Conference Tables — Pro Tips

1 Size for the 95th Percentile, Not the Average

Choose a conference table size based on your maximum anticipated meeting attendance, not your typical attendance. A 10-person table that seats 12 in a pinch is far less disruptive than repeatedly squeezing 11 people around a 10-person table. The industry guideline of 30 inches of perimeter per seat provides comfortable spacing — calculate your table size from your maximum scenario, then verify it fits your room with proper clearance.

2 Boat Shape vs. Rectangular: More Than Aesthetics

Boat-shaped (barrel) conference tables provide better sightlines for everyone at the table — the tapered ends prevent the person at the far end from being visually blocked by others. For tables over 10 feet, boat shape meaningfully improves meeting dynamics. Rectangular tables are more space-efficient and better for classroom or training configurations. Choose based on your predominant meeting style.

3 Plan Power Before Specifying the Table

Integrated power modules are far easier to specify at purchase than to retrofit after delivery. Before ordering, determine the number of simultaneous device connections needed, power module locations along the table length, and the source of power (floor box, wall outlet, or ceiling drop). Under-table cable raceways and pop-up modules should be specified as part of the initial order, not added later.

4 Coordinate Table and Chair Heights Precisely

The relationship between table height and chair seat height is critical for comfortable meeting posture. Standard table height is 29–30 inches; standard chair seat height at 17–18 inches creates roughly 12 inches of clearance — the ergonomic standard. If your chairs have arms, the arm height must clear the table apron when chairs are pushed in. Verify both height and arm clearance before finalizing your chair and table combination.

5 Edge Profile Signals Quality Level

The edge profile of a conference table surface is one of the most visible quality indicators. Sharp, thin-profile edges with tight laminate or veneer wrapping signal premium construction. Thick, routed wood edges signal traditional craftsmanship. Thin paper edge banding that chips easily signals budget construction. Run your hand along the table edge during evaluation — the tactile quality tells you as much as the visual inspection.

6 Base Design Affects Seating Flexibility

Pedestal bases (single or double) provide maximum leg and chair access around the entire table perimeter. Leg-base tables restrict where chairs can be positioned along the edges. Trestle bases occupy the ends of the table, sometimes creating conflicts with end-seat positioning. Before selecting a base style, test that chairs can be positioned at every seat, including corners and ends, with comfortable legroom.

7 Modular Tables Enable Multi-Use Spaces

If your conference room doubles as a training room or event space, flip-top or modular conference tables allow rapid reconfiguration between boardroom oval, classroom rows, and U-shape. Nesting modular tables store in minimal space and set up in minutes without tools. For dedicated boardrooms with fixed use, a traditional fixed conference table with premium finish is the better investment.

8 Finish Sample Before Large Orders

Conference tables in matching sets for multiple rooms, or single large tables with coordinated chairs and credenzas, require finish verification before ordering. Request finish samples from the manufacturer and compare against chair upholstery, wall paint, and flooring in your actual room under your actual lighting conditions. Finishes that match in showroom lighting often diverge significantly under office lighting.

9 Professional Installation Prevents Problems

Large conference tables — anything over 8 feet — require professional installation for proper alignment, base leveling, and secure top-to-base attachment. DIY installation of large conference tables risks misalignment, visible seams on multi-section tops, and improper leveling that creates an unprofessional appearance and potential equipment stability issues. OF2go's installation team ensures a perfect result.

10 Budget for the Total Room, Not Just the Table

A conference room's total investment includes the table, chairs (typically 1.1–1.2x the number of table seats to account for side chairs), a credenza or buffet along one wall, a presentation display or screen, lighting (often requiring supplemental task or pendant lighting above the table), and window treatments. Budget all these elements together — an impressive table in a poorly furnished room undermines the overall impression.