



HOW TO CHOOSE: CUBICLES & WORKSTATIONS

Choosing modular office cubicles is complicated for most small business owners and office managers. If it's your responsibility to select a solution, this list of steps that should help you get the job done efficiently and within your budget.

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Orientation: Open vs Private

What is the most effective way for people to work in your office environment? Do some need more privacy, or should some be oriented in pairs, or in an “open-plan” layout? Do you need any special types of stations for management or a receptionist?

Footprint & Quantity

Determine the amount of workspace appropriate for each workstation based on scope of work. The most common size is 6 ft x 8 ft. Depending on the type work, most companies use 6 ft square or 8 ft square workstation footprints. Identify the number of each type of station you need right now, and how many you might need in the future.

Storage Needs: Filing and Shelving

Evaluate the amount of storage space that would best support the work being done. Your choices include file drawers, above the desk shelves, paper management trays, and pencil drawers. Some of your employees may benefit from having additional file drawers located next to or within their workstations.

Special Functions and Accessories

Do any of your employees need deeper than normal work surfaces, or extra meeting spaces built-in to their work area? Would putting whiteboards in the workstations reduce the demand on your meeting rooms? Will ergonomically correct keyboard trays reduce the chance of workplace injury?

Identify Needs & Wants

Many factors can have a significant impact on the cost of your furniture. It is important to understand your priorities and how they will affect the cost of your purchase. Options like:

- Quality
- Style
- Brand
- Finishes
- Age of the furniture
- Layout of your office space.

If you clearly understand your requirements (needs) and preferences (wants), it'll be easier to know what compromises you can and can't make to save money.

Time Frame for Furniture Installation

Determine the time frame for your furniture to be installed. Be sure to consider other major scheduling issues such as painting, carpet, electrical, and the data/voice cabling. Most furniture dealers will coordinate their work with your other contractors.

Solutions: New, Remanufactured, or Pre-Owned?

The good news is that in today's market you have many choices when buying modular workstations. And if you understand the trade-offs of each option, you can make a well educated purchase decision, and one that's right for you.

New Furniture: Generally the most expensive option, buying new furniture gives you the greatest number of choices with regard to color, style, and functionality. It also comes without wear and tear, and usually makes it easy to get matching product in the future. Unfortunately, it often has the longest delivery time.

Refurbished Furniture: Provides a cost savings over comparable new furniture lines, and is often available in quicker delivery times. Refurbished furniture will give the buyer some options for new fabrics and finishes. Product offerings usually accommodate the most common functionality requirements.

Pre-Owned Furniture: With Pre-Owned furniture, you can gain significant cost savings over comparable new and remanufactured furniture options. Your product choices are more limited because you must choose from available inventories that can involve compromises in terms of color and other features. Provides the quickest delivery because these solutions are usually stored on-hand by the furniture dealer.

“Newsed” Furniture: Combining the best benefits of both new and used furniture, this option typically costs less than remanufactured furniture and more than used furniture. By purchasing new panels along with used internal components, such as work surfaces and drawers, it can look like you bought all new furniture, but save some serious money.

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