

# Know your kitchen

**T**HE kitchen is the heart of the home, a place to celebrate, entertain, dine and cook in. Considering its importance, it is surprising how little most of us really know about this very important part of the home.

Federal Furniture Lifestyle is embarking on a series of articles that will help educate you on everything about kitchens and will touch on a wide variety of subjects such as the type of materials used in cabinets and doors, door styles, worktops, accessories, basics of kitchen design, sink and taps, storage solutions and many more.

To start, the cabinet is essentially made up of the body and the door and in this article, Federal Furniture Lifestyle will touch on what you should look for when evaluating the quality.

The body is almost always made from wood engineered products that include particleboard, medium density fibreboard (MDF) or plywood although by far the most commonly used material is the particleboard or sometimes called the chipboard.

Particleboard is manufactured by mixing wood composites that are basically wood particles of varying sizes and resin that are then pressed into sheets under high temperature before being cooled and sanded.

The particleboard panels are then overlaid with various types of surface finishing materials such as specially printed and impregnated paper, aluminium foil, real wood veneers or high pressure laminates (such as the well known brand Formica).

The extensive use of particleboard for



At Symphony, cabinets are put together with a combination of traditional wood dowels and the latest metallic fixtures.

kitchen cabinets is attributable to its low cost compared to MDF or plywood especially where appearance is not the main consideration. Paper is usually used as an overlay for the raw particleboard to keep costs down.

The main disadvantages of particleboard are it is prone to swelling when exposed to moisture, has rougher surface and lower strength compared to MDF and plywood.

When evaluating the quality of the cabinet, it is important that you check the thickness and the grade of particleboard

used. The industry standard for kitchen cabinets in Malaysia is particleboard of 16mm thickness laminated with white paper overlay.

Also check the method of construction of the cabinet, and what type of wall brackets are used to hang the wall units. All these factors will determine the overall quality of the product.

At Symphony, the body and shelves are made of 18mm thick particleboard and they manufacture their cabinets using moisture resistant chipboard that offers a greater degree of protection in the

Malaysian kitchen environment.

Symphony's products undergo rigorous testing and conform to British Standard (BS) 6222 Part 2 Level H (Heavy Domestic Use), which is the highest level for strength and has been awarded the BSI Kitemark and the FIRA Gold Award, the ultimate mark of product excellence within the furniture industry.

At Symphony, cabinets are put together with a combination of traditional wood dowels and the latest metallic cam fixtures. This gives the body a very strong construction.

Their wall units are hung onto the walls using concealed fully adjustable wall brackets. Be sure the wall units of your kitchen cabinets are securely fastened to your wall with such brackets, and not just with simple wood screws.

When shopping for your kitchen, do remember to put the quality of the body as one of your key purchase considerations as it has a major bearing on the durability of your kitchen.

On the design front Symphony's fitted cabinet comes in a choice of seven interior colours, allowing you to choose a colour that matches closest to the colour and design of your doors and drawers.

Symphony kitchens are fully imported from the UK by Federal Furniture Lifestyle and their showroom is located in Bandar Puteri directly opposite the Giant hypermarket.

For more information or free consultation, call Federal Furniture Lifestyle at 03-8060 1813 or visit their virtual showroom at [www.fff.com.my](http://www.fff.com.my).

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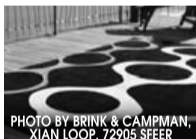


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