

# Whiteboards & Boards

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## Q1. What is the difference between a standard whiteboard and a porcelain whiteboard?

**A:** Standard melamine whiteboards use a painted or coated melamine surface bonded to a particleboard or MDF substrate. Melamine surfaces are the most affordable whiteboard option and write well initially, but the surface gradually becomes stained — absorbing marker residue and ghosting (the visible trace of previous writing that remains after erasing) — over time. In moderate use, melamine whiteboards typically show significant ghosting and staining within 3–5 years. They are appropriate for light-use applications and budget-constrained purchases where longevity is less critical. Porcelain (also called vitreous enamel) whiteboards use a baked enamel surface fused to a steel substrate at high temperature. This creates an extremely hard, non-porous surface that is highly resistant to ghosting, scratching, and staining. Porcelain whiteboards can be cleaned with standard dry-erase cleaners and maintain near-new writing quality after years of heavy daily use. The steel substrate also makes porcelain whiteboards magnetic — standard magnets hold items to the surface, eliminating the need for additional tackboards for posted materials. The selection criterion is use intensity. For a conference room used daily with multiple writing sessions per week, a porcelain or high-quality coated steel board is the appropriate specification — the higher initial cost is recovered through significantly longer service life and consistent writing quality. For an occasional-use board in a private office or break room, a quality melamine board is a reasonable choice. At OfficeFurniture2go.com, our team can walk you through the specific surface quality for any board we carry by calling 1-800-460-0858.

## Q2. What size whiteboard do I need for my conference room?

**A:** Whiteboard size should be proportional to the room size and the maximum viewing distance. The key guideline is legibility: text written in standard 1" letter height on a whiteboard is legible to most users at distances up to approximately 10'–12'. For a conference room where participants will be seated up to 15' from the board, either write in larger letters or specify a larger board. As a general planning guideline, a conference room seating 6–8 people needs a minimum 4'x6' whiteboard; a room seating 10–16 needs at least 4'x8' or two 4'x4' boards. Ceiling height constrains the maximum board height. Standard conference room whiteboards are 4' tall (installed with the bottom at approximately 36" from the floor and the top at approximately 84"). In rooms with 9' ceilings, a 4' board leaves adequate clearance above and below. In rooms with 8' ceilings and lighting fixtures close to the ceiling, a full 4' board may not fit without conflicting with light fixtures or ceiling-mounted AV equipment. Measure the available wall space precisely before ordering. For open-plan offices and collaborative spaces where the board will be used in standing meetings or for quick reference, mobile whiteboards (also called whiteboard easels or magnetic dry-erase boards on casters) provide flexibility — they can be rolled to any location and repositioned without wall mounting. Standard mobile boards are 36"x48" to 48"x72". For permanent conference room installation, wall-mounted boards in the correct size for the room are the better long-term solution.

### Q3. How do I mount a whiteboard on the wall correctly?

**A:** Wall mounting a whiteboard requires attaching the board to structural supports in the wall — either wood studs or masonry — that can bear the weight of the board and the dynamic loads of writing on it. Standard commercial whiteboards in the 4'x8' size weigh 25–45 lbs depending on the surface and frame construction. The mounting hardware must be rated for at least twice the board weight for a safe installation. Always use the mounting hardware supplied by the manufacturer, which is sized and rated for the specific board. Locate wall studs with a stud finder before marking mounting hole positions. Most commercial whiteboards are mounted using a hanging rail or keyhole bracket system at the top and a stabilizing brace or bottom rail to prevent the board from swinging forward. The top hanging hardware attaches to studs through the drywall; the bottom stabilizer is typically adjustable to allow the board to be leveled after the top is secured. On masonry walls, use masonry anchors rated for the board weight at each mounting point. Installation height affects usability. The standard mounting height positions the bottom of the whiteboard at 36"–42" from the floor — allowing seated users at conference tables to write at the lower portion of the board while standing users can comfortably reach the top. For rooms used exclusively for standing meetings, lower the bottom edge to 30"–34" so the full board surface is accessible without stretching. For rooms with mixed use, position the board for the most common use case.

### Q4. What markers should I use on a whiteboard?

**A:** Use only dry-erase markers on whiteboard surfaces — not permanent markers, overhead projector pens, or other ink formulations. Dry-erase markers use a low-solvent ink designed to release from the non-porous whiteboard surface when wiped with a dry eraser. Using permanent markers on a whiteboard saturates the surface with solvent-based pigments that the dry eraser cannot remove — recovering a heavily contaminated whiteboard often requires whiteboard cleaning solution or isopropyl alcohol wiped vigorously across the surface. Dry-erase marker quality varies significantly. Budget markers from non-commercial brands often leave heavier residue and produce more ghosting than commercial-grade markers from established manufacturers. For whiteboards in regular conference room use, specify low-odor dry-erase markers — standard solvent-based dry-erase markers produce fumes that are noticeable and potentially irritating during long meetings in enclosed conference rooms. Low-odor or zero-odor formulations are appropriate for indoor shared spaces. Cap discipline is critical for dry-erase marker lifespan. Dry-erase markers dry out within hours if left uncapped. In shared meeting spaces, markers frequently end up left uncapped on the tray after a meeting — establish a clear expectation that all markers are capped before the meeting leaves. Marker trays with individual marker holders that hold each pen with cap-end up provide a visual reminder to cap before replacing. Replace dried-out markers promptly — writing with dried markers requires harder pressure that abrades the board surface more aggressively.

**Q5. How do I clean a whiteboard that has ghosting or staining?**

**A:** Ghosting — the faint trace of previous writing that remains after erasing — is caused by marker residue absorbed into micro-pores or scratches in the board surface over time. For light ghosting on a melamine or coated-steel board, a whiteboard cleaner spray applied and wiped with a clean microfiber cloth typically removes the residue. For heavier ghosting, repeat the process with a fresh application. Avoid paper towels, which can scratch softer board surfaces. For heavy staining and deep ghosting on melamine boards that does not respond to standard whiteboard cleaner, isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol at 70% or higher concentration) is an effective solvent that dissolves dry-erase marker residue. Apply a small amount to a clean cloth and wipe in the direction of the ghosting. Rinse with water and allow to dry before using the board again. On porcelain boards, isopropyl alcohol safely removes heavy staining without damaging the surface. Permanent marker on a whiteboard — a common accidental contamination — can be removed by writing over the permanent marker with a dry-erase marker (same color or black), allowing it to dry for 30 seconds, and then erasing the area. The solvents in the dry-erase ink partially dissolve the permanent marker, allowing it to erase with the dry-erase residue. This method works on porcelain and coated-steel surfaces; it is less effective on melamine boards that have already absorbed the permanent marker ink deeply.

**Q6. What is the difference between a bulletin board and a cork board?**

**A:** Bulletin boards and cork boards are often used interchangeably, but technically a cork board uses a natural cork surface layer and a bulletin board can use cork, fabric, or foam as the surface material. Natural cork provides excellent pushpin retention — the soft cellular cork structure grips pushpins firmly without the pin hole expanding or loosening the pin hold. Cork boards are appropriate for medium-weight posted materials in moderate-traffic applications. Fabric-covered bulletin boards use a compressed fiberboard or foam core covered with stretched fabric. The fabric surface provides a finished, professional appearance that matches office décor and provides a tackable surface with appropriate pushpin grip. For office environments where appearance is a priority — reception areas, corridors, and conference rooms — fabric-covered bulletin boards are the more appropriate choice over raw cork. The fabric is available in dozens of colors and textures to coordinate with interior finishes. Combination boards — half whiteboard, half bulletin board (cork or fabric) — are a practical choice for conference rooms where both writing and posted materials are regularly used. They provide a single wall-mount solution that serves both functions without requiring separate boards. The split is typically 50/50 or 60/40 (whiteboard to tackboard), available in both horizontal and vertical orientations. Before specifying a combination board, verify which function gets more frequent use and position that surface in the primary sightline for meeting participants.

**Q7. What frame material is best for a commercial whiteboard?**

**A:** Aluminum frames are the commercial standard for whiteboard frames. Anodized or powder-coated aluminum provides a clean, professional appearance, is lightweight (important for wall mounting and handling), does not rust, and holds its profile without warping over years of environmental exposure. Aluminum frames are available in silver, black, and occasionally other powder-coat colors to coordinate with conference room design palettes. The frame profile also houses the marker tray at the bottom, which should be wide enough (minimum 1.5") to hold multiple markers and an eraser securely. Steel frames are used on some commercial whiteboards for heavier-duty applications. Steel frames are more rigid than aluminum at the same profile dimensions and are appropriate for very large boards (6'x12' or larger) where frame rigidity is important to prevent the board from flexing during use. Powder-coated steel frames are durable and rust-resistant; verify the powder-coat is a commercial-grade finish applied over a primed steel surface for maximum adhesion and corrosion resistance. Wood frames are available on designer whiteboard models and are appropriate for executive offices and creative environments where a warmer, furniture-grade aesthetic is desired. Solid hardwood frames (oak, walnut, maple) or wood veneer frames provide a professional appearance that integrates with wood-tone furniture. Wood-framed boards are typically lighter in construction than aluminum or steel-framed commercial boards and are best suited for lower-intensity use applications in private offices and executive environments.

**Q8. Are mobile or freestanding whiteboards a good option?**

**A:** Mobile whiteboards on casters are an excellent option for offices where flexibility is more important than a permanent installation. They can be positioned wherever a meeting is occurring, rolled between conference rooms, used in open-plan areas for standing meetings, and stored in a corridor or storage room when not in use. For organizations with limited dedicated conference space or multiple meeting areas that share resources, a high-quality mobile whiteboard on heavy-duty casters is a cost-effective way to expand whiteboard availability without additional wall mounting. The key specification for a mobile whiteboard is caster quality. The board and stand combined weigh 25–60 lbs depending on size; the casters must be rated for this weight and must include locking mechanisms on at least two wheels so the board can be stabilized during use. An unlocked mobile whiteboard that rolls when the user writes on it is useless. Specify dual-lock casters (two wheels with independent locking, not a single brake) for maximum stability during use. Mobile whiteboards are available in both single-sided and double-sided configurations. A double-sided mobile board provides two usable writing surfaces — effectively doubling the writing area without increasing floor footprint. This is particularly useful in training and ideation sessions where large amounts of content need to be displayed simultaneously. Double-sided mobile boards on large caster frames weigh 40–70 lbs; verify the floor surface is smooth enough for the casters to roll freely under the loaded weight.

**Q9. Can I write on a glass board instead of a whiteboard?**

**A:** Yes — glass markerboards (also called glass whiteboards or glassboards) use tempered glass as the writing surface and are an increasingly popular premium alternative to traditional whiteboards. The glass surface is exceptionally non-porous, which means it does not ghost, does not stain permanently, and wipes completely clean with a dry eraser or damp cloth. For high-use conference rooms where whiteboard quality and appearance are important, a glass board provides the highest-quality writing experience and the cleanest long-term appearance. Tempered glass boards are available in clear glass (where the wall color or a printed backing shows through), painted glass in various colors, and frosted glass. White-painted glass provides the highest contrast for marker writing and most closely resembles the traditional whiteboard appearance. Colored glass boards (blue, green, smoke) are popular in contemporary office designs where the board serves as a visual accent as well as a functional writing surface. Glass boards require specific installation: they are heavy (a 4'x6' glass board weighs 40–70 lbs depending on glass thickness) and must be mounted to structural wall supports — not just drywall anchors. Standard glass board thickness is 3/16" to 1/4" tempered glass. The mounting hardware must be rated for the glass weight and must attach to studs or masonry. Installation of glass boards by a professional installer is strongly recommended.

**Q10. How large should a bulletin board be for a typical office corridor or break room?**

**A:** Corridor bulletin boards serve as communication hubs — posting schedules, announcements, safety notices, and team information. A standard 24"x36" board is the minimum practical size for corridor use; it provides a visible space for standard letter-size documents (8.5"x11") posted in portrait orientation with minimal overlap. For active communication boards that display multiple simultaneous items — a calendar, announcements, team photos, policy notices — a 36"x48" or 48"x48" board provides adequate space without requiring constant removal of older items. Break room bulletin boards serve a mix of social and organizational communication. The typical break room board holds: employee notices, company announcements, benefit information, event flyers, and occasionally personal listings. A 36"x48" or 48"x60" board is appropriate for groups of 10–30 people; larger employee populations need proportionally larger boards or multiple boards in the break room. Plan one board for formal company communications and a separate board (physically separated, in a different section of the room) for personal and social postings. Section organization improves bulletin board effectiveness. Divide the board into labeled zones using colored tape or printed section headers: announcements, schedules, safety, social, etc. A clearly organized board is read and used more than an undivided board where any material can be posted anywhere. In break rooms, designating a "remove by" zone for time-limited announcements and a standing section for permanent reference material maintains the board's relevance and prevents outdated notices from accumulating. Download PDF Buyer's Guide PDF Shop Whiteboards & Boards Talk to an Expert 1.800.460.0858 Monday – Friday, 7am to 6pm CT

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