

Breakfast Is Served

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Widely spaced battens on the wainscoting ensure that dining won't be a pain in the back. Banquette seats should be 18 inches high, with a "heel kick" at floor level.

...In a Cozy Corner

Because you need to slide chairs in and out, and because a table should measure 30 inches across, a table and freestanding chairs aren't the most efficient way to configure an informal eating area. If space is at a premium in your house, consider a banquette in place of some or all of the chairs. A table with built-in benches on two sides occupies less than half the floor space that a table and chairs requires, yet seats the same number of people.

Lee and Lori Zajic, partners in a Portland, Oregon, remodeling firm, put banquettes to good use in a corner of their remodeled kitchen. Lee built the Craftsman-style seating units, and Lori topped them with cushions and pillows. Lee also crafted wainscoting that serves as seat backs, and he made the shallow display shelving above.

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