

# Straight Desks

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

## Top 5 Questions — Straight Desks

1

### What size straight desk do I need?

Desk width should be determined by the equipment and workflow at the workstation. A 48-inch desk is the minimum for productive work and suits a single-monitor or laptop setup in a compact space. A 60-inch desk is the practical standard for a single-monitor workstation with adequate space for a keyboard, mouse, phone, and some documents — this is the most commonly specified commercial size. A 66-inch desk adds a reference area beside the primary monitor zone. A 72-inch desk is recommended for dual-monitor setups or for users who regularly work with printed materials alongside digital screens. Desk depth is equally important: 24 inches is the commercial minimum, but 29–30 inches is the standard that provides proper ergonomic monitor viewing distance (20–28 inches from eyes to screen). Only specify a 24-inch desk if the user works exclusively from a laptop without an external monitor.

2

### What surface material should I specify for a commercial straight desk?

Thermal Fused Melamine (TFM) is the commercial standard — the surface layer is bonded under heat and pressure, creating a harder, more scratch- and stain-resistant finish than standard laminate. TFM resists daily wear from keyboards, coffee cups, and cleaning products and maintains its appearance through years of commercial use. High-Pressure Laminate (HPL) is the premium upgrade with slightly greater impact resistance and an even wider range of finish options. Standard laminate (without thermal fusing) is adequate for light commercial or home office use but chips and peels under daily commercial wear — do not specify it for high-use commercial workstations. Wood veneer is appropriate for executive offices where natural grain appearance is the priority and the desk will receive careful daily maintenance. Always specify TFM or HPL for any desk in a commercial environment with daily multi-user or single heavy-use.

**3****What pedestal configuration should I choose for a straight desk?**

Pedestal configuration determines the type and amount of built-in storage at the workstation. BBF (Box/Box/File) is the most versatile configuration — two shallow box drawers for supplies, pens, and personal items, plus one deep file drawer for hanging folders — and is the most commonly specified option for general commercial workstations. FF (File/File) with two file drawers is appropriate for roles with heavy paper filing needs, such as accounting or legal. BF (Box/File) provides one shallow drawer and one file drawer in a more compact format for desks where full-depth pedestals would feel too bulky. Single-pedestal desks are specified with the pedestal on the right side by default; left-handed users should explicitly request left-side placement at order time — this is factory-set and cannot be changed after manufacturing. Mobile pedestals (on casters) are appropriate for hot-desking and flexible environments where the storage unit may need to move with the user.

**4****What clearances do I need around a straight desk?**

The most critical clearance is behind the desk — where the chair rolls back when the user stands. Allow a minimum of 42 inches behind the desk for chair push-back and comfortable standing; 48–60 inches is preferred in private offices. Side clearance between the desk and a wall should be at least 24 inches for egress, with 30–36 inches preferred for comfortable movement. In front of the desk, allow 36 inches for a visitor chair with the user seated at the desk; 42 inches if visitors need to pull the chair back to sit down. Door swing clearance of 36–42 inches must be maintained from the desk edge to the door arc. A 60-inch desk in a private office requires a room approximately 8 feet by 8 feet as the absolute minimum to meet these clearances — smaller rooms will create a cramped, non-functional workspace.

**5****How should I handle cable management on a straight desk?**

Plan cable management at the time of order — drilling grommets after delivery voids most manufacturer warranties and risks cracking the laminate surface. Specify grommet locations at the back of the desk where monitors sit and at the side where peripheral devices connect. Under-desk wire management trays (metal or plastic trays mounted under the surface) hold power strips, adapters, and cables off the floor — this is the single most effective cable management accessory and should be standard on any commercial workstation. If the desk has a modesty panel, confirm it includes a cut-out or cable pass-through so cables can run from the back of the desk to floor outlets without being pinched or crimped. For sit-stand desks, add a flexible cable spine or coil to accommodate the full range of desk travel without pulling cables taut at the maximum height position.

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

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