

Amenities and Facilities

for Houses in Multiple Occupation
subject to Licensing

Good Practice Guide for Landlords

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Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	2
1 Space Standards	2
Room Sizes	2
2 Housing Health and Safety Rating System	3
Lighting	4
Heating	4
Ventilation	4
Water Supply	5
Drainage	5
3 Personal Washing Facilities	5
4 Sanitary Conveniences	5
Sharing Ratios	6
5 Facilities for the storage, preparation and cooking of food	6
Location	6
Design	7
Availability	7
Kitchen Facilities	7
Sharing Ratios	8
6 Means of Escape and other Fire Precautions	9
Protected Escape Route and Fire Warning System	9
Requirements	9
7 Management	9
Landlords and Managers responsibilities	9
Residents responsibilities	10
Recycling and Waste Management	10
8 Planning	11
9 Building Control	11
10 Further Information	11
Kitchen Layouts	12

Introduction

This guidance has been produced by the City Council for houses in multiple occupation (HMO) that are subject to HMO licensing. The guide has been written to assist owners and occupiers in relation to the standards they should expect in such accommodation.

All HMOs are subject to the Management Regulations (SI 2006 No 372) irrespective of their licensable status.

The following guidance indicates the amenities and facilities that will be sought through HMO Licence Conditions under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004. It has been compiled to comply with the Management (Additional Provisions) Regulations (SI 2007 No 1903) in addition to the requirements of the 2006 Regulations and other parts of the Act.

An HMO is defined in law as a building or part of a building (e.g., a flat) in which three or more unrelated persons forming more than two households share an amenity such as a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities. A 'household' is defined as either a single person or members of the same family who are living together.

Houses Occupied on a Shared Basis

Houses occupied on a shared basis usually consist of individually let rooms with a shared kitchen, lounge and bathroom. Students and groups of young professionals often live in accommodation of this type.

Note: All figures given as imperial dimensions are approximate.

1 Space Standards

1.1 One person unit of accommodation: -

Each study/bedroom should be 8.5m² (90 sq ft) or larger, except where a separate living room is provided which is not a kitchen/dining room, in which case the bedroom can be a minimum 6.5m² (70 sq. ft).

1.2 The living room should be separate from the kitchen/dining room.

1.3 **Room Sizes**

Kitchen (1 to 5 persons)	7m ²	(75 sq ft)
Kitchen (6 to 10 persons)	10m ²	(110 sq. ft)
Kitchen / Diner (1 to 5 persons)	13m ²	(140 sq. ft)
Dining room (1 to 5 persons)	11m ²	(120 sq. ft)
Dining room (6 to 10 persons)	14m ²	(150 sq. ft)
Living room (1 to 5 persons)	11m ²	(120 sq ft)
Living room (6 to 10 persons)	14m ²	(150 sq. ft)

1.4 The measured space in a room must be 'usable space'. The room should be able to accommodate the required amount of appropriate furniture easily and still allow space for movement about the room.

1.5 Any floor space that has a ceiling height of less than 1.5m (5ft) shall be disregarded for the purpose of measuring the total space in the room.

1.6 The Council may exercise discretion to the above requirements.

2 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The Housing Act 2004 replaced the previous housing fitness standard with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. This is a new way of assessing risks in residential accommodation, the aim is to provide a system, not a standard, to enable risks from hazards to health and safety in dwellings to be removed or minimised.

The purpose of the HHSRS assessment is not to set a standard but to generate objective information in order to determine and inform enforcement decisions. HHSRS assesses twenty nine categories of housing hazard, including factors which were not covered or covered inadequately by the housing fitness standard. It provides a rating for each hazard. It does not provide a single rating for the dwelling as a whole or, in the case of multiply occupied dwellings, for the building as a whole. A hazard rating is expressed through a numerical score which falls within a band. There are 10 bands. Scores in bands A to C are Category 1 hazards where the Council has a duty to consider the most appropriate action. Scores in bands D to J are Category 2 hazards where the Council has more discretion on the action to be taken.

The 29 hazards that can be assessed are those associated with or arising from:

<i>Physiological Requirements</i>	<i>Protection Against Infection</i>
Damp and mould growth	Domestic hygiene, pests and refuse
Excess cold	Food safety
Excess heat	Personal hygiene, sanitation and drainage
Asbestos (and MMF)	Water supply for domestic purpose
Biocides	<i>Protection Against Accidents</i>
Carbon monoxide & fuel combustion products	Falls associated with baths
Lead	Falling on level surfaces
Radiation	Falling on etc
Uncombusted fuel gas	Falling between levels
Volatile Organic Compounds	Electrical hazards
	Fire
<i>Psychological Requirements</i>	Flames, hot surfaces
Crowding and space	Collision and entrapment
Entry by intruders	Explosions
Lighting	Position and operability of amenities
Noise	Structural collapse and failing elements

The HHSRS assessment is based on the risk to the potential occupant who is most vulnerable to that hazard. For example, stairs constitute a greater risk to the elderly, so

for assessing hazards relating to stairs they are considered the most vulnerable. Whereas the very young as well as the elderly are susceptible to low temperatures so both groups are considered the most vulnerable with respect to this hazard. The underlying principle is that a dwelling that is safe for those most vulnerable to a hazard is safe for all. Further guidance can be found in Housing Health and Safety Rating System – Operating Guidance (ISBN 13:978 185112 846 4).

The following is recommended as part of the operating guidance.

2.1 Lighting

2.1.1 All habitable rooms should have an adequate level of natural lighting provided via a clear glazed window or windows. (It is advisable that the glazed area is to be equivalent to at least one-tenth of the floor area). Adequate electric lighting should also be provided.

2.1.2 All staircases, landings, passages, kitchens, bathrooms and toilets should be provided, where practicable, with a window. Windows to bathrooms and toilets should be glazed with obscured glass.

2.1.3 Adequate electric lighting points should be provided to all staircases, landings, passages, kitchens, bathrooms and toilets.

2.1.4 Artificial lighting to staircases, landings and passages should be controlled from a sufficient number of appropriately placed switches. If a time switch is used, it should be set to allow persons furthest from the street exit sufficient time to arrive and leave prior to the light switching off. Artificial lighting for common staircases should be operable from each landing. The lighting should be sufficient to allow corridors, passages and stairways to be illuminated at the same time.

2.2 Heating

2.2.1 All habitable rooms including bath or shower rooms must be provided with an efficient and safe, fixed space-heating appliance. The appliance must be capable of maintaining the room at a minimum temperature of 18°C when the outside temperature is minus 1°C.

2.2.2 'Fixed space heating appliance' means a fixed gas or fixed electrical appliance or an adequate central heating system operable at all times.

2.2.3 Portable or removable heating appliances are not acceptable.

2.2.4 Each bedroom shall be provided with a minimum of two double 13amp electrical socket outlets in a suitable position.

2.3 Ventilation

2.2.1 All kitchens, bathrooms and toilet compartments must be provided with a permanent means of ventilation, either by way of an openable window or by artificial means.

2.3.2 All habitable rooms, kitchens, bathrooms and toilet compartments shall be ventilated directly to the external air by a window which has an openable area equivalent to one-twentieth of the floor area. Where it is not practicable to have a window in kitchens, bathrooms and toilet compartments, mechanical ventilation shall be provided as required by current Building Regulations. Such an installation shall be fitted with an overrun device for a minimum of 15 minutes and operate from a lighting circuit of the room.

2.4 Water Supply

2.4.1 A supply of water for drinking and other domestic purposes shall be provided in a communal kitchen.

2.4.2 All water services and water storage tanks shall, where necessary, be protected from frost damage.

2.5 Drainage

The house shall be provided with an effective system both above and below ground for the drainage of foul, waste and surface water. All drainage works must comply with current Building Regulations.

3 Personal Washing Facilities

3.1 A wash hand basin, with continuous supplies of hot and cold running water and a tiled splash-back, shall be provided in each separate toilet compartment and each bathroom containing a toilet.

3.2 Baths or showers shall be provided in the ratio of at least one to every five persons sharing. The bathrooms or shower rooms shall be readily accessible and normally not more than one floor away from the user.

3.3 Bathrooms and shower rooms must be laid out in such a way as to enable persons to undress, dry themselves and dress in a safe manner

3.4 Each bath and shower shall be provided with a constant and adequate supply of hot and cold running water, designed to ensure reasonable temperature control.

3.5 A tiled splash back shall be provided to all baths and wash hand basins. Shower cubicles shall have fully tiled walls and be provided with a suitable water resistant curtain or door to the cubicle. Bathrooms and shower rooms shall have smooth non-absorbent wall and ceiling surfaces, which can be readily cleaned. The flooring should be easily cleaned and slip-resistant.

3.6 Shared facilities shall be accessible from a common area.

3.7 The following minimum dimensions shall apply:

Wash hand basin	500mm x 400mm
Bath	1700mm x 700mm
Splash-back	300mm high
Shower	800mm x 800mm
Shower room	1600mm x 900mm
Bath room (bath only)	1400mm x 1700mm
Bath room	1700mm x 1600mm

4 Sanitary Conveniences

4.1 The toilet must be readily accessible and normally not be more than one floor away from the bedrooms. A toilet shall be provided in a separate compartment with a wash hand basin with an appropriate splash back.

4.2 Toilets to be provided in bathrooms or separate compartments of a suitable size and layout. The rooms shall have smooth, non-absorbent wall and ceiling surfaces, which can be readily and easily cleaned, and slip-resistant flooring.

4.3 Separate toilet compartments should be fully compartmented (recommended minimum dimensions: 1300mm x 900mm with 750mm in front of the wc).

Sharing Ratios

Number of people irrespective of age	Facilities Required
1 – 4 people	At least 1 bathroom and 1 toilet (the bathroom and toilet may be combined) <i>The minimum provision is 1 bathroom containing toilet, bath or shower and wash hand basin</i>
5 people	1 bathroom <i>and</i> 1 separate toilet with wash hand basin (but the toilet may be contained in a second bathroom) <i>The minimum provision is 1 bathroom containing toilet, bath or shower and wash hand basin and 1 separate toilet but 2 bathrooms with toilet, bath or shower and wash hand basin is acceptable</i>
6 – 10 people	2 bathrooms <i>and</i> 2 separate toilets with wash hand basins (but 1 of the toilets may be contained within 1 of the bathrooms) <i>The minimum provision is 2 bathrooms containing a bath or shower and wash hand basin with 1 of those bathrooms also containing a toilet and 1 separate toilet with a wash hand basin</i>
11 – 15 people	3 bathrooms <i>and</i> 3 separate toilets with wash hand basins (but 2 of the toilets may be contained within 2 of the bathrooms) <i>The minimum provision is 3 bathrooms each containing a bath or shower and wash hand basin with 2 of those bathrooms also containing a toilet and 1 separate toilet with a wash hand basin.</i>

5 Facilities for Storage, Preparation and Cooking of Food

5.1 Location

5.1.1 Each occupant shall have the use of a kitchen separate from the sleeping room and, wherever possible, on the same floor level but, in any event, shall not be more than one floor away from the users.

5.1.2 If this is not practicable, then in smaller establishments of not more than 3 storeys and not more than **10** persons, communal kitchens may be provided in one area of the premises up to 2 floors distant from some bedrooms. In some cases, a suitable

dining room or rooms of adequate size shall be provided adjacent to the kitchen(s). Adequate numbers of chairs and tables shall be provided in dining rooms. (See 1.3 for details on minimum dimensions for dining rooms.)

5.1.3 No more than two sets of facilities shall be provided in any one kitchen.

5.2 Design

Each kitchen must be large enough and so designed as to allow for the safe provision and use of all necessary facilities. Kitchens shall be a minimum of 1.8m wide to allow the safe circulation of occupants within the room. Cookers should be located remote from doorways and there should be enough floor space for items to be safely retrieved from the oven. It must be possible to stand directly in front of the cooker and sink and to place utensils down on both sides of each. Sinks, worktops and immediately adjacent walls and floors should be non-porous and smooth to facilitate cleaning. Where two sets of facilities are provided in one kitchen, the layout should allow both sets to be used safely at the same time. [See page 12 for suggested kitchen layouts.]

5.3 Availability

5.3.1 Kitchen facilities shall be made available for use 24 hours a day.

5.3.2 Where it can be shown to the local authority that either by nature of meals being provided elsewhere for the occupants or the manner in which the premises are occupied, provision of kitchen facilities as described above would be excessive, then a lesser standard **may** be applied. However, a minimum of one full set of kitchen facilities will be required in all cases.

5.4 Kitchen Facilities

A complete set of facilities consists of the following – one set of facilities must be provided for every 5 persons – for additional persons see below.

5.4.1 A stainless steel sink and integral drainer set on a base unit shall be provided. The sink shall have constant supplies of hot and cold running water and be properly connected to the drainage system. The cold water shall be direct from the mains supply. A tiled splash back shall be provided to the sink and drainer.

5.4.2 A food storage cupboard at least comprising a 500mm wide base unit or a 1000mm wide wall unit per occupant – this can be provided within each occupant's room. The space in a sink unit below the sink will not be accepted as a food storage cupboard.

5.4.3 A refrigerator with a minimum capacity of 130 litres shall be provided in the kitchen or in a freely accessible position adjoining the kitchen.

5.4.4 Freezer space with a minimum capacity of 60 litres should be provided either within a freezer compartment forming part of a fridge/freezer in addition to the required fridge space or as a separate freezer for each **5** persons with additional capacity of 10 litres per person in excess of **5**.

5.4.5 A worktop of sufficient size shall be provided in the kitchen. The worktop must be level, secure and impervious. The minimum length should be 1000mm and the minimum width should be 600mm.

5.4.6 A minimum of three double 13amp power points shall be provided for each set of kitchen facilities provided in addition to those used for fixed appliances, e.g., washing machines.

5.4.7 The kitchen shall be provided with a gas or electric cooker with 4 ring burners, oven and grill, capable of simultaneous use.

Sharing Ratios

Number of persons irrespective of age	Facilities based on above criteria
1 – 5 people	1 complete set of kitchen facilities as above
6 –7 people	2 complete sets of kitchen facilities as above with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1500mm x 600mm work surface; <i>However</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a combination microwave will be acceptable as a second cooker • a dishwasher will be acceptable as a second sink • 1 x 130 litre refrigerator with an additional 20 litres capacity of refrigerator space per person over 5 • 1 x 60 litre freezer space with an additional 10 litres capacity of freezer space per person over 5
8 –10 people	2 complete sets of kitchen facilities as above with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2000mm X 600mm work surface. <i>However</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x 130 litre refrigerator with an additional 20 litres capacity of refrigerator space per person over 5 • 1 x 60 litre freezer space with an additional 10 litres capacity of freezer space per person over 5.
11 – 12 people	At least 2 separate kitchens containing 3 complete sets of kitchen facilities as above with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2500mm X 600mm work surface. <i>However</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a combination microwave will be acceptable as a third cooker • a dishwasher will be acceptable as a third sink • 2 x 130 litre refrigerators with an additional 20 litres capacity of refrigerator space per person over 10 • 2 x 60 litre freezer space with an additional 10 litres capacity of freezer space per person over 10.
13 – 15 people	At least 2 separate kitchens containing 3 complete sets of kitchen facilities as above with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2500mm X 600mm work surface

6 Means of Escape and Other Fire Precautions

6.1 Protected Escape Route and Fire Warning System

The house should be provided with a minimum 30-minute protected escape route and an appropriate fire warning system. The standard required is assessed by referring to current Building Regulations and the *Fire Safety Risk Assessment Sleeping Accommodation* guide (ISBN 13: 978 1 85112 817 4) published by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Please refer to the Council's publication *Fire Safety in HMOs Good Practice Guidance* for further information.

6.2 Requirements

The requirements may vary according to a risk assessment based on the:

- size of the property
- number of storeys
- number of occupants, and
- type of accommodation.

They may include 30 minute fire doors, half hour fire separation, lobbies, emergency lighting and fire fighting equipment as well as automatic fire detection systems complying with British Standard BS 5839 – 6:2004 Fire detection and fire alarm systems for dwellings – Part 6: Code of practice for the design, installation and maintenance of fire detection and fire alarm systems in dwellings.

7 Management

The *Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006* apply to the property. The manager and owner must be familiar with these Regulations and comply with them fully. A brief summary is as follows: -

7.1 Landlords and Managers are responsible for: -

- 7.1.1 The display, in a prominent position, of a notice giving the name, address and telephone number of the manager.
- 7.1.2 Maintaining the means of escape in case of fire.
- 7.1.3 The protection of the occupiers within the HMO with particular reference to ensuring no accesses to the roof or balcony that is unsafe and ensuring safeguards against falls from windows.
- 7.1.4 Ensuring that the water supply and drainage installations are maintained in good, clean and working condition and are not interrupted.
- 7.1.5 Maintaining gas and electricity supplies to residents and ensuring that competent persons test the systems at appropriate intervals and provide copies of the certificates to the occupiers.
- 7.1.6 Ensuring that all common parts of the HMO are maintained in good and clean decorative repair, maintained in a safe working condition and kept reasonably clear from obstruction.

7.1.7 Repair and maintenance of residents' living accommodation and facilities within the accommodation, including means of ventilation.

7.1.8 Ensuring that sufficient bins or other suitable refuse receptacles are provided for the storage of refuse prior to and awaiting disposal.

7.2 Residents are responsible for: -

7.2.1 Treating the accommodation in a tenant-like manner in accordance with the covenants and conditions of the lease or licence.

7.2.2 Not hindering or frustrating the manager in the performance of his duties.

7.2.3 Allowing the manager to enter the accommodation at all reasonable times to carry out the duties imposed by these Regulations.

7.2.4 Providing the manager with such information as may be reasonably required to carry out such duties under these Regulations.

7.2.5 Avoiding damage to anything that the manager is under duty to supply, maintain or repair under these Regulations.

7.2.6 Complying with the refuse storage and disposal arrangements.

7.2.7 Complying with reasonable instructions in respect of any means of escape from fire, the prevention of fire and the use of fire equipment.

7.3 Recycling and Waste Management

There is an alternate weekly collection system for different types of refuse. Each HMO should have a set of bins based on the number of occupants. The recommendation is:

	Residual waste	for waste to be Recycled		
<i>Number of occupiers</i>	<i>Green wheelie bin</i>	<i>Blue wheelie bin</i>	<i>Blue boxes</i>	<i>Green boxes</i>
3	1 x 240	1 x 240	0	1
4	1 x 360	1 x 240	0	2
5	1 x 360	1 x 240	0	2
6	2 x 240	1 x 360	0	2
7	1 x 360 & 1 x 240	1 x 360	2	2
8	1 x 360 & 1 x 240	2 x 240	0	3
9	2 x 360	1 x 360 & 1 x 240	0	3
10+	Special arrangements will be agreed for 10 or more occupants			

Wheelie bin size based on capacity in litres ~ some charges may apply

For further information about collection arrangements, contact:

Cleansing Services

A: City Works Depot, Marsh Lane, Oxford OX4 2HH,

T: 01865 252 900,

E: recycling@oxford.gov.uk

8 Planning

Planning permission is required for material changes of use of a house. It is likely that a house is used for multiple occupation will need planning permission. If the use has existed for a long period of time (10 years or more), it may be possible to obtain a certificate of lawful use instead of planning permission.

In general, the Council seeks to retain small family houses in single-family use whereas larger houses are assessed on their individual merits. Since the Council may require improvements without prejudice to the planning status of the house, owners and managers are advised to clarify the planning status at an early stage.

Additional consent may be required if the property is a listed building or within a conservation area.

For further information:

Planning Services

A: Ramsay House, 10 St Ebbes Street, Oxford OX1 1PT

T: 01865 252 860

E: planning@oxford.gov.uk

9 Building Control

Works of alteration and/or improvement including those requested by the Council such as drainage works to provide additional bathroom facilities; window replacement or alterations to the electrical system may require Building Regulation or Building Notice approval.

For further information:

Building Control Service

A: Ramsay House, 10 St Ebbes Street, Oxford OX1 1PT

T: 01865 252 896

E: buildingcontrol@oxford.gov.uk

10 Further Information

For further information in respect of the required standard of accommodation, necessary improvement works, management matters and licensing, contact:

Environmental Health

A: Ramsay House, 10 St Ebbes Street, Oxford OX1 1PT

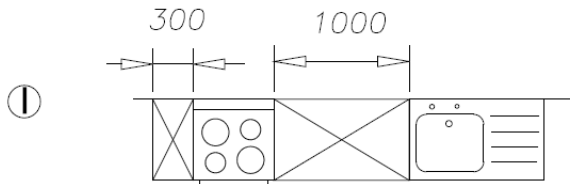
T: 01865 252 307

E: hmos@oxford.gov.uk

KITCHEN LAYOUTS

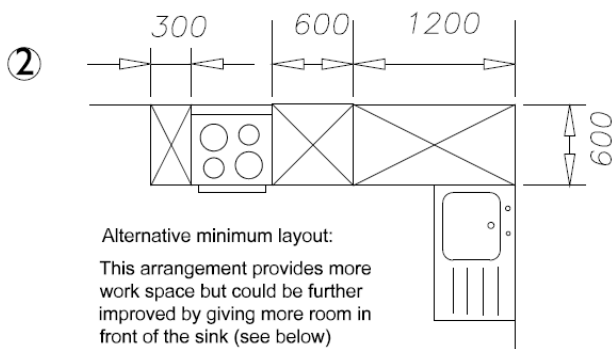
Good Practice

A satisfactory kitchen must be safe, convenient and must allow good hygiene practices. It must be possible to stand directly in front of the cooker and sink and to place utensils down on both sides of each. Worktops must be secure, level and impervious and must be of adequate size. Adjacent walls require splashbacks and power-points must be suitably located.



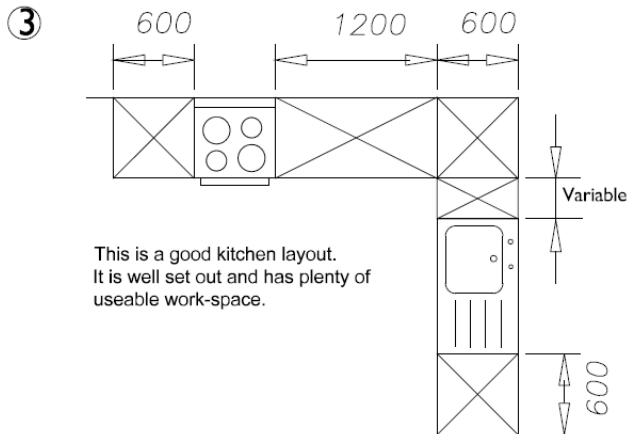
This is the minimum provision for a kitchen. It incorporates worktop on both sides of the cooker and working space both sides of the sink-bowl

Note: The 300mm worktop is a minimum and should be made wider where possible.



Alternative minimum layout:

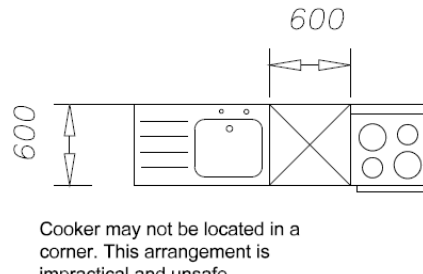
This arrangement provides more work space but could be further improved by giving more room in front of the sink (see below)



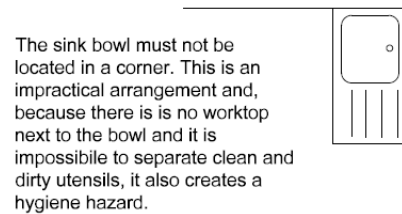
This is a good kitchen layout. It is well set out and has plenty of useable work-space.

Unacceptable

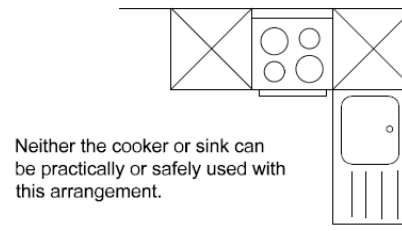
Cookers cannot be safely used if they are located in corners, do not have adequate worktop on both sides or are too close to sinks. Sinks require space to put dirty utensils on one side and clean on the other.



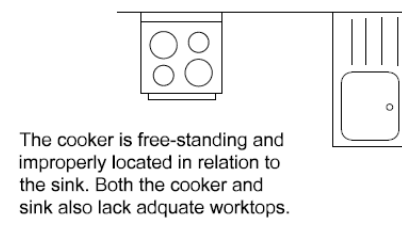
Cooker may not be located in a corner. This arrangement is impractical and unsafe.



The sink bowl must not be located in a corner. This is an impractical arrangement and, because there is no worktop next to the bowl and it is impossible to separate clean and dirty utensils, it also creates a hygiene hazard.



Neither the cooker or sink can be practically or safely used with this arrangement.



The cooker is free-standing and improperly located in relation to the sink. Both the cooker and sink also lack adequate worktops.

This arrangement is impractical and unsafe. Adding worktops will still not give a practical and safe kitchen.