cont'd.*

- Construction is a relationship based business
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Check and double check your specs
- Walk job sites with a tape measure, notepad, and camera



# Overview of our goals for today:

- Review cabinets and cabinet styles
- Review framed vs. frameless cabinets
- Review woodworkers and cabinet makers
- Overview of retail cabinets and custom wood shops
- Review cabinet door construction and workflow between designer and cabinet shop
- Overview of doors and opening type



# Cabinets and Millwork



# As designers, we know all the different styles of cabinets...



Standard



Full overlay



Frameless



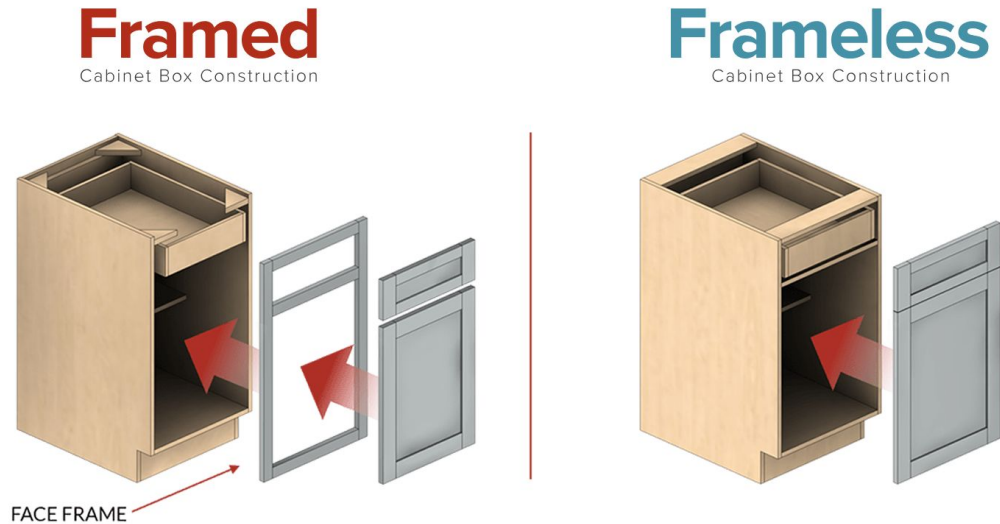
Flush face



Flush face with  
edge profile

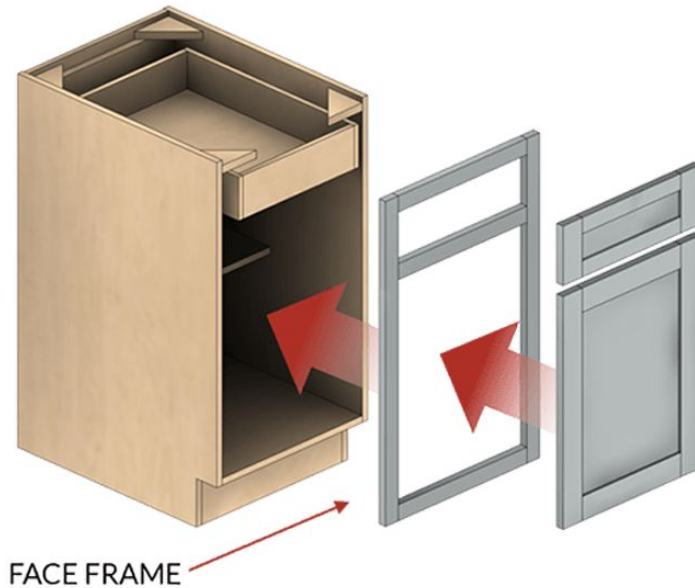


# To woodworkers, there are basically two types of cabinets...





# How these two overlap

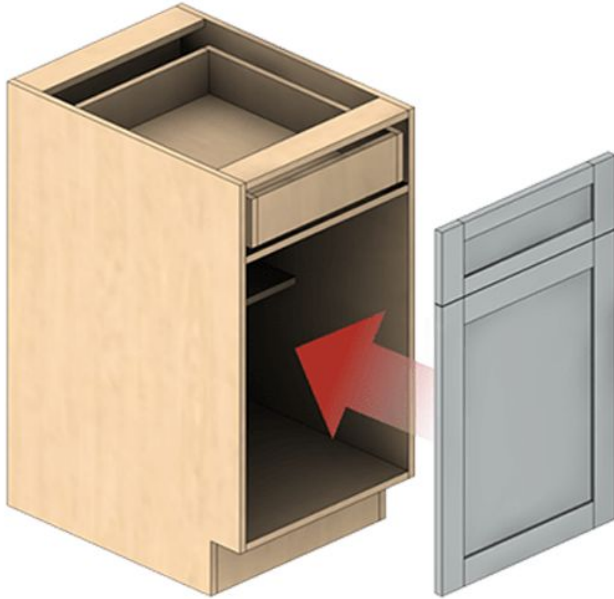


Framed





# How these two overlap



Frameless



# In order to deliver the best product for our clients we need to have a solid idea of:

- What is the style goal
- The capabilities of the cabinet shop we will be working with (if specified by the builder)
- The budget constraints



Cabinet makers, not unlike interior designers, run their businesses in a ***wide*** range of styles:

- Retail operations with installers (from Lowes to Ikea to super high end European)
- Custom wood shops (a guy or gal in the back literally hand making the cabinets)
- Some combination of these two business models



# Entry-Mid Level Retail Cabinets



## *Pros*

- Typically the most affordable option
- Often will do renderings for the client for free
- Durable baked on finishes
- Lead times (sometimes, all bets are off the table these days)



# Entry-Mid Level Retail Cabinets

*cont'd.*




## *Cons*

- Least amount of customization in size, layout, wood species, interior box materials, finish, and color
- Quality of box materials
- Sometimes overall quality (hinges, drawer boxes, etc)



# Mid-High to Luxury Level Retail Cabinets

WILLIAM OHS

poggen  
pohl 

 **eggersmann**  
Kitchens | Home Living

Molteni & C

## *Pros*

- Quality
- Customizable sizes
- Curated finishes
- Will often offer a rendering after deposit is made
- Sometimes opportunity for profit margin (managed more like a furniture purchase)



# Mid-High to Luxury Level Retail Cabinets

*cont'd.*

WILLIAM OHS

poggen  
pohl 

 **eggersmann**  
Kitchens | Home Living

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## *Cons*

- Long lead times (especially European lines)
- If a mistake is made by the person measuring before the order, can be hard to adjust/fix
- Price
- Location of retail shop (the really luxury brands typically only have a few locations in the US)
- Attitude



# Custom Wood Shops

## *Pros*

- Highly customizable
- Have access to unique species of wood
- Easier to modify on site

## *Cons*

- Finishes often not baked on (less durable)
- Wide range of quality available
- Typically limited to framed styles







# More on Custom Wood Shops

- Honestly, the most important thing is to get out and visit a few shops in person.
- Look at real life samples of their work (in their showroom or a project they have in progress).
- Open doors and drawers and check out the overall look and feel as well as notice any details.
- Ask the cabinet maker about the style you are interested in and try to see a sample of that particular style.
- **You want to work with someone reputable.**
- Typically a custom wood shop will not be able to do a frameless wood cabinet (the exceptions will be really high end shops, or commercial shops).



# Cabinet Door Construction

As designers we know there are two basic styles of cabinet doors:

Paneled



Slab





# More about the Paneled Door type:

The construction of a paneled door gives it its stability.





## More about the Slab Door type:

- Slab doors that are veneered or laminated are the more structurally sound
- Solid wood slabs are going to expand and contract a bit with natural weather
- Fluctuations





## Putting It All Together:

- Know your vendor.
- Know the capabilities and limitations of both the materials and cabinet shop you are working with.
- There is always a solution. Focus on finding the right one for the highest and best outcome of each project.



# Our typical workflow between designer and cabinet shop:

## *Luxury Full-Service*

- We create floor plan and elevation (we do a model in SketchUp to develop and sell our idea to the client).
- Cabinet shop reviews designer plan, takes on site measurements, and presents shop drawings-we review, mark-up, and sign off on shop drawings.



# Our typical workflow between designer and cabinet shop:

*cont'd.*

## *Design for Spec Builders*

- We review and mark-up the architects kitchen and bath plans.
- Cabinet shop takes on site measurements and presents shop drawings.
- We review and mark-up cabinet maker's shop drawings.

## *Express Design*

- We select the finish for the cabinets.

**Make sure the cabinet shop is creating shop drawings no matter what.**



# How to incorporate cabinetry into your business plan:

- Cabinets are a high impact item in the home and clients love showing them off to their friends. Being great at cabinet design is an excellent calling card.
- A lot of retail cabinet shops love having relationships with designers and will offer financial incentives for you to work with them.
- Make sure that you are in integrity and your clients understand that you are being compensated or that the cabinets are part of the retail purchase that is run through your firm.
- Custom or smaller cabinet shops can offer a wide range of product and offers the designer an excellent opportunity to express creativity and be a huge value add to your client.





# How to incorporate cabinetry into your business plan:

*cont'd.*

- Take time to visit luxury cabinet shops even if your clientele isn't in the super luxury market. You'll learn about cool technology you can incorporate no matter who you use to create cabinets for your clients.
- Personally, if I wasn't already swamped with my design clients, launching a furniture collection, coaching, and also launching a European antiques shop on my website I would 100% open a cabinet shop. They are literally one of my favorite pieces of the design puzzle.