

Storage Cabinets

These are the 5 most commonly asked questions about storage cabinets for commercial office environments, with straightforward answers to help you make a confident, well-informed purchase decision.

Top 5 Questions — Storage Cabinets

1

What is the difference between a tall storage cabinet and a low storage cabinet?

Tall storage cabinets (also called wardrobe cabinets) are 65–72 inches high with full-height double doors and multiple adjustable shelves — some models include a garment rod for coat storage. They maximize vertical storage in utility areas like breakrooms, mailrooms, and supply rooms, but their height creates visual weight in a room and requires wall anchoring for safety in most installations. Low storage cabinets are 36–42 inches high (counter height), with two doors and one to two adjustable shelves; their top surface doubles as a usable work surface for printers, copiers, or secondary work areas. For private offices and under-window installations, low cabinets preserve sight lines and make the room feel more open. Most commercial offices use a combination: tall units in utility areas where vertical storage capacity is the priority, and low units in occupied work areas where the top surface is needed and visual openness matters.

2

What locking options are available for storage cabinets?

Storage cabinet locking systems range from basic cam locks to high-security electronic access. Cam locks are the most common — a single rotating cylinder engages a cam behind the door or drawer, providing general-purpose security for office supplies and personal items. Bar locks (also called interlocks) use a vertical steel bar to engage multiple drawers simultaneously from a single lock point, securing an entire tall cabinet with one key. Pin-tumbler cylinders offer higher pick resistance and are specified for regulated materials, confidential records, HR files, and high-value items. Master key systems allow one master key to open all cabinets in a department or floor while individual keys remain assigned to specific units — essential for facilities management in large installations. Electronic keypad or RFID card-access locks are appropriate for shared environments where authorized users change frequently, as access lists can be updated without physical re-keying.

3**What shelf weight capacity should I look for in a commercial storage cabinet?**

Commercial-grade laminate shelves with steel reinforcement are rated at 75–150 lbs per shelf under evenly distributed load — the standard for most office storage applications. Residential-grade particleboard shelves without steel reinforcement typically sag under sustained loads over 50 lbs and are not appropriate for commercial environments. To assess whether a shelf rating is adequate, estimate the heaviest load it will carry: a full ream of copy paper weighs approximately 5 lbs, so 10 reams on one shelf equals 50 lbs; a shelf full of binders can reach 40–80 lbs depending on binder size and spacing. Specify adjustable-shelf pin systems rated for the expected maximum load before ordering — adjustable shelves that are not properly rated will bow or fail under sustained heavy loads. Steel shelves are the highest-capacity option and are appropriate for mailrooms and supply areas where paper and heavy materials are stored.

4**What door style should I choose for my storage cabinet?**

Door style affects daily usability, aesthetics, and the clearance required in front of the cabinet. Hinged swing doors are the most common — they swing outward on concealed or piano hinges and provide full-width access to the interior, but require clear space in front equal to the full door width. Sliding doors move horizontally on a track and require no front clearance, making them ideal for tight spaces and busy aisles — the trade-off is that only half the cabinet interior is accessible at a time. Tambour (roll-up) doors consist of horizontal slats that roll into housing above the opening, providing full-face access with zero swing clearance — the best choice for credenzas and admin areas in high-traffic spaces. Glass doors in aluminum or wood frames are used in display cabinets, reception areas, and executive offices where the contents are meant to be visible. For high-traffic administrative areas, tambour doors provide the best combination of full-width access and zero clearance requirement.

5**Do tall storage cabinets need to be anchored to the wall?**

Yes — any freestanding cabinet over 48 inches tall should be anchored to the wall using anti-tip hardware, and in California and other Zone 4 seismic areas, wall anchoring is required by building code for commercial occupancies. Fully loaded tall cabinets can exceed 300–400 lbs — a tipping event caused by a partially opened drawer, an earthquake, or an accidental bump creates a serious life-safety risk. The strongest anchoring method is a through-bolt or lag bolt through the cabinet back panel directly into a wall stud or concrete anchor — drywall anchors alone are not adequate for the forces generated by a tall, fully loaded cabinet. Anti-tip straps (heavy-duty nylon with two mounting points) are the simplest method; steel L-brackets bolted to the top rear of the cabinet and into a stud provide more rigid attachment. Always verify that anchoring hardware is included with the cabinet or order it separately at the time of purchase.

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

www.OfficeFurniture2go.com