COMPLETE GUIDE TO

Office Planning and Design

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COMPLETE GUIDE TO
Office Planning and Design

If you own or manage a business, you likely spend a lot of time in the office. You might even feel like you spend more time at work than you do at home. According to Harvard Business Review, CEOs work an average of 62 hours a week, and about half of that time is spent at the company's headquarters. Whether or not you're the CEO of your company, the way your office looks and feels can impact your productivity and overall job satisfaction.

Offices are no longer the cold, uninviting spaces they were in the past. A modern office should be designed to improve the health and well-being of everyone who uses the space. With the right layout, design elements and furniture, you and your employees can feel more inspired and motivated to help your business grow.

To give your old office a new look, or to design a workspace in a completely different building, you first need a plan. We'll help you start the process with this handy guide. In this guide, we cover topics such as:

- How to choose the right office space
- How to design an office that promotes productivity
- How to select an office layout
- How to choose and assemble office furniture

From the planning to installation, we'll take you through each step to help you create an office that works for you.

If you run into any questions along the way, give us a shout at Arnold's Office Furniture. We'll be happy to help.

Chapter 1:
How to Choose Your Office Space

Working in an office building can be traced back to the 18th century with the East India Company in London. Workers of the old days complained of feeling like prisoners, and some even threw themselves from the windows.

Things were not much better for office workers during the early 1900s, when "bullpen" layouts lacked privacy and proper lighting, and companies did not consider ergonomics.
Today, business owners take a worker-centric approach to office design. Modern design trends focus on comfort, productivity, sustainability and fostering employee health. The first step to creating a welcoming, thriving office environment is to choose a building that works.

In this chapter, we'll show you how to pick the right office space.

If you already have your office space but need a new layout, check out our products at Arnold's Office Furniture.

Modern design trends focus on
comfort, productivity, sustainability and fostering employee health.

Things to Consider When Choosing an Office Space

What is your office space criteria?

Knowing what you need will help you narrow your options.

Here are the factors you'll want to consider:

• **Location:** First, you need to think about location and proximity to customers and vendors. Think about surrounding businesses and if they fit in with your company.

• **Security:** Think about whether you'll be able to run your business and store inventory securely in the location.

• **Noise:** Consider the noise levels surrounding the building and how it might impact your business and your employees' productivity levels.

• **Rent:** Rent is influenced by location. An office in the center of a city or upscale neighborhood is going to come with a higher rent than a building located in a less desirable area. You need to consider the spending power of your customers and who you want to attract.

• **Utilities:** Research the service providers of the area you're interested in, so you know who will be providing the utilities and internet for your building.

• **Space:** Consider the space you need for the number of employees you have. It's important to have enough space to make employees feel comfortable as they work. In general, you'll want at least 70 square feet of personal space per employee.

• **Desired layout:** Though you don't need to know whether you want an open or closed layout just yet, it helps to have an idea before you go office shopping.

• **Accessibility:** Consider whether the office building is easy to reach by car or public transportation. Ensure there's adequate parking.

• **Windows:** Consider choosing an office that offers plenty of natural light. Keep in mind you'll need a way to filter incoming light. If there are no windows, think about how you'll bring energizing light to the space.

• **Building quality:** How does the building look? Is it visually pleasing and in great condition? Will it reflect your brand well? Also, make sure the building allows room to grow if you plan on hiring more workers.

• **Facilities:** What facilities are offered in the building? Are there daycare services, an outdoor space or fitness center? Think about the amenities your employees want and need.

• **Workforce resources:** If you plan to hire new employees, think about the region and the workers available. Consider the local education and if you'll have access to a talented pool of candidates.

• **Nearby housing:** Are there affordable housing options near the potential office space? If employees can live comfortably near the office, you'll be saving them exhausting commutes, and they'll be more likely to stick around.

• **Taxes:** Research the local and state taxes and think about how it impacts your business. Local zoning ordinances: Check the zoning laws of the area and make sure you can legally operate your business in the location.

• **Your overall impression:** Think about how the building makes you feel and if you can envision it fitting your brand. If it feels right and seems like a good investment, it may be time to make a decision.

Working with a real estate agent who is familiar with the area and the local market can help you make the right choice.

Should You Rent or Buy an Office Space?

To decide whether to rent or buy, consider the pros and cons.

The pros of renting include:

- Greater flexibility if you plan to change locations in the future
- Minimum property maintenance
- May be able to rent in a good location

Cons include:

- Rent may increase over time
- Will have to deal with a landlord

The pros of buying include:

- Build equity
- Face fewer restrictions on remodeling and decorating
- Can rent out extra office space

Cons include:

- Costs more upfront
- Must maintain the property
- Will have to pay property taxes

Working with a real estate agent who is familiar with the area and the local market can help you make the right choice.

Chapter 2:
What Are the Common Types of Office Layouts?

The office layout refers to how the equipment, furniture and supplies are arranged within the space.

Office layout impacts efficiency and comfort levels for employees.

Also, when furniture is thoughtfully arranged, you can fit the equipment you need into the space.

In this chapter, we'll explore common office layouts to help you find the right fit for your business.

If you need assistance deciding on a layout, reach out to us at Arnold's Office Furniture – that's what we're here for.

When furniture is thoughtfully arranged, you can fit the equipment you need into the space.

How Do You Plan an Office Layout?

To plan your office layout, you need to consider several factors first, such as:

• **Privacy:** Make sure your employees have the privacy they need to complete their job duties. This is important for employees requiring high levels of concentration.

• **Noise:** Consider noise levels and how they can affect productivity and focus. This might involve placing copy machines and other equipment in separate rooms.

• **Meeting spaces:** Think about where you want to have meetings and how much space you need.

• **Natural light:** Consider ways to maximize the use of natural light in your layout.

• **Departments:** Think about the different departments and which ones should be located close to each other to improve workflow.

• **Accessibility:** Your office should include accessible routes and workstations to accommodate individuals with disabilities. Office furniture should be placed a minimum of 32 inches from walls to allow easy access in a wheelchair.

Once you've considered what you need in your space and the purpose it must serve, start mapping out furniture placement to help you envision the layout you want.

You might start with a copy of the current office floor plan or use a layout tool online. Make sure to include elements you plan to keep, such as the conference room or kitchen, and mark anything you wish to remove. Add existing furniture into the plan, and place electronic equipment near power outlets if possible.

Experiment with new furniture ideas and layouts once you have the static pieces in place.

Let's look at the different layouts for inspiration.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF OFFICE LAYOUTS

- Cubicle layout
- Team-based layout
- Open layout
- Hybrid or combination layout

What Are the Different Types of Office Layouts?

- **Cubicle layout:** Also called a closed layout, this is a traditional style that utilizes partitions to create private workspaces for employees. Cubicles help employees stay focused.

- **Team-based layout:** With a team-based layout, you'd form separate workstations to accommodate different teams. Usually, this type of layout includes individual workstations and a space for collaboration within each department. A team-based layout helps employees with similar roles work together.

- **Open layout:** An open layout generally means the space is free of partitions and private workspaces, and individual desks may be replaced with large tables. With an open plan, employees might move around throughout the day and work at different stations. Open plans may be ideal for collaborative work environments. Even with open layouts, it's a good idea to include private spaces where employees can hold private calls.

- **Hybrid or combination layout:** A hybrid layout combines an open plan with private workstations. Hybrid layouts are flexible and allow you to create a tailored environment. Choosing furniture that can easily be reconfigured can help you create a hybrid layout. You might also include low partition walls to encourage interaction while still providing some level of privacy, for example.

Need help with a custom layout design? Give us your floor plan and requirements, and our team of experts will design a layout that meets your needs.

Chapter 3:
How to Choose an Effective Office Layout for Your Company

Some experts say the best offices have a variety of spaces and allow workers to have different experiences throughout the day.

The most effective layout depends on the nature of your business, the number of workers you have, the space available and the physical appearance you want.

Consider your business goals, culture and what you wish to accomplish with your new layout. It helps to get your team involved and listen to employees' ideas, so you can create an environment that will help them thrive.

In this chapter, we'll share ideas to help you create your ideal office space layout.

If you need more tips or assistance, get in touch with our team at Arnold's Office Furniture.

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Although artificial lighting has significantly improved over the years, **it's still important to provide as much natural light as possible.**

Office Layout Ideas

There are many advantages to having an effective layout, such as:

- Creates a positive and collaborative work environment
- Makes work feel more meaningful
- Uses the space to improve workflow
- Creates a sense of belonging among employees
- Improves employee satisfaction

Here are a few layout ideas:

• **Increase productivity by offering more ways to move:** You'll want to create opportunities for employees to get up from their desks and move. Movement increases productivity and focus. You might include common areas to encourage employees to get up and stretch or add adjustable standing desks to the layout.

• **Create flexible spaces to promote collaboration and creativity:** If your business requires brainstorming, you'll want to offer a flexible layout that can easily change. You might include movable tables or create different zones.

• **Offer privacy for results-oriented work:** If your employees need to focus and concentrate for long periods, be sure to offer private workstations. Add high cubicle walls and sound-absorbing furniture to increase privacy. Make sure to include a few group spaces for meetings.

• **Focus on natural light:** Although artificial lighting has significantly improved over the years, it's still important to provide as much natural light as possible. If you plan to have rows of desks in your space, arrange them in single columns running parallel with the window wall. Depending on your space, you might add mirrors to reflect light.

How Do I Make My Office More Welcoming?

There are plenty of simple ways to make your private office more welcoming.

Here are some tips:

- Add custom art pieces to the walls.
- Bring in a bold piece of furniture to get the conversation started.
- Incorporate bright accent colors to bring energy to the space.
- Add interactive touches like whiteboards.
- Add warmth with decorative lighting.
- Remove or organize clutter.

Make your office more welcoming **incorporating bright accent colors to bring energy to the space.**

Chapter 4:
Office Design Ideas and Considerations

Imagine an office that is comfortable, flexible and customized for your unique brand.

This office also features the latest technology and design trends to create a space that promotes efficiency and growth.

All of this is possible for any budget when you make informed design choices.

In this chapter, we'll explore the various elements of office layout design and share ideas.

If you need assistance designing an office space layout that encourages growth and innovation, we'll be happy to assist you at Arnold's Office Furniture.

Imagine an office that is
**comfortable, flexible
and customized for your
unique brand.**

Office Design Considerations

Before you give your office a makeover, consider the following factors:

• **Current workspace:** What aspects of your current workspace are the most satisfying that you plan to keep?

• **Employees:** Think about how you want to make employees feel. For example, do you want them to feel less stressed or more focused? Also, consider different personalities. Make sure to include quiet spaces for introverts and places to collaborate for extraverted types.

• **Brand:** Consider your company brand and the impression you want to make on visitors, clients and potential employees. Plan to incorporate elements of your brand throughout your design. For example, you might choose colorful desk chairs to express your brand.

• **Budget:** Before you plan to make any changes or buy new furniture, you need to have an idea of how much you can spend. Depending on your budget, you may need to prioritize certain pieces and design elements, adding the most important pieces first and bringing the rest in over time.

• **Aesthetics:** One of your goals in creating or redesigning an office is to ensure it's visually pleasing. Plan to use design elements like colors, textures and patterns to make an office more appealing and inviting.

Consider your company brand and the impression you want to make on visitors, clients and potential employees.

Office Design Ideas

The following office design ideas will help you create a comfortable environment that promotes productivity and well-being:

• **Use lighting inspired by nature:** Ideally, you'll want to incorporate as much natural light in your office as you can. Wherever you lack natural lighting, install fixtures that mimic sunlight. Exposure to daylight improves sleep, well-being and productivity.
• **Add adequate storage:** A cluttered, disorganized space can be visually distracting and make it hard to work efficiently. Make sure to include enough storage and shelving in your design to help every employee stay organized.

• **Choose work-enhancing colors:** Colors can impact mood and productivity. For example, blue is believed to increase focus. Green, a color found in nature, is said to help workers stay calm and energized even while working long hours. Use the power of color psychology to your advantage.

• **Add idea spaces:** Consider adding whiteboards to your design to encourage employees to jot down ideas whenever inspiration strikes. You might also keep paper and pens readily available.

• **Bring the outdoors in:** Companies have realized the importance of natural elements in office design and have prioritized making their workspaces greener. Add plants, wood elements and nature-inspired artwork to make employees feel connected to the outdoors as they work. Or, if possible, create an outdoor space for employees to enjoy. According to the University of Exeter, researchers have found that plants might increase productivity by 15%.

• **Consider interconnectivity:** Make sure your overall design enables your workers to communicate, collaborate and be mobile when needed.

Tips for Making an Office Feel More Spacious

No matter the size of your business, too much clutter or the wrong color choices can make an office space feel cramped. On the other hand, a bright and airy office feels clean, promotes creative problem-solving and opens the mind to possibilities.

A bright and airy office feels clean, promotes creative problem-solving and opens the mind to possibilities.

Here are tips to maximizing your space and making an office feel more open:

- Remove clutter and any unused furniture or equipment.
- Bring in natural light if possible.
- Use light colors on the walls.
- Add reflective surfaces.
- Use vertical space as much as possible and try to pull the eye upward.
- Consider converting paper to digital for all files to reduce clutter.
- Limit the use of accessories.
- Hang oversized art on the wall, but don't add too many pieces to the same area.
- Avoid blocking windows or pathways with furniture.
- Choose light, multi-purpose pieces, such as expandable tables.
- Choose furniture shapes that eliminate unused space.
- If you plan to create a collaborative work area, place the furniture in the center of the room.
- If employees need privacy while they work, focus on placing furniture around the perimeter of the room.

Chapter 5:
How to Choose the Right Office Furniture

Think of a time you sat in a really uncomfortable chair. If you can recall, it was probably hard to focus on anything other than your discomfort. Choosing the right furniture is critical to your employees' happiness and resulting success.

When you buy new office furniture, you invest in your employees' health and the future of your company. You'll encounter a lot of options when it's time to shop for office furniture, and it might feel overwhelming at first.

Let this chapter be your office furniture buying guide. We'll explore your options and provide tips.

If you need help along the way, reach out to us at Arnold's Office Furniture.

Choosing the right furniture is **critical to your employees' happiness and resulting success.**

How to Get Started

Take these steps to start the process:

• **Examine your space:** Consider the rooms you need to furnish.

• **Assess your needs:** Think about the purpose of each room and how many employees you need to accommodate.

• **Think about aesthetics:** What look are you going for? Consider color schemes and your design style.

• **Make a list:** Create a list of all the furniture you need so that you don't forget anything.

What Should I Look for in Office Furniture?

When you're ready to shop, look for the following qualities:

• **Durable:** Choose furniture that's built to last, so you won't have to replace it anytime soon, and you can keep employees safe.

• **Easy to maintain:** Select materials that are easy to maintain and keep clean. For example, leather and vinyl are easy to wipe down and may make ideal choices in break rooms.

Furniture should fit into the space well. **Stack chairs offer an easy solution when you need temporary seating.**

• **Considers ergonomics:** Sitting at a desk all day can have serious consequences and lead to pain, eye strain and headaches if the furniture does not have an ergonomic setup. Choose desks and chairs designed to provide back support and that can be adjusted to suit each employee's needs.

• **Comfortable:** Comfort impacts productivity. If employees are comfortable, they won't be distracted by pain and can focus on their work. Choose chairs with soft padding to make employees feel cozy at their workstations.

• **Flexible:** Modern offices call for flexibility. With the right furniture, you can transform a collaborative space into one with private sections, and vice versa. For example, an adjustable standing desk allows an employee to stand for a few hours and then sit again when they need a break. You might also wish to incorporate sliding cubicles to change the layout whenever you need to.

• **Functional:** Choose furniture that will help your employees complete their jobs. For example, if most of your workers sit at a computer all day, you'll want to prioritize comfortable desk chairs. Furniture should also fit into the space well. Stack chairs offer an easy solution when you need temporary seating.

• **Timeless:** While a few trendy furniture pieces can add splashes of color to the office, you'll likely want most of your pieces to have timeless appeal.

What Are the Office Furniture Options?

• **Cubicles:** Cubicles allow employees to concentrate and work without distractions. Sliding cubicles are easy to reconfigure if you're looking for flexible options. Choose high wall cubicles for extra privacy, or low wall cubicles to encourage interaction.

• **Open concept workstations:** Open plan benching and desk systems allow employees to collaborate while still having private work areas.

• **Desks and chairs:** You have a wide range of options when it comes to choosing desks and chairs that are comfortable, functional and flexible.

• **Lounge furniture:** Use high-quality and attractive lounge furniture to keep visitors comfortable as they wait or to create relaxing break areas for employees.

• **Conference tables:** Conference tables should make a powerful impression and reflect your brand.

Choose high wall cubicles for extra privacy, or **low wall cubicles to encourage interaction.**

How Do I Choose an Office Desk?

• **Think about the desk purpose:** First, consider how you or your employees will use the new desk. Will you be working on a computer all day? If so, choose a desk designed for computer use. If your job requires a lot of paperwork, make sure the desk has plenty of surface space. If you want to give your back a break, choose a standing desk.
• **Consider ergonomics:** The desk should provide enough clearance for your legs and feet. If you choose a desk that cannot be adjusted, make sure to pair it with an adjustable chair.

• **Compare desk materials:** Think about the look you want and choose a quality material. For instance, a wood grain laminate finish is elegant and scratch-resistant — perfect for an executive's office.

• **Prioritize durability:** You want to choose a durable, high-quality desk to make an impression and show you mean business.

What Type of Chair Is Best for Office Work?

The best type of chair for office work includes the following features:

- 350-degree swivel
- Adjustable lumbar support
- Pneumatic seat height adjustability
- Adjustable armrests or no arms for computer use

Check out our selection of office chairs and make your employees happy.

New vs. Used Furniture

While buying used furniture might save you money upfront, it may not be worth it if you want to increase employees' productivity and provide ergonomic support.

Used furniture, like chairs, for example, may not be as supportive as modern chairs, which are now designed specifically to reduce work-related pain.

New furniture will refresh your office and show clients and employees you care and plan to grow.

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Chapter 6:
How to Install and Assemble Office Furniture

To install and assemble office furniture, you'll generally need tools and a little experience.

Every configuration is different, so you'll need to read the manufacturer's instructions carefully and make sure you have the right tools before you start connecting the pieces.
Although you don't have to hire professionals to do the job for you, it may be worth it depending on your situation.

Professionals will ensure your new office furniture is assembled and installed quickly, correctly and safely.

In this chapter, we'll provide tips for office furniture installation.

If you get stuck and realize you need a helping hand, reach out to us at Arnold's Office furniture.

Professionals will ensure your new office furniture is **assembled and installed quickly, correctly and safely.**
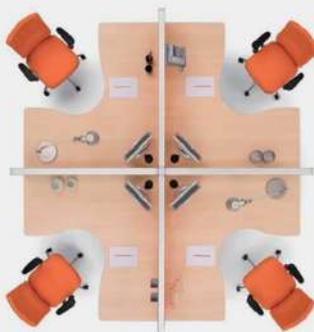
Tips for Assembling an Office Desk

Assembly instructions for an office desk should be easy to follow, right?

If a half an hour has passed and you're still trying to open the box the desk parts came in, don't fret.

Here are tips to help you survive the desk-assembly process:

• **Put it together on-site:** Plan to assemble the desk where you'll use it so that you don't have to worry about transporting it once it's ready. Make sure you have adequate room to assemble the desk.
• **Recruit a buddy:** It's a good idea to have an assistant nearby to help with the assembly. If no one's available, consider using clamps to help you while you work.

• **Read the instructions:** First, look over the manufacturer's instructions to get an idea of the sequence.

• **Gather tools:** Gather the tools you need to put the desk together. This may include a tape measure, Allen wrench, drill, screwdriver, hammer and level. It may also help to grab a few small containers to keep nails and other tiny pieces organized.

• **Lay out the parts:** Lay all the pieces out so you can work more efficiently.

• **Take your time:** Make sure you don't book any meetings the day you plan to assemble the desk. You'll need time to work at a comfortable pace and follow each step precisely.

If you're having trouble following the instructions, **check the manufacturer's website and see if they have tutorial videos available** to help you visualize the process.

· **Watch videos:** If you're having trouble following the instructions, check the manufacturer's website and see if they have tutorial videos available to help you visualize the process.

· **Double-check your work:** Reread the instructions and double-check each assembled part to ensure it's in the right place.

How to Assemble Cubicles

Putting a traditional cubicle together is an involved process.

A modern sliding system, like a Sunline cubicle, is easier to assemble.

To assemble and install Sunline cubicles, you'll need a few tools such as a level, drill and screws.

Next, take these steps:

- Lubricate the posts.
- Assemble the first panel.
- Put together the remaining panels.
- Add the file cabinets.
- Install the overhead storage cabinets.
- Secure the work surfaces in place.

If you need help along the way, check out our tutorial video.

To assemble and install Sunline cubicles, you'll need a few tools

■ LEVEL   ■ DRILL   ■ SCREWS

How Do You Connect Power to a Cubicle?

The cubicle wiring depends on whether you have panels with raceways or have to use extension cords under the panels.

You may need to install a power whip that will connect the cubicle to the building's power source.

It's best to hire a licensed electrician to connect the electrical whip to the main power safely.

Otherwise, the instructions that come with your cubicle will tell you how to connect the wiring properly.

Ask the Pros for Help

Even if you purchase the highest quality piece of furniture, it won't do much good if it's not assembled and installed properly.

To ensure the furniture is assembled and installed quickly and correctly, it's worth hiring professionals to do the job.

At Arnold's Office Furniture, we offer a professional installation service **to save you time and bring you peace of mind.**

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Conclusion:
We Got Your Back at Arnold's Office Furniture

Designing or redesigning your office takes careful consideration and planning. After all, it's where you and your employees spend a significant amount of time and energy.

It's worth it to create a space that's inviting, comfortable and promotes well-being.

Happy employees are productive employees, and every boss knows that business can't get anywhere without a dedicated workforce.

Fortunately, designing a great office space is much easier to do today than it was a hundred years ago. Thanks to decades of research and technological advancements, furniture manufacturers have a better understanding of how to impress clients and enhance comfort and functionality.

At Arnold's Office Furniture, we have everything you need for a complete office transformation, from flexible cubicles to sleek executive chairs. You and your employees deserve innovative furniture to bring out your best and make each workday a little less stressful.

To start your office makeover, browse our furniture online, or get in touch with us today!
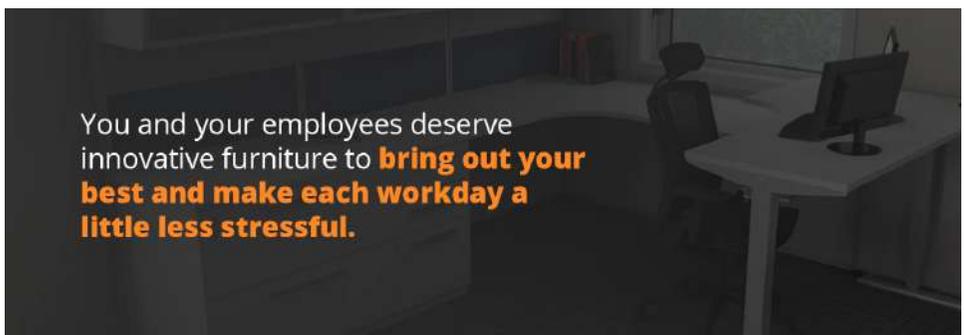
You and your employees deserve innovative furniture to **bring out your best and make each workday a little less stressful.**

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