Sit-Stand Desks

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

Top 10 Questions — Sit-Stand Desks

1

What is the recommended height range for a sit-stand desk?

The recommended height range for a commercial sit-stand desk is 22 to 48 inches (desk surface to floor). This range accommodates users from approximately 5'0" to 6'4" in both sitting and standing positions — a user at 5'0" needs a sitting height as low as 22–25 inches, while a user at 6'4" needs a standing height up to 43–48 inches. Desks with a narrower range, such as 28–46 inches, will not accommodate shorter users in a proper seated ergonomic position. When ordering for a workplace with diverse user heights, prioritize desks with a minimum sitting height of 22–24 inches and a maximum standing height of at least 48 inches. If a keyboard tray is used, factor in an additional 1–2 inches of drop below the surface when calculating the required range.

2

What is the difference between a single-motor and dual-motor sit-stand desk?

Dual-motor sit-stand desks use two motors — one per leg — to lift the desk evenly and simultaneously. This configuration handles heavier loads (200–350 lbs), operates faster (approximately 1.5 inches per second), and provides more stable lifting under asymmetric loads — for example, when one side of the desk has significantly more weight than the other. Single-motor desks use one motor driving both legs through a shared axle or belt; they are typically slower (about 1 inch per second), have lower weight capacity (150–220 lbs), and may experience uneven lifting under heavy or asymmetric loads over time. For commercial workstations with multiple monitors, a desktop computer, and accessories, dual-motor is the standard specification. Single-motor is adequate for light laptop-only setups where budget is a primary constraint.

3

How do I know if my sit-stand desk is stable enough at standing height?

Stability at standing height is one of the most critical and most overlooked specifications for sit-stand desks. A desk that wobbles when raised undermines confidence and discourages users from actually standing. Key stability indicators include frame construction: crossbar-stabilized or H-frame bases are significantly more stable than T-frame or two-leg designs at full extension. Steel gauge matters — 14-gauge steel is the commercial standard for legs and cross-members. Test or verify the desk at its maximum standing height (not sitting height), as wobble increases with extension. Weight distribution also matters — spread equipment evenly across the surface rather than concentrating weight on one side. A desk with more than a few millimeters of sway at the top of the surface when you press lightly is inadequate for commercial daily use.

4

What features should I look for in a sit-stand desk controller?

At minimum, the controller should include programmable memory presets — typically 3 or 4 positions — so users can return to their preferred sitting and standing heights with one button press rather than manually adjusting every time. Without presets, most users stop adjusting the desk after the first week because the manual adjustment process is too inconvenient. Anti-collision sensors are a critical safety feature: if the desk encounters resistance while moving (a chair, a person, an obstacle), it should stop and reverse automatically. A height display showing the current surface height in inches or centimeters helps new users find their correct ergonomic position. Some controllers include a sit-stand reminder timer that prompts the user to change position every 30–60 minutes — a useful feature for users building a new habit of regular position changes.

5

What is the standard surface size for a commercial sit-stand desk?

The commercial standard surface size for sit-stand desks is 60 inches wide by 30 inches deep. The 60-inch width accommodates a dual-monitor setup with room for a keyboard, mouse, and a phone or small peripheral. The 30-inch depth provides adequate monitor viewing distance — placing a monitor at the back of a 30-inch surface positions it approximately 24–28 inches from a user's eyes, within the ergonomically recommended 20–40 inch range. For power users with triple monitors or large curved displays, a 72-inch wide surface is available. Avoid 24-inch deep surfaces for monitor-based workstations — the shallower depth forces the monitor closer than recommended and leaves insufficient room for a keyboard and mouse at a proper distance from the front edge.

6

What is the difference between a sit-stand desk converter and a full sit-stand desk?

A sit-stand converter is a platform placed on top of an existing fixed desk that raises the monitor and keyboard to standing height — the base desk itself does not move. Converters are a lower-cost entry point for offices that already have fixed-height desks and want to add standing capability without replacing furniture. However, converters have significant limitations: they typically raise the keyboard and monitor to a fixed standing height that may not be optimal for all users, they reduce available desk surface when in use, and they do not provide the full ergonomic flexibility of adjusting from a true sitting position to standing. A full sit-stand desk replaces the entire workstation and provides the full 22–48 inch range, programmable presets, and proper ergonomics in both positions. For new furniture purchases, a full sit-stand desk is the better long-term investment.

7

How do I manage cables on a sit-stand desk?

Cable management on a sit-stand desk must accommodate the full range of desk travel — cables must have enough slack to follow the desk from its lowest position (22–24 inches) to its highest (45–48 inches), a range of 20–26 inches. Use a flexible cable spine or retractable coil that mounts vertically between the desk and the floor, providing a service loop that expands and contracts with each height change. For cables running across the desk surface, use a under-surface wire management tray to keep them organized and off the work area. Avoid routing cables through a fixed floor grommet near the desk if the desk will travel its full range — the cable will pull taut at maximum height. At the monitor end, use velcro cable wraps (not zip ties) so cables can be adjusted without cutting. Plan cable management at order time, as most manufacturers offer integrated solutions that are cleaner than aftermarket additions.

8

How long should I stand per day at a sit-stand desk?

Ergonomics experts recommend alternating between sitting and standing every 30–60 minutes rather than standing for extended uninterrupted periods. A practical starting guideline is a 3:1 ratio — approximately 45 minutes sitting followed by 15 minutes standing — adjusting as comfort develops over the first few weeks. New users should not attempt to stand for several hours at a time immediately; gradual introduction prevents foot and lower-back fatigue that can make the experience negative. Anti-fatigue mats are strongly recommended for standing periods — a mat with 3/4-inch to 1-inch cushioning significantly reduces leg and foot fatigue during standing. Supportive footwear also matters: standing in flat shoes on hard flooring without a mat will cause discomfort within 20–30 minutes for most people, which discourages continued use.

9

What weight capacity do I need for my sit-stand desk?

Always choose a sit-stand desk with a weight capacity well above the actual load you plan to place on it, as operating a motor at or near its rated maximum reduces its lifespan significantly. For a single-monitor plus laptop setup (30–50 lbs total equipment), a 150-lb capacity desk provides adequate headroom. For a dual-monitor plus desktop computer setup (60–90 lbs total), specify a 200-lb-capacity or higher model. Triple monitors and heavy equipment (90–130 lbs) require at least a 300-lb-rated desk. When calculating load, include all items: monitors, monitor arms, computer tower or docking station, keyboard, mouse, phone, desk lamp, and anything else that lives on the surface permanently. Dual-motor desks inherently provide higher weight capacity and are the right specification for any setup beyond a single-monitor configuration.

10

What anti-fatigue mat should I use with my sit-stand desk?

Anti-fatigue mats for standing desks should be at least 3/4 inch thick, with a firm but slightly cushioned surface — mats that are too soft (like foam yoga mats) cause instability and actually increase leg fatigue. Look for mats with beveled edges on all four sides to eliminate trip hazards. Size the mat to match your standing footprint: a 20-inch by 32-inch mat is a common minimum; a 24-inch by 36-inch mat provides more room for weight shifting, which is the primary mechanism through which anti-fatigue mats reduce discomfort. For sit-stand desks, choose a mat that can be easily slid under the desk when not in use — this keeps the floor clear during seated work and prevents the mat from becoming a tripping hazard for anyone passing by the workstation.

Have more questions? Our office furniture specialists are ready to help.

www.OfficeFurniture2go.com