

U-Shaped Desks

1 A minimum 12'×12' room is required — smaller rooms cause dangerous clearance issues

U-desks occupy three walls of a room's corner. With the desk in place, the user needs at least 48" of clear space behind the chair and open paths on both sides. Rooms under 12'×12' rarely achieve this safely.

3 Plan cable management for all three surfaces independently

Each surface of a U-desk may have its own monitors, devices, and power needs. A single grommet at the main surface won't serve the returns. Plan separate cable access points for each surface zone.

5 U-desks ship in multiple large cartons — verify delivery access

U-desk components are heavy and oversized. Verify that the delivery address has elevator access, freight-rated elevators if above floor one, and hallway widths of at least 36" minimum. Building access issues are the most common delivery problem.

7 Full-extension drawer slides are worth specifying on file pedestals

Full-extension slides allow the drawer to open completely, giving full access to the back of the drawer. 3/4-extension slides leave the rear 25% of the drawer inaccessible — a real problem for deep file drawers.

9 Bridge panels between surfaces must be specified — they are not always standard

Bridges connect the main surface to the returns and are critical for a seamless work surface. Some manufacturers include them; others sell them separately. Always confirm whether bridges are included in the quoted configuration.

2 The open end of the U should face the room entrance

The user should be able to stand and exit without walking around the desk. Orient the open end toward the door. This also keeps visitors at a natural conversational distance at the open end rather than feeling blocked.

4 Overhead storage (hutch) on a U-desk can create a fortress effect

A hutch above the main surface with returns on both sides creates a very enclosed workspace. Some executives prefer this; others feel isolated. Confirm with the end user before specifying overhead storage.

6 Peninsula configurations allow visitor seating on the open side

A peninsula-style U-desk extends one return into the room rather than against the wall, creating a natural visitor seating area across from the user. This works well for managers or advisors who meet frequently.

8 Anti-tip interlocks are essential when multiple drawers are present

When a U-desk has pedestals on both returns, opening multiple drawers simultaneously can shift the center of gravity. Specify pedestals with anti-tip interlocks that prevent more than one drawer from opening at a time.

10 Adjustable-height versions of U-desks exist but require significant floor clearance

Electric height-adjustable U-desks require clear floor space under all three surfaces for the leg mechanisms. This typically adds 4"–6" of depth to each surface footprint. Room size requirements increase accordingly.