

10 QUESTIONS TO ASK

10 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU BUY A SIT-STAND DESK

Sit-stand desks have transitioned from a niche wellness product to a mainstream commercial office specification — and the market now includes an enormous range of products across widely varying quality levels and price points. A poorly specified unit risks premature mechanical failure, inadequate height range, or sluggish performance that discourages use. These 10 questions ensure you specify correctly the first time.

1. What type of motor drives the lift, and how many motors does it use?

Single-motor lift systems are adequate for lighter loads (up to 150 lbs.) and narrower desktops. Dual-motor configurations distribute load more evenly, operate more quietly, and are strongly recommended for desktops exceeding 60" or load capacities above 150 lbs. Premium commercial units utilize brushless DC motors, which run cooler, deliver extended service life, and require less maintenance than brushed-motor alternatives. Confirming motor count and type before ordering is standard practice.

2. What is the full height range, and does it cover my team?

A sit-stand desk that cannot reach the sitting height of the shortest user or the standing height of the tallest user fails its fundamental purpose. A practical commercial unit should offer a height range of approximately 22"–48" from floor to desktop surface. For users under 5'3", the minimum should reach 22"–23". For users over 6'3", the maximum should extend to 48"–50". Some units marketed as "commercial" span only 28"–46" — a range that excludes both ends of the user height spectrum.

3. What is the rated weight capacity?

Weight capacity must account for the full equipment load: monitors (12–25 lbs. each), mounting arms, keyboards, computers, accessories, and standard work materials. A typical dual-monitor configuration with a desktop tower reaches 60–80 lbs. easily. Commercial sit-stand desks should carry a minimum rated capacity of 200 lbs. of desktop load. Units rated below 150 lbs. are insufficient for professional environments and may develop motor strain under typical equipment loads over time.

4. How fast does the desk move, and how loud is it?

Transition speed is measured in inches per second. A practical commercial unit should operate at 1.5–2.5 inches per second — fast enough to make standing transitions convenient without feeling abrupt. Noise levels are particularly relevant in open-plan environments; quality commercial units operate at 45–50 dB or below. Our specialists recommend requesting decibel ratings from the manufacturer — consumer-grade units running at 65+ dB create noticeable disruption in quiet work settings.

5. Does the desk have programmable height presets?

Programmable height presets enable each user to save their preferred sitting and standing heights, reducing transitions to a single button press instead of manual dial-in each time. Commercial-grade units typically offer 3–4

presets. Without this feature, users must hold the control button and monitor the readout — adding 15–20 seconds per transition that discourages frequent position changes and diminishes the health benefits the desk was purchased to deliver.

6. What does the warranty cover?

We offer a Free Lifetime Warranty that covers any manufacturer defect. Normal wear and tear, patron abuse, or damage is not covered. For sit-stand desks, confirming whether the motor and actuator components carry separate coverage from the frame is an important specification detail. Our Free Lifetime Warranty at OfficeFurniture2go covers manufacturer defects across the complete unit.

7. What is the desktop surface material and edge thickness?

Surface thickness is critical for sit-stand desks because the desktop must support clamp-mounted monitor arms without cracking or deflecting. A minimum 1" surface thickness is required for clamp-mount compatibility. Thinner surfaces (5/8"–3/4"), common on consumer-grade units, may not withstand monitor arm clamp loads rated above 20 lbs. Surface material follows the same hierarchy as fixed desks: HPL for maximum durability, veneer for premium aesthetics, and TFL as a strong mid-range option.

8. How does the frame handle wobble at standing height?

Lateral wobble at maximum height is a documented weakness in lower-quality sit-stand frames. Commercial-grade frames address this through wider crossbeam spacing and steel box-tube legs (minimum 2"x3" cross-section) that minimize lateral sway at full extension. Some manufacturers publish stability ratings measured in millimeters of deflection under a defined side load. If stability specifications are absent from the product documentation, requesting them before committing to a volume order is appropriate.

9. Can multiple desks be networked or centrally managed?

For enterprise deployments of 20 or more desks, certain manufacturers offer network-connected systems that enable IT to monitor usage patterns, track sit-to-stand ratios, and push height-preset updates across the fleet. While not a requirement for most purchasing decisions, this capability is worth confirming if your HR or wellness team tracks ergonomic activity metrics as part of a formal program.

10. What does installation involve, and can it be done without specialized tools?

Most commercial sit-stand desks arrive partially assembled, requiring final tabletop attachment, leg adjustment, and cable management installation. Budget 30–60 minutes per desk for experienced assemblers. For installations of 20+ workstations, professional assembly is worth pricing — frame alignment errors during setup can affect long-term leveling accuracy and motor service life.

Our comprehensive Sit-Stand Desk Buyer's Guide at OfficeFurniture2go.com covers motor specifications, frame comparisons, and surface options across every commercial price tier. Call 800-460-0858 to discuss your specific deployment requirements with a specialist.

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