

TOP 5 MISTAKES WHEN BUYING OFFICE FURNITURE

Buying new office furniture can make you more productive and transform your office space, but don't start without reviewing these five top mistakes. You are much more likely to enjoy your purchase when you follow this advice.

Mistake 1 – Buying Office Furniture without a Master Plan

Most people with a home office or small business office have a little of this and that for furniture, leading to clutter, painful work postures, unreachable equipment and inadequate room for work materials. Offices that work well have components that all relate properly to each other and to the shape of the room. It takes a master plan to get them all to work together. You don't have to buy all the furniture at once but you should have a master plan guiding your purchases.

Mistake 2 – Buying Furniture Based on Price Instead of Quality

Everyone likes to save their hard-earned dollars, but you are not saving money when you later have to get rid of cheap office furniture because it wobbles, has chipped edges, and looks shoddier by the day. Despite what some advertisers want you to believe, you cannot rely on stylish but cheaply priced furniture to serve you well. You must go beyond furniture fashion and look at how solidly built the piece is.

For example, consider the core material inside the furniture. Price oriented manufacturers usually use cheap grades of particleboard that will come back to haunt you.

By way of explanation, particleboard is made up of compressed **PIECES** of wood while more expensive fiberboard is made up of compressed **STRANDS** of wood - a huge difference! Cheap particleboard is known to sag under weight and has poor screw-holding strength which causes wood screws to loosen up over time. Porous low-density particleboard has less surface area for glue to adhere to, resulting in de-lamination of edges. Additionally, exposed unfinished edges of particleboard components have less integrity so the laminate will chip and break easily. The correct alternative would be furniture with a medium/high density fiber core, usually called MDF board, which has none of these deficiencies.

Mistake 3 - Buying Style over Function

It is not unheard of for people to get rid of expensive, beautiful, well-built executive office furniture because it simply is not comfortable. There is an intimate working relationship between the human body and the keyboard, mouse, monitor and reference materials when doing computer work. A non-adjustable 30" high traditional desk doesn't allow for these critical relationships. In a well-designed computer workstation, the keyboard, chair and even the monitor are adjustable, thus eliminating neck and back strain.

Mistake 4 – Buying Office Furniture without Considering Custom Options

Most off-the-shelf office furniture is designed to fit the size of particleboard sheets stacked up in a factory. The more pieces of furniture that can be cut from a sheet, the more economical the production process. However, rooms have completely different needs in order to be turned into well designed, ergonomic work spaces. A room may be too narrow or too long for standard sized components. Custom pieces can make the furniture fit perfectly without leaving unsightly gaps and can wrap the owner in an efficient, ergonomic work space.

Mistake 5 - Buying Built-In Office Furniture

Built-in office furniture has several disadvantages: loss of flexibility within the room, loss of ability to switch the furniture to another location, and a potentially lower sales price for your home. Once you add built-in furniture you cannot re-arrange it should you decide to face the door instead of the corner or want to add an additional computer area. Should you decide your office would actually make a better guest room, you cannot switch the furniture to another room. Finally, when it comes time to sell your house, a built-in office may not appeal to a buyer either because of style or how they want to use the room. Financial newspapers have noted a built-in home office could result in up to a 10% decrease in your home's value. In contrast, freestanding modular office furniture allows you to make changes, move the furniture to another room, and take it with you when you sell.

Conclusion

Buying new office furniture can transform your space, but be sure to have a plan and consider quality, function, custom options, and flexibility.

