

BEST BUYING GUIDE FOR SEATING AND TABLES





Why a buying guide?

Every environment, every customer, every culture and every single person have different needs, necessities and tastes, and this is even more evident in the choice of furnishing solutions. For example, it is impossible to establish how many seating models exist on the market, which ones are absolutely suitable for the environment to be furnished, which fabrics will be most appreciated, which materials and finishes are more durable over time, how long the chairs must resist...

It is also increasingly important to be able to customize the environments and services for the most demanding guests.

A family on vacation, looking for relaxation but also for stimulating activities for their three children, has different needs from the manager who constantly lives with a suitcase in hand and needs to be fully operational even in his own room. Just as the sensitivities can be different in terms of design, comfort, but also of environmental sustainability.

For example, upon entering a superior suite, we expect to find a welcoming, comfortable, fragrant environment with attention to detail in all the rooms.

It is therefore not just a question of style or design, let's try to imagine some realistic situations in which an accommodation facility could find itself.



business e relax

The manager enters the room after a busy day of meetings, he is satisfied but also a little tense. He then makes himself comfortable because he wants to enjoy a good book for a while and relax... but in the room he only finds a desk chair, a plastic one!
What could his mood be in not being able to really enjoy that moment?

And what is the mood with which he will face the meetings of the following days? For sure, next time he will choose another hotel, probably without even complaining to the reception about the inconvenience he experienced, and he will advise against it to his colleagues, when he could have promoted it and considered it a reference point for his travels.



a family on vacation

A family returns to a hotel room in the late afternoon to enjoy a moment of relaxation before dinner, during their vacation: dad and mom sit on the terrace on a deck chair, rather uncomfortable but oh well, patience... the son would like some privacy to call his girlfriend, the eldest daughter wants to read a book, while the little one wants to play with her Legos.

But the spaces are cramped, the lounge chair is heavy to move and cumbersome, it is easy to disturb each other and the kids end up arguing. At that point the deck chair becomes a further element of dissatisfaction and the family certainly won't tell anything good about that hotel. Not only that, the children take pictures and post them on social media: "You won't believe it, this was supposed to be a vacation, but it looks like a prison!"



eco-sustainable hospitality

A forty-year-old couple has just attended an event organized by an environmental association: they chose the hotel because it advertises its commitment to protecting the environment and follows the best practices for reducing waste, it has a cleaning policy with natural products, gives a service of washing only for the towels which have been used... But they sit on an unstable, very “poor” chair, the varnish of the wood has bumps and peels, they turn it over and see the label “Made in China”...

They therefore ask themselves: “What is it made of? It also has a strange smell... How long will this chair last? And how will it be disposed of? “. Protecting the environment also means taking care of the origin of the furnishings and providing for their correct disposal when they are no longer in use, all with the lowest possible impact. This is what customers who choose eco-friendly accommodation facilities expect.



chairs

and TripAdvisor

A sturdy American gentleman, whom we will call John Gross, goes to the restaurant, looking forward to enjoying true Italian cuisine, in comfort and without stress. He sits down and feels a little encouraging “crack”, the chair does not seem to hold his weight, but he is almost used to being in this situation since he weighs 111 kg...

When sitting down, however, he notices that the chair is also quite uncomfortable, the seat is too hard... but never mind, he ordered the house specialty and his mouth is already watering. The waiter arrives, brings him the steaming plate, the customer is about to dive into this delicacy but notices that the

table is a little too high, he almost feels like he is a child again when the table reached chest height... but never mind, he’s very hungry! Yet there is something else wrong, the table legs are too tight for his legs, to eat he is forced to keep one leg inside the table and the other one outside, and this also causes problems to the waiter who has to pass often and risks tripping, and in any case disturbs the customer. The result? The customer eats a very good dish, but the experience he will tell on TripAdvisor will be bad, because he could not enjoy that special moment as he had imagined even before leaving the United States.



and how much is safety worth?

Let's say John Gross, who weighs 111 kg, moves a little too much on that chair because he feels uncomfortable and that at a certain point the structure collapses and he ends up on the ground, hitting his head.

What could be the consequences of a lawsuit brought by an American in a restaurant?!? Watch out, the guarantee on restaurant chairs, provided that it is ensured by the manufacturer (and that we know who the real manufacturer is), re-

sponds up to a capacity of 110 kg, so theoretically the break that happened to the American customer is out of warranty, and the problem would be entirely of the restaurateur. It would be, because with the ruined dinner and a sore head, don't you think that the customer has already lost 1 kg?!? And so, it could also be necessary to take legal action against the chair manufacturer, with an unforeseeable outcome. All for having chosen wrong during the purchase phase!



Restaurant: in addition to design, it is also necessary to take in consideration the materials and some technical characteristics of the product. For the restaurant area, it is essential to choose a resistant, light product that is easy to move and can be adapted to the spaces according to the number of people present at the table. If the product is easy to move, cleaning the floors will be quick and effective, and the staff won't be overloaded while handling the goods. It is also important to think from the beginning about the

daily cleaning operations, in order to make them easier and to avoid damage or rapid wear, especially in the phases of sanitizing with alcohol (unfortunately very frequent nowadays), which risks to irreparably damage the surfaces of the coatings and / or parts in wood, metal and plastic. It is also important to know on which floor the chairs and tables will be placed, to ensure that the acoustics of the room are not affected and, of course, that the floor and / or the products are not damaged.



It is also essential to ensure that tables and chairs are matched in finishes, but above all in size, especially in height and width, as well as in shape. A square table, for example, will make the arrangement of the spaces more rigid, based on the maximum number of people who can take a seat, but it will instead give the possibility to employ more useful surface, as well as to easily join the tops, to quickly increase or reduce the number of people for each table.

As for the chairs, it is better to choose upholstered seats, mainly for two reasons:

- wooden or plastic seats are easily subject to scratches and / or damage during use (for example due to jeans studs) and during cleaning operations (streaks, loss of colour);
- the padded seats are more comfortable, easier to clean, less prone to damage and easily replaceable or re-upholsterable after years, which means that the product will last longer and can be renewed when needed.



Bar/pub: in many aspects, the principles listed for the restaurant area apply also for the bars/pubs, with particular attention to the size of the products in order to make the most of even small spaces. The stackability of the chairs and / or tables allows to use them only when necessary. The stools deserve a specific evaluation. They are generally made in two standard seat heights: from about 58-62 cm, mainly for kitchen use, from 72-76 cm for bar counter, but more and more often or for some markets in particular, the standard seat height becomes 80-82 cm. Then there are the

stools with adjustable height, but it is necessary to pay a lot of attention to them, in order to avoid bad surprises. In fact, people tend to play with the stools with adjustable height, they tend to use the adjustment lever repeatedly with the risk of blocking the stool. Lightweight and not expensive stools, usually made of plastic, are mostly Asian made and therefore have a limited durability and a limited warranty. More robust and heavier stools, mainly with a shell in plywood or upholstered, guarantee greater durability, as well as greater comfort and design.



Hotel room: of course, it depends a lot on the type of room and on the hotel level, but some rules apply to all environments. First of all, it is necessary to pay attention to the noise generated by the products, especially in presence of hard floors (tiles, parquet): chairs and tables are moved frequently and this could disturb the guests of the rooms nearby or below.

It is therefore important to choose the right product but also the most suitable glides. In general, the guests may have the need to work on the computer in their room: for this

reason, the chair must be comfortable and calibrated to the desk or table. Even an active seat stool could be an excellent solution with a small encumbrance. The guests may also need a moment of relaxation, meditation or reading, in this case the seat must be large, comfortable and enveloping, so that the person feels “embraced”. For hotel supplies in Italy, it is fundamental to obtain the 1IM homologation by the Ministry of the Interior, issued upon passing specific tests at accredited institutes.



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ENVIRONMENT/FUNCTION



Lounge: the lounge area is often the real business card of an accommodation facility. If, when entering a hotel, we immediately feel an atmosphere of tranquility, safety and comfort, this is the best way to start our stay. The furnishings are in fact the first element with which a guest comes in contact. If people say that their first opinion is formed after 7 seconds (and not later), the same principle applies to the hotel.



Wellness centre/SPA: it is important to understand if the products will be exposed to the humidity of the SPA and/or in contact with wet objects (for example towels), because this could compromise their duration. It is therefore necessary to choose the most suitable materials, for example teak or okumé wood, or a metal such as aluminium or stainless steel, which are not afraid of humidity.



Cruise ships: assuming that the products will be in contact with the salty sea air, it is necessary to carefully study the necessary characteristics. The pressure on prices, typical of this sector, must not compromise the quality of the materials, because making a mistake in a single detail in this environment can cause a big damage to the customer, and consequently to the supplier. It is therefore essential to be able to trace and guarantee the

quality of the material, making sure that all the production phases are carried out according to the strict indications of the owner, as well as being able to provide all the specific certifications and approvals for the naval sector, which are really numerous and stringent. It is also essential to be very flexible with the deliveries and at the same time extremely punctual, in order to avoid severe penalties.



Libraries: also in this case, the acoustics make the difference and can be considerably improved thanks to some expedients: for example, chairs with holes in the backrest, soft glides and / or sound-absorbing panels under the seat are preferable than standard chairs. Even being able to move the chairs with a handle can facilitate the maintenance of silence, that is so precious in a study environment. The materials must also be fireproof and very easy to clean and sanitize, without damaging the surfaces or the coating. Finally, it is possible to play with colours. Choosing the right colours has a positive effect and gives the user a feeling of well-being.



Schools and universities: the rules listed for libraries and churches also apply to schools, with further attention to the safety of the product, of the materials used (which must be safe and traceable), of the soft shapes (not sharp). Resistance for intensive use must also be guaranteed. It is often necessary to equip the chairs with safety screws, which prevent the product from being tampered with in the fixing points. Important are the certifications of the materials and the compliance with the MEC (Minimum Environmental Criteria).



Churches: in many ways, the characteristics listed for libraries also apply to churches and places of prayer or meditation. It could be of great value to graphically recall religious symbols, for example by decorating the wood with inlays or laser designs or by embroidering on the padded parts.

The customer often appreciates options such as linking devices, a compartment inside the seat or a support on which it is possible to place religious books.



Conference rooms: dynamic chairs, comfortable, light but extremely durable, often equipped with handles for an easy handling, always stackable, most of the time with some specific accessories such as linking devices, writing tablet, numbering, adjustable glides and trays for transport and storage. The tables usually have a folding metal base, a top in laminate and ABS or rubber edges, in order to avoid damage during the set-up and handling operations.

Making a mistake in furnishing a conference room with hundreds of chairs can lead to serious economic and image damage.



Offices: it is important to understand which area needs to be furnished. Desk chairs or armchairs must be comfortable, with an adjustable seat, with adjustable armrests and wheels to facilitate the handling. But be careful because the regulations, even for the wheels, are very stringent and it is necessary to equip the armchairs with self-braking wheels to avoid accidents at work, even if this aspect is often disregarded as the imported products have been invading this sector for many years. A possible alternative

are active seats, which allow the user to maintain a more correct posture and to constantly modify it with rocking and/or height adjustment, so that the back is always in motion. Visitor chairs may be simpler, as the guests usually only stay for a short time, but why depriving a visitor of a positive experience even just by sitting down? What if that visitor is an important customer? We all know how much the mood can influence the choices, even in the purchasing phases.



Meeting rooms: the chairs are often the same as those used for conference rooms, but there is a tendency to encouraging even more comfort and design, as it is likely that the meetings will be attended by our customers, and it is therefore important to be able to offer a positive experience, from the point of view of the comfort and pleasantness of the environment.

With the boom of web calls, the look of the meeting room has become even more important, since many more people can see our offices, even if remotely, and the decor is a key factor in creating a favourable impression on our interlocutor. It is always better to have a well-kept meeting room behind you than to choose a fictitious background with palm trees in the heart of Milan!



Museums: In addition to what has been indicated for libraries, museums also need to be able to combine the design of the chairs with the design of their spaces. For example, in a modern art museum, contemporary design products will likely be required unless the designer intends to work on the contraposition of different styles. The chairs for the common areas will also have to recall the chosen style.

Shops: when furnishing a shop, design and materials are generally the most important elements. In order to give an exclusive touch, we are often asked to customize the colours, to reproduce the fashion brands on the fabrics or on the wood by using the laser technique. It is also essential to be able to offer a supply of minimum quantities, even single pieces.



Airports and stadiums: extremely resistant but also light products, in order to facilitate the cleaning operations. In many cases, the products are also anchored to the floor and equipped with a height adjustment mechanism and/or swivel mechanism, these are solutions that need to be studied specifically.

It is important that the products are easy to maintain over time and that their components are replaceable, even separately.



Fast-food: in this environment, the products are subject to severe wear due to frequent cleaning, stains from sauces, coloured drinks or coffee on the fabrics (almost exclusively eco-leather) and on the table tops (water-repellent or stratified laminates). It is also necessary to optimize the spaces in order to facilitate the flow of customers, especially during the purchase phase at the counter and when handling with trays.



Waiting rooms: here a lot depends on the actual use of the dedicated space. The waiting room of a prestigious company plays a very important role; therefore, it is preferable to choose large and padded seats. For other environments, such as hospitals, where there is a high flow of people, it is more important to choose products with a reduced encumbrance which facilitate the cleaning and safety operations.

In this context even the small tables, placed in front or next to the seats, assume a high importance for the comfort of the guest: the magazines scattered on the top can be positioned on lower shelves or in a magazine rack. On the other hand, during the winter, it is necessary to have stable and not cumbersome coat-hangers.



Hospitals and retirement homes: these environments require several types of products. For the restaurant area there is the need of chairs and tables with rounded shapes and with a free space between the backrest and the seat which facilitates quick cleaning. The covers must be smeared, anti-urine and easy to clean with aggressive products. For bedrooms and recreational spaces, it is necessary to provide relaxing armchairs, with rounded armrests (which also serve as a “grip” to raise the back), equipped with specific accessories such as trays or storage compartments to allow the user to have everything nearby without depending on the assistants. People often have to sit for hours and it is therefore necessary to ensure the maximum comfort.

Nursing homes: nursing institutions generally have the same characteristics as hospitals. The centres for the treatment of obesity and eating disorders present critical issues: it is in fact essential to provide ad hoc solutions, both in terms of resistance and size. For psychiatric institutions, products must be able to guarantee maximum safety so that they cannot be used improperly and become dangerous for those who use them or for the assistants. It may be necessary to anchor the products to the ground or to make them very heavy to prevent them from being lifted. It is important to avoid sharp and dangerous shapes.



Homes: even if, from the point of view of construction standards, this is a sector with less problem, since the products are less stressed than in the communities, the choice of materials, colours, design and combinations is much more complex. In this case it is important to deeply understand the character, style and expectations of the customer and then to agree together on targeted and customized solutions so that the result is in line with his/her

expectations. The experience of an architect or of an interior designer is precious in these cases. Our home is our shelter, the space where we seek tranquillity and cosiness, where we want to enjoy beautiful moments with our family and friends, therefore a lot of attention must be paid on details. And, since we pay a rising importance to spiritual growth, why not thinking about a meditation chair?



Terraces and outdoor environments it is extremely important to understand if and how the products will come in contact with atmospheric agents, if we are in presence of sea air, if there can be strong changes in temperature and how much we are exposed to the sun's rays. This is because the materials react differently to atmospheric

agents and the combination of several factors can compromise the use of the product or even the safety of the person. Not all stainless steels are truly stainless, not all laminate table tops are water resistant, not all paints are weather resistant. And not all colours remain unchanged with exposure to light.



THE LOCATION: it is important to know the location. Maritime locations are critical due to the salty air, while the mountain area is characterized by sudden temperature changes and by the presence of snow which, in the case of chairs and tables, can be very damaging. Proximity to the sea is a crucial element, we must be able to propose the most suitable materials. Stainless steel and aluminium are preferable to lacquered iron (which however can be used after being treated with specific products). Wood is suitable for furnishing interiors. Regarding the fabrics, it is necessary to select safe mate-

rials, in order to avoid inconveniences such as surface “peeling”. The mountains and very cold countries represent dangerous situations: although we are talking about products for internal use, it is important to understand where these will be placed. A solid wood chair or table placed near radiators and/or poorly isolated windows may be subject to swelling, shrinking or ungluing, caused by the drying of the internal glue. Furthermore, in mountain areas, the products can come in contact with the snow of the boots, which can contain salt and can therefore damage the surfaces.



THE COUNTRY/CULTURE: just a few examples (not exhaustive) of how complex it can be to work for different cultures and countries.

-United States: it is necessary to provide products for “oversize” users and to respect the safety and fire regulations, which are often different from state to state;

-Japan: chairs are generally required with a lower seat and must occupy very little space, for this reason, stackable and folding chairs are very popular.

-Russia: they search for valuable products with increased

thicknesses (for example wood), which also need to be very resistant;

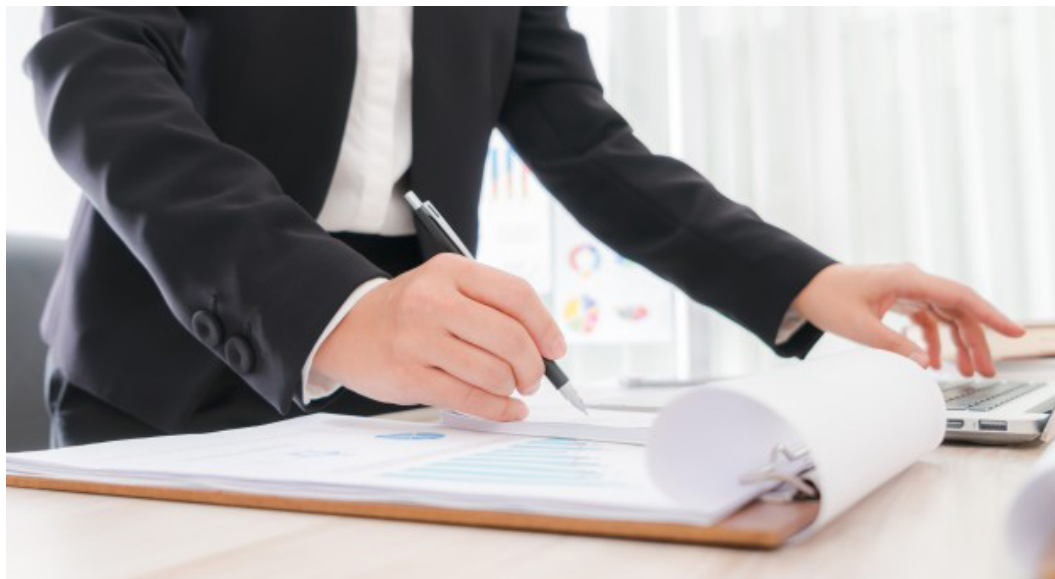
-Arab countries: variety of styles. From the classic style with “charged” finishes and coatings, to the modern style, up to the high-end design, with the complexity of the presence of salty air;

-Scandinavia: utmost attention to design and details, finishes and upholstery in particular, compliance with environmental and safety regulations, as well as ethics established by the manufacturer of the furnishings.



THE AREA: in case you need to take care of transport and installation, it is crucial to know the area where the furniture will be installed. For example, to be able to deliver furniture to the centres of large cities, it is often necessary to request specific permits and / or to make use of suitably equipped transporters for unloading, with trucks with tail lift and / or personnel dedicated to unloading, often

only in determined days of the week. The disposition of the spaces within the accommodation facility can create barriers to the installation, as well as small elevators, narrow stairways, doors etc. Choosing products that can be assembled on site can represent a significant added value, and will allow us to save in transport costs.



OUR GUIDE: Based on what has been described so far, we have identified the elements that simplify the preparation of an offer: this allows you to save time with your customers, increase effectiveness during project development and ensure that your suppliers are faster in responding to requests. In addition to avoiding misunderstandings, dissatisfaction or

even complaints after the delivery has been made. We have therefore prepared a check-list of elements which need to be indicated in order to send complete requests for offers that will save you time in the selection of products and suppliers, and will also increase the effectiveness of communication with your customer and with the manufacturer.



ELEMENTS TO INDICATE WHEN REQUESTING AN OFFER:

Seatings:

- Reference image, photo or drawing
- Dimensions Structure or base material (wood, metal etc.)
- Seat material (wood, upholstery etc.)
- Type of wood (for example beech, ash, oak)
- Wood finish (stained, matt lacquered, glossy lacquered)
- Type of metal (steel, stainless steel, aluminium)
- Metal finish (chromed, satin, painted with RAL reference or with galvanic process)
- Coating: type of fabric, technical specifications (for example Martindale cycles) or fireproofing (for example class 1 IM), polyurethane foam or injection foam etc.
- Quantity required for each type of article Special options (for example felt glides, linking devices, handles etc.)

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- Environment/Function: restaurant, conference, bedroom, lounge chair etc; Area;
 - Country (in particular for fire regulations);
 - Area (if transport to destination and possible installation is also required);

In order to save time and avoid misunderstandings during the quotation, it is preferable to always specify:

- Target price or expected level (for example 5-star hotel).

Tables:

- Image, photo or drawing of reference
- Dimensions of the complete table and top
- Base material (wood, metal, etc.)
- Top material (laminated, solid wood, veneer)
- If in wood, base and/or top finish (stained, matt lacquered, glossy lacquered)
- Type of metal (steel, stainless steel, aluminium)
- Metal finish (chromed, satin, painted with RAL reference or with galvanic process)
- Function: restaurant table, conference table etc.
- Quantity required for each type of article Special options (for example adjustable glides, bag hooks, extensions etc.)

A FEW WORDS ABOUT US

Our company Braida Srl SB is highly specialized in the technical development and production of chairs, tables and furnishing accessories on design and / or order for contract and hospitality.

We are located within the Chair District, where furniture has been produced since 1860 and where about 600 companies connected to furniture operate. The heart of the company is made up of two partners, the brothers Marco and Lorenzo Braida, who were literally born “between chairs” and raised in the family business founded by their father Marino, together with his three brothers. Marco and Lorenzo have had parallel and international work experiences until 2009, when they decided to undertake this new challenge.

Our clients include architects, general contractors, interior designers but also furniture manufacturers who come to us with the need to develop seats and accessories for individual projects or for continuous productions.

Since October 2020 we have become a Benefit Company, the first in the furniture sector in Italy, and we are developing a circular economy and social responsibility project that we hope will be an example for other entrepreneurs.

Our “Best buying guide” aims to become a useful tool for the development of furniture projects. We are open to collaborations with architects, interior designers and manufacturers to increase the real value of the goods and work together for an increasingly conscious and sustainable production.

We look forward to meeting you!

Lorenzo e Marco Braida



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