



# OFFICE FURNITURE BUYING GUIDE

Selecting the right furniture for your office benefits both your employees and your budget. The furniture you choose should help your staff work more efficiently and comfortably, fostering a happy and healthy work environment. It should also offer flexibility, value, and room for growth. Office furniture is a significant purchase, but it's also a smart investment for your company.

While there is no one-size-fits-all solution, there are common questions related to purchasing office furniture. Within this guide, we address the top four considerations and provide straightforward advice and solutions for your business.

## CHOOSE VALUE OVER PRICE

A common mistake people make when buying office furniture is focusing solely on cost. It's natural to experience some sticker shock during the selection process, but remember that prioritizing quality and durability will be worthwhile over time. While it's tempting to purchase less expensive furniture to save money in the immediate future, it's healthier for your bottom line to invest in a lasting long-term solution.

Consider the role of each piece of furniture in your office. How often will you use it? How will it affect daily employee comfort and productivity? What will repairs or replacement cost? Weigh its initial price tag with how much value it will provide over the course of its lifetime. If your budget is limited, invest in the high-traffic, high-visibility parts of the office – such as employee workstations, conference rooms and reception areas – and save money in less-frequented sections. If new office furniture is simply out of reach, buying used or refurbished furniture is one way your business can strike the right balance between cost and value.



## EMPLOYEE COMFORT IS KEY

Providing an inviting and comfortable workspace not only influences efficiency, but also boosts morale and retention. Employee comfort should be a top priority as you furnish your office. People spend long hours at their workstations, so invest in desks and chairs with ergonomic features like lumbar support, adjustable armrests, and countered seats to make a big impact on employee happiness and productivity. Factors such as sufficient storage, proper lighting, and privacy and sound insulation also create a functional and pleasant work environment.

Other spaces that contribute to employee comfort and retention include relaxed breakout and lounge areas. These rooms are more personalized and less formal than traditional meeting rooms, and they create a warm, casual environment for employees to meet and socialize.

## BUY WITH A STRATEGY IN MIND

Your company's furniture needs will change over time. Evaluate your staff size and office plan now. How do you estimate it will evolve in the future? Will you require more space for collaboration, or additional offices for executives? Will you need to expand your manufacturing area, or add more workstations in a few years' time? What pieces could you buy now, and build onto later, to use your space most efficiently? Develop a strategy that supports your business now and in the future.

Keep company growth in mind as you're planning the layout of the space and making furniture decisions. Count on technology and equipment evolving over the next few years, and look for furniture that can be adapted to meet your changing needs. For instance, set aside enough space to add more seats in a year, and opt for a beam benching system can be reconfigured to many different layouts.

## NEGOTIATE FURNITURE INTO THE COST OF THE LEASE

Prior to negotiating a new lease, gather quotes for office furniture – whether new, used, or refurbished – and incorporate the cost into the negotiation strategy. If furniture costs \$20 per square foot, the landlord could potentially help offset some of the expenses as part of the lease concession package.

A tenant improvement allowance is often available for commercial real estate clients to improve and customize their new office, as well as increase the overall value of the property. When speaking with the broker or landlord, ask if this allowance is applicable and what it covers. You may be able to use it for furnishings, as well as flooring, paint, or kitchen appliances.

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