

Whiteboards & Boards

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Visual communication boards are essential tools in every functioning workplace. Whether used for brainstorming sessions, project tracking, team announcements, classroom instruction, or daily operational updates, the right board transforms blank wall space into an active, productive surface. This guide from OfficeFurniture2go covers every board type — from standard dry-erase whiteboards and magnetic surfaces to glass boards, cork bulletin boards, combination units, and mobile rolling boards — along with sizing, mounting, maintenance, and space planning considerations.

1. Types of Whiteboards

Whiteboards come in several distinct surface types, each with different performance characteristics, durability, and aesthetic appeal. Understanding these differences is critical to matching the right board to the environment.

Surface Type	Characteristics	Best For
Melamine	Entry-level; porous surface; ghosts within 6–12 months of daily use; not magnetic	Personal offices, light/infrequent use
Painted Steel	Magnetic; significantly more durable than melamine; mid-range price	Conference rooms, training rooms, classrooms
Porcelain	Premium; fused enamel on steel; virtually ghost-proof; magnetic; 25-year+ warranty	High-traffic rooms, daily heavy use
Glass	Tempered glass; zero ghosting; not magnetic unless steel-backed; heaviest option	Executive offices, reception areas, modern spaces
Dry-Erase Paint/Film	Converts walls to writable surface; no frame; limited longevity vs. dedicated boards	Creative studios, large collaboration walls

2. Bulletin Boards and Tackboards

Bulletin boards provide a passive display surface — a place to pin, tack, or attach documents without damaging the wall behind them.

Type	Key Features	Best For
Fabric Tackboard	Self-healing pin holes; 15–30+ colors; fiberglass core; ASTM E-84 Class A fire rating	Commercial hallways, HR offices, schools
Cork	Natural aesthetic; pins easily; pin holes degrade; discolors with age	Private offices, home offices, light use
Self-Healing (High-Density)	Foam/fiberglass composite closes around pin holes; heavy-use rated	Job boards, event planning walls, project tracking

3. Combination Boards

Combination boards integrate two surface types in a single frame — most commonly a whiteboard on one half and a tackboard on the other. They serve both real-time writing and document display without requiring two separate installations.

Standard configurations include half-and-half splits (50/50), quarter-quarter splits, whiteboard with cork/fabric borders, and premium porcelain + fabric combinations. Standard sizes range from 4 × 4 to 4 × 12 ft.

4. Mobile and Rolling Boards

Mobile whiteboard stands allow boards to be moved between rooms, repositioned within a room, or stowed when not needed.

- Single-sided: one writing surface; back typically cork or plain
- Double-sided: both faces are writing surfaces; ideal for breakout sessions
- Easel-style: A-frame stand with whiteboard or flip chart pad
- Mobile presentation: heavy-duty rolling unit with locking casters

Evaluate caster quality (4-caster with two locking), height adjustment (60"–80" range), frame rigidity (tubular steel for heavy boards), and collapsed storage footprint.

5. Sizing by Room Capacity

Choosing the right board size is critical. The viewing distance should not exceed 6× the board's height.

Room	Min Width	Recommended
Personal (1)	2 ft	3 ft
Small (2-4)	3 ft	4 ft
Medium (4-8)	4 ft	6 ft
Large (8-16)	6 ft	8-10 ft
Training (16-30)	8 ft	12-16 ft

6. Frame Styles and Aesthetics

Frame material, color, and profile determine the finished appearance of any board installation.

Frame Type	Material	Best For
Aluminum	Anodized; silver, black, or bronze finish; lightweight	Standard commercial offices
Wood	Oak, mahogany, walnut, cherry; heavier	Libraries, executive offices, boardrooms
Frameless	Through-bolt or stand-off clips; no visible frame	Design-forward workplaces, glass boards

7. Mounting — Wall-Mount vs. Mobile

Mounting method determines where a board can be used and how permanently it is installed. Lightweight boards can hang on drywall with toggle bolts; mid-weight boards require stud anchoring; heavy boards (porcelain, large glass) need through-bolt mounting into studs or structural backing.

Mobile boards are appropriate when no suitable wall space is available, the board needs to serve multiple rooms, or the installation is temporary or lease-restricted.

8. Magnetic vs. Non-Magnetic Surfaces

Magnetic functionality is a common requirement. Always confirm the board's substrate material before ordering.

Surface	Magnetic?	Notes
Melamine	No	Paper/cardboard substrate
Painted Steel	Yes	Steel substrate
Porcelain	Yes	Steel backing
Glass (standard)	No	Glass only
Glass (magnetic)	Yes	Steel backing behind glass

9. Ghost-Resistant Surfaces and Cleaning

Ghosting results from marker ink penetrating a porous or degraded surface. Preventing ghosting extends the useful life of any board.

- Use quality low-odor dry-erase markers; erase marks the same day
- Monthly deep cleaning with dry-erase cleaner or 70% isopropyl alcohol
- Porcelain and glass can almost always be restored; melamine cannot

10. ADA Height Considerations

For ADA compliance, the bottom of the writing surface should be no higher than 34"–36" above the finished floor. Forward reach range is 15"–48"; side reach is 9"–54". Provide 30" × 48" clear floor space in front of the board for wheelchair maneuvering.

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