

WHAT TO LOOK FOR When Buying Dental Equipment





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Equip Your Practice for Success.

Purchasing dental equipment is one of the most important decisions you'll make for your practice. Choosing the right equipment increases your productivity, and ultimately, your success. This booklet is designed to guide you in selecting reliable equipment to help you perform healthier, more efficient dentistry—whether you're making your first dental equipment purchase or your twenty-first.

DURABILITY AND RELIABILITY

The first thing you should look for in dental equipment is durability and reliability. For an environment that's subject to moisture and constant use, choose solid equipment that's built to withstand the daily rigors of dentistry. **Try these tests next time you're in a dealer showroom or at a dental tradeshow:**

- Touch each piece of equipment to get a feel for how well it's made.
- Move the armrest. Adjust the headrest.
- Sit down beside and behind the chair. Is it easy to position yourself close to the chair in each working position?
- Recline in the chair to determine the comfort.
- Check the motion. Is it bumpy or smooth?
- Notice if the equipment feels sturdy.
- Open and close the cabinets. Do they operate smoothly?
- Check that all parts fit well together.
- Ask for the chair's tested lifting capacity.
- Test the functionality of the delivery system, chair, and all components. Just as you would when buying a car, take it for a test drive.

PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY

The ultimate test of your equipment is how well it performs. Top-performing equipment keeps you operating at peak efficiency. Every feature should have a specific purpose, with the ultimate goal of helping you and your team perform at your best. Each piece should be ergonomically designed not only for patient comfort, but for your comfort as well. Consider these two major points when you're trying to create a comfortable, efficient work environment:

- **Minimize motion.** Design your environment to access what you need, and keep what you use most often within reach. By eliminating time-wasting movements such as overreaching for an instrument, twisting your body, or craning your neck, you can complete procedures more efficiently and feel better at the end of the day.
- **Make every move count.** Treatment teams have to work in neutral positions, which implies that the more they move, the more energy they waste. The tenser the muscles, the less efficiently they operate. Through the years, the daily aches and pains of poor positioning accumulate and can lead to chronic injury, severely impacting your ability to practice dentistry. Look for equipment that will reduce your motion and make every move count.

REPUTATION AND SERVICE

When your equipment isn't working, you're not working. Excessive maintenance can result in costly service calls and lost productivity. Select products that need the least amount of maintenance and service. Choose a manufacturer that has a history of creating products that are durable, reliable, easy to maintain, and can support service parts years after the sale.

Ask your peers for advice:

- What brand do they use?
- Would they buy that brand again?
- Who do they trust? Make sure you choose a manufacturer that stands by its products and will still be in business when it comes time for servicing or upgrading five, ten, even 15+ years down the road.

TO BUY NEW OR MAKE DO

If what you have is still operating (though outdated), you may be wondering if it's worth investing in new equipment. **Ask yourself these basic questions:**

- Although your existing equipment may be operating up to the standards at which it originally was manufactured, does it perform to today's standards of dentistry?
- Is your productivity impaired by a lack of features (seamless integration of electric motors, cameras or scalers, etc.) that weren't available at the time?
- Does your existing equipment require excessive maintenance and continued costly service calls? If so, you're losing productive hours in downtime, and money in repair costs.
- Does your existing equipment look up to date? Today's patients look at your office through a more sophisticated lens. Your practice is a reflection of your professional commitment to excellence and success. Clean, modern-looking equipment and furniture instills confidence and trust that your dental techniques are equally up to date—and can pay off with higher patient referrals and case acceptance.

VALUE AND PRICING

If you approach purchasing equipment with feature-for-feature or dollar-for-dollar comparisons, you may end up with a mismatch in terms of lasting quality and satisfaction. How can you determine what to buy, and if there really is a difference in quality? **Guide your purchasing decision by:**

- Asking questions about product performance, reliability, and durability.
- Researching the manufacturer's products, consistency, and longevity in the marketplace.
- Asking what differentiates a manufacturer's products from the competition and/or new generations of product.
- Learning about the partnership between the manufacturer and your dealer. Do they have an established reputation for standing behind the product? What is their customer service record?
- Defining what you need and expect from your next dental equipment purchase.





Patient Chairs

When considering patient chairs, stability is key. The chair must provide an unwavering platform for the precise work you perform in the oral cavity. It must also create an efficient working environment that maximizes your access to the patient—and offers both you and the patient comfort.

Q. How stable is the chair?

A. Stability requirements will vary, depending on what type of equipment you use. Chair-mounted delivery systems require a much more stable chair than cabinet or wall-mounted systems. Still, a chair must deliver stability as you access the oral cavity.

Here's a practical test of stability on a chair with a chair-mounted delivery system and light, which is sitting on an even and level floor: with a person in the supine position, run the chair to its maximum height. Grasp the top of the light post and attempt to rock the chair side-to-side. The patient seating area should not rock or sway, but should remain basically rigid. The baseplate shouldn't rock at all. "Tippy" chairs may not be capable of delivering a stable oral cavity.

The chair baseplate is an important factor in stability. It should have a large footprint, yet be configured so it won't interfere with stool casters. Cast iron is rigid and provides more strength than aluminum, with a thinner profile. It also transfers less sound and vibration to the patient if it is hit or bumped.

Q. Does the chair baseplate resist dents, scratches, and corrosion?

A. The baseplate is constantly under assault from cleaning chemicals and equipment. The finish should not be simply painted, as it will chip or scratch easily. To keep it looking clean and new, a permanent finish process such as epoxy or electrolytic bonding is ideal. The baseplate should be finished on all sides, so floor coverings won't be damaged by rust or corrosion.

Q. How do the chairs move?

A. The chair's initial and final movements play a big role in patient comfort and experience. Sit in the chair. Move it up and down to determine whether there is an initial jarring movement at the start or stop. The chair should eliminate jarring movements and provide a smooth ride for the patient from start to finish. Be sure to ask who manufactures the hydraulic cylinders: an important part of the chair.

Q. Can you easily position the headrest?

A. The headrest is important for patient positioning. You should be able to easily reposition it by activating an adjustment mechanism with your thumb and forefinger. A headrest that automatically follows the motion of the patient when the chair back is raised or lowered means fewer adjustments for the operator, and more comfort for the patient. Knob-style headrests, on the other hand, are more difficult to adjust, especially when covered with a plastic barrier protection.

Q. Does the backrest flex for easy access?

A. An ultra-thin, sturdy backrest offers more leg room, allowing you to position the oral cavity several inches lower (and closer) to your lap. This position lets you work with your forearms parallel to the floor, minimizing arm and shoulder strain. A thin, properly designed backrest also absorbs pressure and supports the patient while entering and exiting the chair.

Q. How low can you position the chair?

A. The lower you can position the chair the better, in order to allow all members of the dental team to work comfortably and ergonomically. Keep in mind that many chairs can go low, but because they have thick upholstery, the dentist must raise the chair in order to get under it.

Q. Do the armrests easily move out of the way?

A. While armrests support the patient, it's important to be able to move them out of the way with one hand for direct, unobstructed access to the patient, and easy entry and exit from both sides of the chair.

Q. Does the chair cradle the patient?

A. Is there a simple hinge mechanism that reclines the back, or a “virtual pivot” that allows the patient to achieve the supine position without stretching or repositioning? As you recline the patient, the toeboard should simultaneously lift to elevate the patient's legs in a cradling motion that automatically rotates the patient to a comfortable position.

Q. Does the chair swivel?

A. Have someone sit in the chair. While in the supine position, release the brake and try rotating it using two fingers. Chairs with good swivel mechanisms will rotate easily. Those that are difficult to rotate have a lower quality rotation mechanism.

Q. Is the chair easy to preprogram and use?

A. The preset operating positions should result in fewer touch surfaces. **Preset program combinations should include:**

- **X-ray position** – Activate once to raise the chair back and place the patient in a position to use the cuspidor or take an x-ray. Activate a second time to return the patient to the precise pre-rinse position.
- **Pre-position program** – This allows for programming of up to four user-defined positions, including the exit position.

Q. Can you instantly override automatic or preset functions?

A. Look for conveniently located switches that allow you to override all functions with a touch.



Q. Does the chair include a power supply for the delivery system, light, and assistant's instrumentation?

A. Some chairs list the power supply as an option at an additional charge. **Look for:**

- **Location** – A power supply in the chair base offers better service access and removes it from the floor box, where it may be susceptible to water leaks and drain overflow.
- **Output** – A power supply is important if you plan to integrate ancillary equipment, such as electric motors, cameras, or scalers into the delivery system. A 300-watt power supply provides ample power for integrating ancillaries.

Q. Are fasteners molded or glued? Are there exposed screws?

A. Don't be afraid to remove covers on the chair you are considering. Look for fasteners on the plastic covers. Are they molded as part of the cover, or glued, which is cheaper and less durable. (Touch fasteners and glue have no place in a multi-thousand dollar product, and unfinished metals and screws will eventually rust.) Also note how carefully items are routed and retained, if the appropriate material is used for the specific part of the chair, what type of paint is used, and what's underneath. It's all in the details.

Q. Are the upholstery materials and colors compatible with your décor?

A. Make sure the manufacturer offers a wide array of colors and upholstery selections. Ask how long the replacement upholstery will be available.





Stools

When purchasing dental equipment, stools are generally that last piece considered or discussed. Ironically, this is the one item you will use in your operatory more than any other. Doesn't it make sense to start your purchase with the one piece that most directly affects your health and comfort at the end of the day?

Q. Does the stool meet your specific ergonomic needs? Does the seat provide the flexibility to allow for proper blood flow to the lower legs?

A. To avoid circulation problems, it's important that your stools do not have a hard or abrupt edge, which can pinch off the nerves and blood vessels in the rear thigh and behind the knee.

Test the stool:

- Place feet flat on the floor with hips slightly higher than your knees.
- Adjust the backrest to support the lumbar region.
- Move laterally on the seat to simulate using the stool in the dental environment. Does it provide the proper flex?
- Does the stool move quietly over various surfaces?

Q. Does the stool have multiple points of adjustability?

A. Regardless of body type, the stool you choose should provide integrated seat and backrest tilt adjustment options for a comfortable fit.

Q. Is the backrest easy to adjust?

A. You should be able to make a one finger adjustment to bring the backrest up or down.

Q. Is the back of the operator stool smooth and free of knobs?

A. Look for a backrest that has a smooth outer surface free of knobs and handles that can mar walls, cabinetry, or other surfaces.

Q. Are there optional and dynamic armrests?

A. The armrests are especially important when shoulder, neck, and back problems are present.



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR ASSISTANT'S STOOLS

Q. Does the assistant's seating have an adjustable foot ring?

A. The adjustable foot ring helps the assistant maintain correct posture and stability. It also accommodates the need for greater vertical height than the operator's stool, providing improved visibility to allow your assistant to anticipate the next step in a procedure.

Q. Does the torso support on the assistant's stool offer multiple adjustments?

A. For individualized comfort and ergonomics, the torso support should:

- Move on both the vertical and the horizontal plane.
- Position properly against the assistant's back and side.
- Adjust in height, providing the assistant with support and balance while leaning in toward the patient.

CONSIDER WHILE YOU SHOP

- Are all adjustments easy to locate and operate from a seated position?
- Does the stool provide smooth, ultra-quiet movement on both carpet and hard flooring?
- Can you easily upgrade options such as armrests, backrests, and foot pedestals?
- Does the stool tip easily? The wheelbase should be sturdy and broad enough to prevent tipping.





Delivery Systems

Delivery system design plays a critical role in reducing or eliminating the number and extent of motions you must perform at chairside. **Two factors play a significant role in reducing your stress and fatigue:**

- Economy of motion
- Ability to see

Because the delivery system plays such a critical role in your treatment room, and includes several components, we've organized this section into the following key categories:

- Delivery System Control Head
- Handpiece Controls and Syringe
- Delivery System Arm
- Touchpads

DELIVERY SYSTEM CONTROL HEAD

Q. Does the delivery system allow for the integration of ancillary equipment?

A. Look for a delivery system that can accommodate the integration of several ancillary devices, such as two electric motors, an intraoral camera, a scaler, and a curing light.

Even if you're not integrating these items now, how easy is it to add or replace them in the future? You'll likely have your equipment for 12–15 years or more, yet ancillary technology is changing rapidly. Look for a delivery system that has space to accommodate ancillary equipment in the control head, and arms with removable covers that are large enough to easily run the required cabling or power cords. This will allow you to add or replace ancillary items easily in the future. **A delivery system that enables ancillary integration will also:**

- Allow you to prepare for unexpected future needs.
- Provide integrated items at chairside, within arm's reach.
- Eliminate hanging ancillaries, which may impede control head positioning.
- Improve infection control by having ancillary power controls out of the aerosol zone.

Q. Does the control head have multiple pivot points?

A. When accessing handpieces, multiple pivot points offer more angles for accurate and easier control head positioning.

Q. Does the system support a solo operator?

A. Instrument and handpiece positioning is even more important for the solo practitioner. All handpieces, ancillary devices, and vacuum instruments should be within easy reach of the seated operator to minimize Class 4 and 5 movements.

Q. Do you have a choice of control head design styles?

A. Rear delivery, side delivery, chair-mounted... no one design style works for all operators. Choice is essential.

Q. Are multiple tray size and mounting options available on the delivery system?

A. Multiple tray size and mounting options satisfy every operator's requirements—one size doesn't necessarily fit all.

Q. How much weight can the control head tray handle?

A. The tray on the control head should adequately hold up to eight pounds (3.6 kg) of instruments and other materials without causing the control head to drift or damaging the tray holder.

Q. Why is handpiece tubing position on a Continental control head important?

A. Handpiece tubings that connect and pivot from the back of the unit are located further away from the patient (used only in a trans-thorax position above the patient's chest). **On the other hand, front-positioned handpiece tubings:**

- Place the Continental whip pivot point closer to the oral cavity for optimal delivery unit positioning.
- Create more workspace.
- Eliminate pull-back on the handpiece resulting in less fatigue.
- Offer better ergonomics.
- Allow you to return handpieces and other instruments without taking focus away from the oral cavity (Continental delivery).
- Eliminate hanging tubing for safer patient entry/exit.
- Enable easy mobile technology (lasers, CEREC, mobile CAD-CAM unit, etc.) positioning alongside the patient chair, on the operator side.

Q. Does the delivery system meet your needs for additional time-saving features?

A. The ability to remotely control several ancillary devices such as a call system, light, or bitewing viewer from a touchpad increases efficiency and reduces touch points for contamination.

HANDPIECE CONTROLS AND SYRINGE

Q. Are there removable air and water adjustment knobs?

A. Adjustment knobs are a cross-contamination point. Knobs that are easy to remove, clean, and sterilize are preferable. Some operators may want to remove and store the knobs once the water coolant settings are established, making a delivery system surface that's easy to wipe throughout the workday.

Q. Does the delivery system offer a chair lockout feature?

A. Look for this deluxe safety feature that automatically stops chair movement when the handpiece is in use.

Q. Is the control block unitized?

A. Some control blocks can have up to 12 gaskets/diaphragms; a unitized block has just one. Fewer components require less seals and gaskets, eliminating potential leaks and the need for maintenance gaskets between blocks. A unitized block also accommodates standard features, such as integration of ancillaries.

Q. What size is the air supply tubing to the control block?

A. Larger tubing, such as 5/16" diameter (7.938 mm), provides superior airflow for higher handpiece torque. Increased airflow to the handpieces results in more power and durability.

Q. Can you repair a water valve by replacing a single water cartridge?

A. Most systems require replacement of the entire control block in the event of a water leak. Replacing a single cartridge to repair a leak is quick and easy, minimizing downtime. An optional dry block cartridge eliminates biofilm in a handpiece position otherwise intended solely for a lowspeed or prophy handpiece.

Q. Does the foot control modulate the handpiece smoothly?

A. The foot control should vary the handpiece speed in a smooth and controlled manner. It's difficult to achieve precision results with a foot control that produces erratic speed. A-dec also offers a lever foot control option, which precisely modulates and controls electric handpiece motor speed.

Q. When returning the handpiece to the holder, does the weight of the handpiece and tubing automatically turn off the handpiece?

A. It shouldn't take extra effort to push the handpiece into the holder, or to remove it. It's also important that the handpiece properly seat itself in the holder with its own weight so that when you attempt to use another handpiece, the one left in the holder isn't unintentionally activated.

Q. Does the delivery system feature silicone handpiece tubing?

A. Silicone handpiece tubing increases handpiece flexibility and stain resistance. This tubing is light and will not harden over time, allowing it to consistently follow the natural movement of your hand.

Q. How many handpieces or ancillary devices can you operate with a single foot control?

A. If you integrate a camera, electric motors, or a scaler along with handpieces on your delivery system, you'll want to ensure that you can operate all devices from a single foot control.

Q. Does the delivery system accommodate a warm water syringe?

A. Your patients will thank you for this one, especially those with sensitive teeth. A warm water syringe provides a pleasant, comforting experience. It should maintain a consistent temperature range that assures comfort during all procedures, from hygiene to lengthier treatments.

Q. Does the manufacturer offer a locking syringe tip option?

A. A good syringe design provides the flexibility to meet the needs of a given procedure. Changing a nut to lock the syringe tip tightly in place helps facilitate cheek retraction, while allowing it to swivel freely improves access to certain areas of the oral cavity.

DELIVERY SYSTEM ARM

Q. Does the delivery system arm allow for easy integration or future replacement of ancillary equipment?

A. A delivery system arm must be large enough to route power cables for ancillary devices and/or monitors. Choose a delivery system with removable arm covers. This allows you to add or replace devices, without cutting wires or fastening them to the outside of the arm.

Q. Does the arm system use bushings at the pivot points?

A. Needle bearings or self-lubricating bronze bushings provide the longest product lifespan. Plastic bushings tend to deform and become worn after minimal use.

Q. Are the bushings precision fit?

A. Loose bushings affect unit stability. **To check:**

- Extend the arm to its full length.
- Lock the arm brake.
- Lift the control head.

The unit should remain stable and level, with little or no slack.

TOUCHPADS

Q. What functions can you operate from the touchpad?

A. A touchpad is all about user-friendly operation. It should be intuitive and have direct access to functions, rather than requiring you to navigate through layers of menus to find what you want. **Look for operation of the following functions:**

- Chair
- Light
- Cuspidor bowl rinse and cup fill
- Electric motors with endo capability
- Scaler
- Preset positions for multiple operators
- Remote functions

Q. Does the touchpad have a sealed face?

A. A sealed face protects the touchpad's internal parts from liquid. If you can easily peel or remove the touchpad face, liquids will seep underneath and cause damage.

Q. Is the touchpad's viewing angle and brightness adjustable?

A. An adjustable contrast allows you to position the touchpad for easy viewing from different angles.

Q. Does the touchpad design allow for easy upgrading, repair, or replacement?

A. A touchpad that is a separate piece can be upgraded and easily repaired, ensuring that equipment doesn't become obsolete due to its limitations.

Q. Is the touchpad easy to cover and clean?

A. Look for a touchpad design that allows barrier protection and has a smooth finish for easy cleaning.



CONSIDER WHILE YOU SHOP

- Does the delivery system accommodate technology integration?
- Does the delivery system provide a range of motion, such as easy left or right positioning?
- Does the delivery system provide a choice of delivery preference?
- How easy is it to level the control head?
- Does the control head maintain its vertical position when the brake is off?
- For ease of replacement, are there quick disconnects for handpiece tubings at the control block?
- Is the water adjustment to the handpiece very fine or coarse?
- Can you place a fiber-optic handpiece on a non-fiber-optic handpiece tubing?
- Does the 3-way syringe have easy air and water flow control, or simply an On/Off control?
- Do the syringe tips have a visible indicator that ensures proper installation?
- Does the shape of the syringe make it easy to bag for barrier protection, easy to clean, and easy to autoclave?
- Are there friction adjustments on flexing control arms?
- How do you adjust the balance of the flexarm?





Lights

Your ability to see—and perform—depends greatly on your light. While a general lighting system should satisfy normal visual requirements, some procedures require greater visual clarity and illumination. **Three properties are essential for providing good dental lighting in the oral cavity:**

- **Light continuity** – A “clean” and uniform light pattern, free of shadows.
- **Color correction** – For consistent color-matching and accurate soft tissue inspection, the dental light must show teeth surfaces, gingiva, and surrounding tissues in their natural colors. This helps you see better during treatment procedures, and assists with soft tissue inspection.
- **Shadow reduction** – This is essential for good oral cavity lighting and to reduce eyestrain and fatigue.

Q. Can you position the light head so the light pattern is where you need it?

A. Make sure you can place the light in a number of operating positions. For example, a third axis of rotation allows you to illuminate the oral cavity no matter how you turn or position the patient's head.

Q. What is the light pattern?

A. Look for a soft or feathered light edge, to reduce eyestrain and fatigue as you look away from the oral cavity. In addition, make sure the light pattern fully illuminates the oral cavity, yet is controlled enough not to extend up to the patient's eyes.

Q. What intensities does the dental light feature?

A. Light intensities range from 15,000 lux (1394 fc) to 30,000 lux (2785 fc).

Q. How is the intensity of the light distributed?

A. To reduce eye fatigue, the intensity should evenly distribute throughout the light pattern, with no dark or bright spots.



Q. Can you accurately match colors and shades with the light?

A. Don't overlook this important feature. Take your shade guide along while shopping to test for accurate color and shade matching. A color temperature of 5,000K provides optimum color for shade matching.

Q. What is the color rendering index?

A. The higher the color rendering index (CRI), the better your illumination. A high CRI mimics sunlight's clarity and reflects colors accurately for soft and hard tissue diagnosis. Look for a light that conforms to the latest ISO9680 standards for brightness, color, rendering, and uniformity.

Q. Does the light have a range of mounting options?

A. You may need or want to have your dental light delivered from a wall, cabinet, ceiling, or chair. **Choose a mounting location that best meets your space requirements and treatment room functions:**

- **Wall/cabinet mounts** – Offer great stability, have fewer surfaces to clean, and can fold against the wall or above a cabinet when not in use.
- **Ceiling/track mounts** – Offer great stability and less area to clean.
- **Chair mounts** – Offer less stability, but are more economical, require less positioning, and are ideal for small treatment rooms.





Dental Furniture

Freestanding cabinetry offers both design and financial benefits. Cabinets manufactured by dental equipment companies are engineered and designed specifically to meet the many requirements of a dental environment. You can be assured of the appearance and quality of your dental furniture, as you get to see, touch, and choose from various configurations. With custom cabinets, you usually don't get to see the product until it's already finished.

Another benefit of freestanding cabinetry is that it doesn't require fixed walls and halls (although it can be used that way), so space can be used more efficiently—and construction costs are often lower. Ask your full-service dealer for details. **Other benefits include:**

- **Ownership** – While the property owner may own built-ins, you own freestanding cabinets. You can take them with you when you move, or sell them at retirement.
- **Tax advantages*** – Just like other dental equipment, dental cabinets are considered capital equipment (not leasehold improvements), making them eligible for investment tax credit and accelerated depreciation schedules.

**Consult your accountant for additional details.*

- **Loan collateral** – Lending institutions treat freestanding cabinetry as capital equipment, allowing it to be used as loan collateral. Traditional built-in cabinetry is classified as a leasehold improvement and can't be used as collateral.

Q. How is the cabinet designed to withstand impact from dental stools, carts, or other mobile equipment present in the treatment room?

A. Let's face it: cabinets do take a beating. Metal radiused panels, PVC edgebanding on all four sides of the shelving (instead of melamine), and extra thick edgebanding on drawers and doors provide more durability and impact resistance.

Q. Is the edgebanding molded?

A. In an environment where water is always present, cabinetry with molded edgebanding is a practical choice. The advantage of this type of banding is that it seals and protects the edges of all cabinet doors and drawers, prolonging the life of the cabinetry.

Q. Does the countertop substrate provide resistance to environmental affects of high humidity and moisture?

A. High-quality cabinetry uses a phenolic (resin) material to seal and protect the wood underside of countertops.

Q. How will the drawers hold up over time?

A. Rather than traditional all-wood cabinet drawers, some are manufactured with epoxy-coated metal sides and integrated drawer runners. These runners and sides last the lifetime of the cabinet. Metal side drawers should be rated to hold contents in excess of 75 pounds (34 kg). Make sure drawers include higher quality, heavy-duty slide hardware.

Drawers should be easy to clean, and accessible from a seated position during a procedure.

Q. Are the doors and drawer fronts adjustable?

A. High-quality dental furniture uses modern “Euro” hardware that allows for side-to-side, front-to-back, and top-to-bottom adjustments to doors and drawers. This ensures that the cabinetry functions the way it’s designed to, while also allowing quick and easy replacement of doors or drawers for color changes.

Q. Is the cabinetry designed to minimize infection control “touch points?”

A. Cabinet drawers and doors may be equipped with push-latches rather than knobs. You can operate the drawer and/or door with a push of the elbow or knee, instead of grasping a knob with gloved hands (or having to remove gloves).

If cabinet doors and drawers include knobs, they should be easy to clean and barrier protect, if this is your usual procedure. Look for a hole in the countertop where you can deposit trash rather than having to open a drawer or door. Cabinet products with foot- or knee-activation systems allow you to operate the sink without using your hands. The sinks should be deep enough to fill self-contained water bottles in the operatory.

Q. How is the faucet activated?

A. A foot- or knee-activated faucet is more hygienic than one requiring hand operation. The faucet control should not interfere with washing or cleaning space. In addition, a single control should operate both the hot and cold water.

Q. Are materials and construction methods consistent with infection control requirements?

A. Good dental cabinet construction should reflect attention to improved asepsis within the dental treatment room. This is demonstrated in materials and design features such as clean lines, smooth shapes, easy-to-clean surfaces, and minimized joints and seams.

Q. If freestanding cabinetry is not custom-installed, is the mounting base (commonly called “subbase” or “toe kick”) durable and easily leveled?

A. When manufactured with corrosion-resistant materials and protective coatings, metal subbases are much more durable than wood subbases. Look for powder-coated 14- to 16-gauge, with stainless steel features and an integrated leveling system.

Q. Is the dental furniture designed to accommodate current and future dental delivery systems?

A. One of the greatest disadvantages of local custom cabinet shops is the lack of knowledge about how to properly mount and position dental delivery systems. It’s better to choose the same manufacturer for both your cabinetry and delivery systems. This way, the mounting systems are compatible and include integrated water supply, vacuum, and nitrous subsystems.

Q. Will the freestanding cabinetry easily and economically adapt to existing facilities and oddly shaped rooms?

A. Some manufacturers have modular equipment that allows you to configure and expand the cabinets in many different ways. Look for cabinets that you can configure to meet your specific needs now... and in the future.

Q. Is everything readily accessible?

A. Cabinetry should allow the chairside assistant to easily and instantly reach all supplies and instruments needed during a treatment procedure.

Q. Are pass-through upper storage areas available?

A. Pass-throughs are not only convenient, they also permit supply sharing between rooms, and allow tray and tub restocking without treatment room entry.

Q. Is the cabinetry well thought-out for specific dental requirements?

A. Some cabinetry includes features such as glass shelving in cassette, tub, and tray storage areas. **Thin (but strong) tempered glass shelving:**

- Allows for nearly any size of cassette, tub, or tray.
- Offers purchasing flexibility, as it doesn't restrict you a particular size or brand of cassette, tub, or tray storage.
- Cleans easily, a major requirement for any dental setting.

A cabinetmaker may not know all of the requirements for a dental clinic. Dental cabinetry manufacturers will have a better understanding of your professional needs.

Q. What kind of doors are on upper storage areas?

A. Three types of doors are common for upper storage units:

- Sliding
- Slide-up
- Pop-open

Q. Is the cabinetry compatible with a tub and tray retrieval system?

A. Cabinetry should be proportioned to accommodate standard-sized racks for tubs and trays.

Q. Is the cabinetry designed to accommodate x-ray mounting?

A. The cabinetry should be structurally capable of supporting a fully extended x-ray arm. Be sure that the manufacturer drills and taps the mounting holes to fit the x-ray equipment you choose.

Q. Are the corners rounded?

A. Sharp corners on cabinetry are dangerous and obtrusive. Check for rounded corners, covered with a resilient molding for safety and durability.

Q. How easy is it to add or change technology and equipment in the future?

A. Not having to cut holes in your cabinetry to route cables is a big plus if you decide to add an ancillary device in the future. Look for cabinetry where you can literally “run a cable from anywhere to anywhere” in the cabinet, without having to cut holes.

Q. Does your electrician have to do extra work to install your treatment rooms?

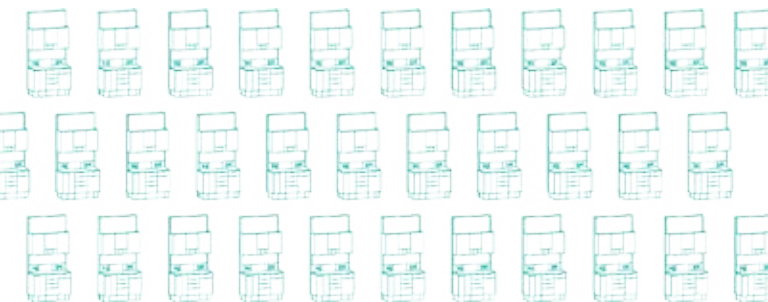
A. Look for manufactured dental furniture that is agency-rated, with hospital-grade components and wiring with redundant grounding. Connectors that attach the cable to electrical boxes should be manufactured to conform to recognized standards.

Q. Are individual portions of cabinetry replaceable?

A. In case of damage, replacement panels or modules should be readily available and easy to install. This could provide substantial savings on your installation, depending on the number of treatment rooms.

CONSIDER WHILE YOU SHOP

- Are doors small and light enough to open easily and allow full access to the cabinet interior?
- Can you open doors conveniently and safely from a seated position or with your arms full?
- Watch out for doors that could close on your hand and cause injury.
- Will the hinges or tracks collect dirt, debris, or obstructions?
- Are the doors “soft close” to maintain your quiet environment?







Sterilization Centers

The sterilization center must meet the specific needs of your practice. Look for setup options and different modules that let you arrange equipment according to your staff's preferred way of working. The more flexible those options are, the better.

Q. Is the cabinet system designed with sterilization procedures in mind?

A. It's critical to take into account the standards and processing guidelines relevant to your country, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), when purchasing a sterilization center.

Has the manufacturer:

- Developed a system that allows flexibility to observe the various guidelines as set by organizations such as the CDC?
- Published helpful information about how their product supports guidelines, and how you can use their sterilization center cabinetry in the manner intended?
- Designed their sterilization center with colors or visual cues to indicate “dirty” and “clean” areas?

Q. Is the sterilization center designed for durability?

A. Sterilization processes are wet, dirty, and sometimes chaotic. Well-built cabinetry stands up to moisture and perpetual cleaning, and easily accommodates unexpected, temporary, larger volumes of work with an efficient design. Be sure to look for:

- Metal toe-kicks that resist potential damage from floor cleaning equipment.
- Drawers with durable stainless steel slide mechanisms.
- Solid surface countertops designed and manufactured to withstand exposure to constant moisture.

Q. Are there options for integrating sterilization technology?

A. Look for the ability to accommodate built-in ultrasonic cleaners, instrument dryers, and/or thermal disinfectors to significantly decrease instrument processing throughput time.

Q. How do plumbing and electrical hookups work with your installation?

A. Installation will be smoother if your sterilization center manufacturer has devoted engineering time to plumbing and electrical details. Plumbing and electrical templates, cabinet cutouts, and special mounting locations all contribute to a successful installation.

Q. Can you customize the sterilization center to fit the size and needs of your practice?

A. Modularity is extremely important when you're planning a sterilization room. Choices, options, fit, and sequence are important considerations. Your practice may need more storage to accommodate a particular part of the sterilization process, or additional sterilization capabilities that require space for supplementary autoclaves. You may want to use thermal disinfection, which has capacity potential for better instrument turnover than ultrasonic cleaning. You may want to add a "make-ready" cabinet across your sterilization center that provides more space and utility for your processes. Efficient sterilization cabinetry offers all of these options.

Q. Can you modify the sterilization center if your practice needs change?

A. Procedures and equipment change over time (for example, you get an instant washer instead of an ultrasonic). Modularity is the key to “future proofing” your sterilization center. It should be able to change as your practice needs change.

Q. Does the sterilization center include hands-free design features?

A. The key to a good sterilization procedure lies in the ability to operate or access certain functions without having to touch a control or grab a knob. While not all drawers and doors need to be automatic, key areas such as incoming dirty storage or outgoing clean storage, should be accessible without touch. Faucets should feature foot- or knee-activation. All of this helps maintain a clear break between the contaminated and sterile sides of the process, and increases staff safety when handling contaminated instruments.

Q. What organizational options does the sterilization center provide?

A. Flexibility is key. Look for:

- Adjustable shelves
- Adjustable tray holders
- Drawer inserts with divider format options

You may want a convenient high volume vacuum hand-piece that allows you to clean up spills. Waterproof slide-out shelves are also good for mounting “wet devices” such as ultrasonic cleaners and sterilizers.

Q. What are your sterilization center color choices?

A. More dental practices are making their sterilization rooms visible to patients to reinforce good asepsis processes. The ability to choose the same color scheme for both your treatment rooms and sterilization center is a significant benefit. With a blended color scheme, the sterilization center integrates nicely into the overall appearance of your clinic and is visually impressive to your patients.







Maintenance

Whether it's surfaces, seating, or instruments, your tools need routine upkeep to maintain a healthy and efficient environment. Here are some things to keep in mind.

Q. Is the equipment designed to minimize touchpoints?

A. Are there features that help limit the number of times you need to touch the product to make adjustments? **For example:**

- Multifunction touchpads
- Handles and adjustment levers that allow you to perform a number of functions in one pass
- Hands-free activated features, including dental lights, sink faucets, and sterilization center doors

Think about how you can set up your treatment room and plan your chairside procedures to take more advantage of your equipment features and reduce touching surfaces.

Q. Has the manufacturer designed their equipment to best accommodate the use of infection control surface barriers?

A. Look at the equipment and imagine how you would add barriers to the different areas. Better yet, ask to see how barriers would be placed over key areas, such as the chair back, headrest, and handles. Is it easy to add them? Are constant adjustments needed? Do they stay in place?

Q. What steps has the manufacturer taken to help minimize damage that might result from your infection control practices?

A. In addition to surface disinfectants, many other factors contribute to dental equipment damage, **including:**

- Handpiece lubricants
- Cleaning and other chemicals
- Applicators used to apply cleaning and disinfecting chemicals
- High mineral content water

Q. Is routine maintenance on the dental chair and delivery system relatively easy?

A. Be sure to ask about the required maintenance schedule and routine steps required.





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Why A-dec?

A-dec began in 1964, with an invention and a dream to better the world of dentistry. To this day, we inherently understand that every successful product requires a tremendous amount of perspective from the dentist. We work in partnership with engineers, designers, and dental professionals—developing simple, intuitive products that are made to last.

RELIABLE AND DEPENDABLE

A-dec built its reputation on an unwavering commitment to outstanding customer service, because we see ourselves as a partner in your success.

A-dec and our dealer partners go to extraordinary lengths to keep your practice humming along like a well-oiled machine. From overnight shipping of replacement parts, to helping you design the most efficient workflow for your practice, we'll do whatever it takes.

DISCOVER THE A-DEC DIFFERENCE

Imagine the value of gaining renewed energy and vision for your practice. Clear ideas for improving efficiencies for your office and staff. And proven solutions for improving your business productivity and profitability. We invite you to visit A-dec and experience it all for yourself.

While you're here, you will experience the heart and soul of A-dec as you tour our manufacturing facility for a personalized look at our meticulous processes. You'll see firsthand how each chair, light, delivery system, and piece of dental furniture is designed with one goal: to improve the performance, safety, and comfort of your practice.

Call your A-dec dealer and set up a time to visit. We can't wait to sit down with you to plan, to dream, and to find solutions that lead to your continued success.

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IF YOU SUCCEED, WE SUCCEED

We're all in this together: A-dec, your authorized A-dec dealer, and you. We're partners with a common goal of helping you succeed. That's why A-dec enjoys the strongest referral base in the dental industry. We take great pride in that—and we are thankful for the large number of enthusiastic, satisfied customers around the world who make it possible. We hope you'll consider joining them.





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