

Cabinet Doors - Measuring for 1-1/4 Inch Overlay Replacement Doors

The two most common overlay options for cabinet doors on face-framed cabinets are 1/2" overlay and 1-1/4" overlay. Here we'll discuss 1-1/4" overlay which is a bit more complicated than the 1/2" overlay option.

Even with the complexities, the 1-1/4" overlay option has grown in popularity in recent years. There are a few reasons for this:

- It feeds off of the contemporary styling of frameless cabinets while maintaining the traditional face-framed look.
- The larger door and drawer front sizes allow room for a raised panel on all but the smallest of drawers.
- The larger sizes bring more focus to the doors. This is especially important with the increased popularity of mitered and applied molding doors, allowing this level of custom detailing to stand out more.

We'll start the sizing discussion with a simple 18"w x 36"h wall cabinet. Again, this is pretty simple. Measure the opening (always!!). You'll probably find it sized at 15"w x 33"h. The 1-1/4" overlay requires you to add that amount to the four sides (left and right *stiles*, top and bottom *rails*), adding 2-1/2" to the width and adding 2-1/2" to the height. The size of the door becomes 17-1/2"w x 35-1/2"h.

If we use a wider wall cabinet, say 30"w x 36"h with a single opening covered by a pair of doors, then the routine starts the same way. Calculate the total door size (29-1/2"w x 35-1/2"h), divide the width by two (now 14-3/4"w) and subtract 1/16" from the width of each so that the doors don't rub. The size is 14-11/16"w x 35-1/2"h.

The trickier part comes when the cabinet has multiple openings with a shared *rail* (horizontal) or *stile* (vertical) between them. Common examples would be a door/drawer base cabinet, a two-opening-two-door wall cabinet, or a 3-drawer base, but there are many other permutations. In these situations, you cannot have a 1-1/4" overlay on the shared *rail* or *stile* because the doors or drawers would overlap each other! Instead, the typical solution is this: Use a 1-1/4" overlay on any side of the door or drawer that does not meet up with another door or drawer on that same *rail* or *stile*, but use a 1/2" overlay on the sides with a shared *rail* or *stile*. So, on a typical door/drawer cabinet, the top of the door would get a 1/2" overlay, the bottom of the drawer front would get a 1/2" overlay, and all the other sides would get a 1-1/4" overlay. So the calculation for the width in this example is (opening-width + 2-1/2") and the height is (opening-height + 1-3/4").

Really, it's not all that complex, but it is usually a good idea to draw out each multiple-opening cabinet on graph paper and write down each overlay along with the opening sizes. After it's drawn, calculate the sizes. (On our website, we have a tool that does this for you.)

The principles are the same for other large overlay options, but the actual measurements depend on the size of the overlay and the size of the cabinet frame. In general, you'll use

the full overlay size wherever you can fit it. When two doors or drawer fronts share the *railor stile*, decide how much of a gap you want to see between the adjacent doors and drawers. Subtract the gap from the frame size, then divide the rest by two to get the overlay for that side. (When trying to go for the biggest overlay possible, make sure you understand the hinge requirements! Most face-frame hinges need 1/4" of clearance.)

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