

Mobile Pedestals

These are the 10 most commonly asked questions about mobile pedestals for commercial office environments, with straightforward answers to help you make a confident, well-informed purchase decision.

Top 10 Questions — Mobile Pedestals

1

What is a mobile pedestal and what are the drawer configurations?

A mobile pedestal is a rolling under-desk storage unit on locking casters, typically 15–18 inches wide, 20–24 inches deep, and 27–28 inches tall — sized to roll under a standard desk surface. The three main configurations are BBF (box/box/file — two shallow supply drawers plus one deep file drawer), FF (file/file — two full-depth file drawers for maximum filing capacity), and BF (box/file — one supply drawer plus one file drawer). BBF is the most versatile and most common configuration for general knowledge workers who need both supply storage and hanging file capability. FF is used by heavy filers or legal/administrative roles. A central lock on the top box drawer typically interlocks with the file drawer below, securing both with a single key.

2

What size files do mobile pedestal drawers hold — letter or legal?

Standard mobile pedestal file drawers accommodate letter-size hanging folders (8.5" × 11") natively. Legal-size folders (8.5" × 14") require a pedestal with at least 15–16 inches of interior drawer width and are often specified separately as 'legal-size' configurations. Always confirm letter vs. legal capability when ordering — not all pedestals support legal-size files and the distinction is not always obvious in product listings. The most practical approach for most offices is to standardize on letter-size filing, which is supported by all mobile pedestals, and reserve legal-size specifications only for roles that actively use legal-size documents (legal departments, real estate, contracts management).

3**Should I choose a fixed pedestal or a mobile pedestal?**

Fixed pedestals are built into or attached to the desk structure and cannot be removed without disassembling the desk — they provide the cleanest appearance and maximum structural stability but cannot be repositioned. Mobile pedestals on locking casters roll under the desk and can be moved anywhere — to the other side of the desk, to a shared space, or alongside a different desk entirely. Mobile pedestals are the standard choice for open-plan and hot-desking environments where employees move between stations, for organizations that frequently reconfigure their furniture layout, and as supplemental storage alongside fixed-pedestal desks. In hybrid environments where employees don't have a permanently assigned desk, a mobile pedestal that travels with the employee is a practical personal storage solution.

4**Do mobile pedestals lock and how important is the lock?**

Yes — commercial mobile pedestals include a central lock (typically a cam lock or pin-tumbler cylinder) that secures all drawers simultaneously through an interlock mechanism. The lock is important for securing personal items, confidential documents, medications, and valuables when the user steps away from their workstation. In open-plan and hot-desking environments where adjacent users could easily access unlocked storage, the lock is essential. Many pedestals use interchangeable lock cores so the same key can be used across all pedestals on a floor — convenient for facilities management. When ordering multiple pedestals, specify whether keyed-alike or keyed-different configurations are needed.

5**What are the caster and anti-tip requirements for mobile pedestals?**

Mobile pedestals use four swivel casters on the base — specify soft polyurethane (PU) casters for hard floors to prevent scratching and marking; use hard casters for carpeted surfaces. At least two of the four casters should be locking casters — these keep the pedestal stationary when it is parked under the desk during use. Anti-tip interlock is a safety feature that prevents multiple drawers from being opened simultaneously — opening two heavy loaded file drawers at once significantly raises the unit's center of gravity and can cause it to tip. Specify commercial-grade pedestals with anti-tip interlocks for any environment where loaded file drawers will be accessed regularly. Never exceed the pedestal's rated weight capacity in any single drawer.

6**What is the standard size of a mobile pedestal and will it fit under my desk?**

Standard mobile pedestals are 15–18 inches wide, 20–24 inches deep, and 27–28 inches tall (including casters). Most desks have an under-surface clearance of 27–29 inches from the floor, so a 27-inch-tall pedestal rolls under with minimal clearance — measure your desk's under-surface clearance before ordering. Desk depth of 24 inches minimum is needed to park a 20-inch-deep pedestal fully under the desk surface with the front face flush. Wider pedestals (18 inches) are common on desks with returns or corner units. When specifying pedestals as part of a desk suite, verify the pedestal dimensions against the desk's stated pedestal bay dimensions rather than assuming standard sizes will fit.

7**Can mobile pedestals be used in benching environments?**

Yes — mobile pedestals are the primary personal storage solution in benching environments precisely because benching systems eliminate the built-in under-desk pedestals that traditional panel-based workstations include. A BBF mobile pedestal per station in a benching environment provides the supply and file storage that the shared bench structure cannot. In hot-desking benching environments, mobile pedestals travel with the employee rather than staying at a fixed station — employees roll their pedestal to whichever station they claim for the day. This requires locking casters (to park securely at the station), a reliable lock, and a coordinated pedestal-to-employee ratio in the storage planning. Some benching systems are designed with a dedicated pedestal bay at each station.

8**What is a cushion-top mobile pedestal and when is it useful?**

A cushion-top mobile pedestal has a padded upholstered top surface, doubling as a seating option for visitors or casual standing-desk perching alongside the primary work surface. The cushioned top is typically 15 inches wide and supports 250–300 lbs for seating use. Cushion-top pedestals are popular in open-plan environments, collaborative team areas, and small private offices where a second chair would consume too much floor space. The cushion is usually removable for cleaning. When specifying a cushion-top pedestal, confirm the upholstery material is contract-grade (250,000+ double rubs) since the top surface will experience the same varied-user exposure as guest seating. Cushion-top pedestals are slightly taller than standard models — verify clearance under the desk.

9**How should mobile pedestals be finished to match my desk?**

Mobile pedestals are available in laminate and painted steel finishes. Laminate pedestals (the most common in commercial office settings) match the desk's surface finish — specify from the same manufacturer's collection as the desk to ensure an accurate finish match. Standard finishes include espresso, harvest cherry, modern walnut, white, and gray, coordinating with the same finish families available on desk surfaces. Painted steel pedestals (available in black, silver, and gray powder coat) are a more contemporary, industrial option and are often paired with modern desk designs featuring metal frames. The top surface finish of the pedestal is the most visible element — it should match the desk surface closely or be intentionally contrasting (painted steel pedestal with laminate desk) for a modern mixed-material aesthetic.

10**What is full-extension vs. three-quarter extension on pedestal drawers?**

Full-extension drawer slides allow a drawer to open 100% of its depth, providing complete access to the entire contents including the back corners. Three-quarter extension slides open approximately 75% of the drawer depth, leaving the rear 25% partially inaccessible without reaching into the drawer. For file drawers, full extension is essential — folders at the back of a three-quarter extension drawer are difficult to access and prevent the drawer from being used to its full capacity. For shallow supply drawers (box drawers), three-quarter extension is adequate since supplies in shallow drawers are generally accessible without reaching deep. Always specify full-extension slides on file drawers — the cost premium is minimal and the daily usability improvement is significant.

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