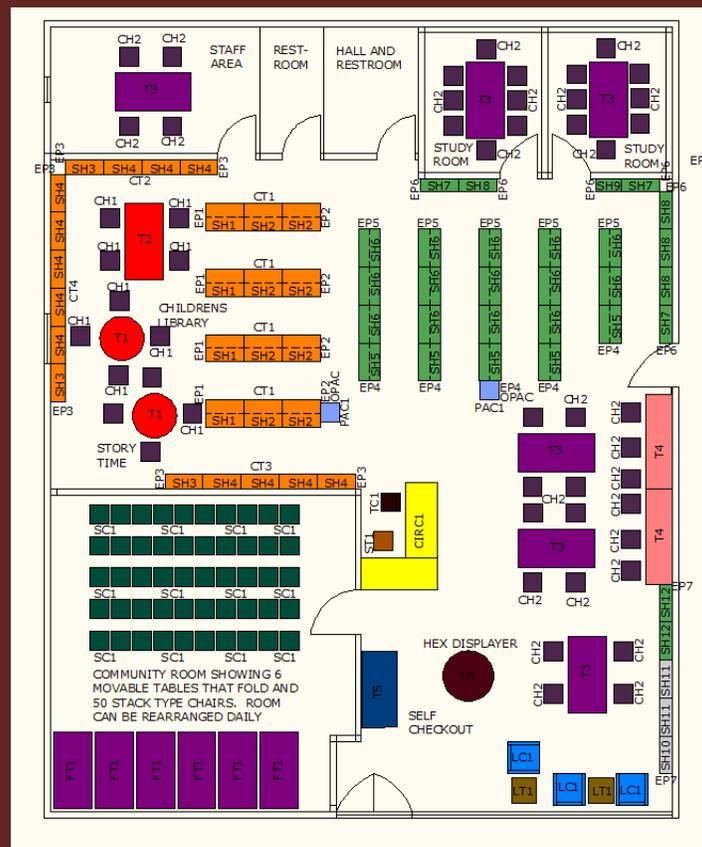


# J. P. Jay Associates, Inc.

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## Space Planning Guide



1313 Roth Avenue, Allentown, PA 18102

# Forward

For most communities and colleges planning a library happens once every 30 to 40 years. In all of America there are only a handful of people with the experience to assist in this endeavor. At J.P. Jay Associates, we know the library you are building is your dream so we put together this booklet to help you make it as successful as possible. This guide is not meant to imply that we have all the answers and know exactly what your needs are, it is more of a tool to guide you in what will need to be considered and help stimulate thought.

Start the layout process today, you don't have a minute to lose. The most successful, interesting, and functional libraries we see are the ones that started the process early. You would be surprised how many libraries we talk to that are nine months away from opening but haven't started the furniture selection phase yet. That phase should start as soon as the architect gives you an empty floor plan of the building and if the rest of the building process takes one or two years, the layout process should continue with it. All equipment orders should be placed no later than six months before it's needed.

Thirty years ago, this book would be relevant for the next 5 years, but today's libraries are constantly changing. Public library needs are vastly different from university needs and each are changing their requirements almost monthly. Added to that is that fact that most libraries have different philosophies as to what a library's needs are. Being in libraries daily, we stay current with trends.

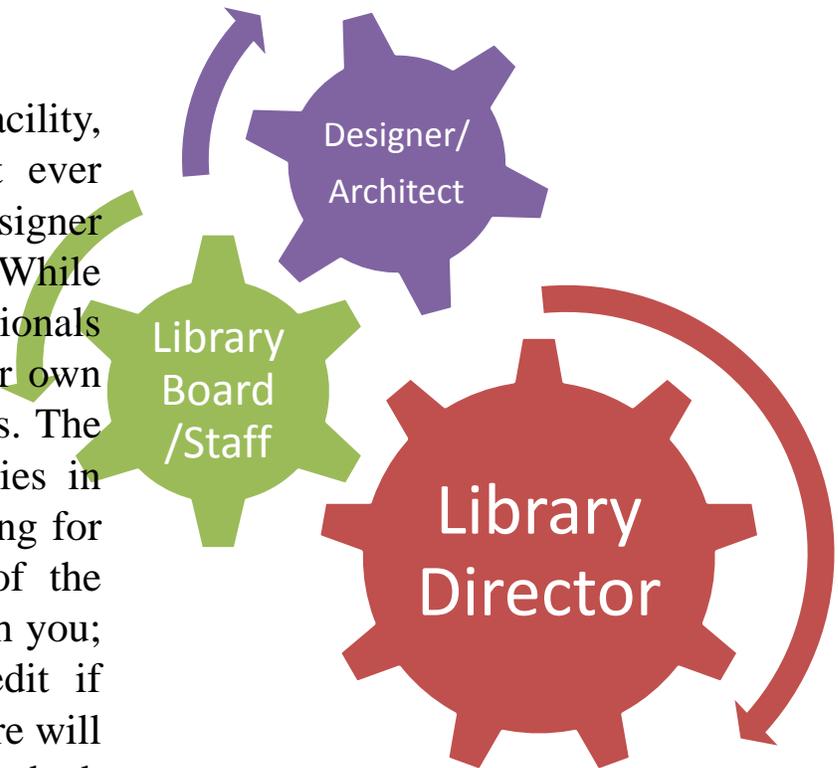
Please know that our business is assisting you in making your library a success by first helping you plan, then by helping you furnish. Please feel free to call for a no cost, not obligation consultation.

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## CONTROL

When planning a new facility, remain in charge – don't ever assume your architect or designer has everything covered. – While these folks are professionals every new facility has their own special set of circumstances. The success of any project relies in the input from those working for the library. As Director of the Library, the buck stops with you; you may not get the credit if things are great, but you sure will get the blame if things go bad. Stay involved!!!



## SELECT YOUR CONSULTANT

It never hurts to have an experienced consultant – two sets of eyes are better than one. If you are a public library, hire a consultant with public library experience; if conversely, you are a university, a university consultant is the way to go. Many, many consultants hold Director positions presently so they are in tune to what is happening in the industry. If there is no money for a consultant, perhaps a colleague in the industry can lend a hand. As with anything do your homework, check references.



## SELECTING A VENDOR



## SELECTING A VENDOR (CONTINUED)

We at J. P. Jay Associates would never presume to tell you that only we can do the right job for you. What we believe is important to you is that you interview various companies like J. P. Jay Associates and select a vendor who can take you through the many months of planning and issues involved. A vendor who has the right product mix for your project and probably most importantly, a company that you feel you can form a partnership with whose goal is to provide the three P's, the **best planning** and the **best products** at the **best pricing**.

We recommend that you never look at the furniture as an afterthought. Once you think about building or renovating and are interviewing architects to do the work on your project start interviewing library furniture specialist firms to be part of the team. You may be saying why? The reason why is furnishing a library is a detailed endeavor. Right from the start, an experienced library furnishing specialist can help your architect with making sure their space planning has enough shelving or tall enough shelving for your collection. They can help the architect with what manufacturers provide furniture that is library engineered. Furniture that meets these qualifications are ones that are built to the library technology reports specifications. They use metal to metal connections to put the furniture together. Not all furniture is built the same and how can an architect or designer who is not a specialist on library furniture know whose furniture will last you the next 30 years. It is like having open heart surgery done by your family doctor. They are a doctor and probably very gifted and knowledgeable but the open heart surgeon is a specialist.

Many library furnishing specialist firms will work on the team at no additional charge because you have done your homework and want to work with them. If you do not want to commit to a library furniture specialist then I still recommend you hire one for the preliminary work such as getting the space planning/ collection phase done right. The cost is negligible to trying to figure out why there is no shelving left and you still have 10 boxes of books.

\*Most library furniture and shelving companies, at least at present, are not asking for down payments. If you were asked for a down payment, in return you should ask for a performance bond to guarantee that the money is there to do the project should the company you are working with run into financial problems. Recently a major manufacturer of library furniture went bankrupt and the down payment money of several libraries evaporated into thin air. Whenever possible, we at J. P. Jay Associates, prefer to do the work before any money changes hands. Payment should be made within 30 days after the shipment of the equipment. While the majority of vendors do not ask for down payments, they do ask for prompt payment and that usually is 30 days. It is, however, smart to retain 10 or 15 percent until you are satisfied that all punch list items have been addressed.

## WHAT IS A SPEC SHEET? WHAT IS A BID SHEET?

How many?

A **specification sheet** outlines the details you are looking for in each of the items you are intending to purchase. For example, you may find a table from a manufacturer; that table may have metal legs, a laminate top, a beveled wood edge and an apron rail. The metal legs may be powder coat painted, the table may need to be 36" x 72" x 29"H and the surface core may be particleboard. These and other details on this particular item should be listed and adhered to.

Size?

Make sure you include enough in your specification that you get the quality piece of furniture you are looking for, but not so much that only one vendor can provide it.

A **bid sheet** lists how many of the above tables you want and what the cost is delivered and installed.

Materials?

The nice thing about living in the State of Pennsylvania is that Pennsylvania has a pretty good \*State Contract which allows you to bypass the specification and bid process. This means that after you do your homework, interview a number of vendors and find the product that you want, you can simply buy it off contract without any specification writing or bid sheets. This ensures that you are getting the exact product want. The bid process is often time consuming, extremely costly and just may not provide the desired results.

Finishes?

\*Many states today have state contracts and many that do not allow the purchase of products off of other state contracts as long as they were competitively bid.

## SET UP A VOLUNTEER BUILDING COMMITTEE

You would be surprised how much talent is available for free in the community. Every town has folks who work for plumbers, electricians, painters, etc. Enlist some of these folks to sit on your building committee, not to do the work, but to help oversee the details. For example, you are going to have a bank of 16 computers, but the specification for the building calls for this area to have one 20 amp circuit; you probably need a minimum of 4 circuits, but electricity is not your area of expertise. Chances are your volunteer would catch a mistake like this. If you are not going to let a professional designer pick furniture designs, carpets, colors, etc., talent from the community more than likely would love the opportunity to help. Remember, the more you get the community involved, the more word of mouth advertising the library reverberates through the community. In other words, don't work in a vacuum.



### A RECTANGLE IS YOUR BEST FRIEND

For some reason, many architects love arcs and circles – do yourself a favor, insist that your building be a rectangle. Think about it, what furniture and shelving in your existing library is not a rectangle? Maybe your circulation desk has an arc and possibly some media spinners. Arced buildings waste space. What is more important, FORM or FUNCTION? More often than not, it is function and again, more often than not, you get more function from a rectangle than an arc.

## SPACE

Your library is going to contain “X” amount of square feet of floor space; 5,000 square feet, 10,000 square feet, 15,000 square feet or 50,000 square feet. It is imperative that you intimately understand your floor space. Stare at the empty floor plan and start to visualize what should go where; i.e. circulation desk by entrance, perhaps directly in front of a workroom, computers where they can be monitored, reference close to where questions can be answered, multi-media items in an intriguing area, fiction to the left, non-fiction to the right, children in a special area where they can be children and not interfere with other functions of the library and a teen area that gives the illusion of privacy while still being easily monitored by staff.



We are fortunate to live in this high tech age. Inexpensively you can have a 3D rendering done so that you can virtually walk thru the library long before it is being built. Insist on it even if it only points out tight areas or blind spots in the library it is worth having done. Early in the process these renderings will not show your exact shelving or furniture or even colors or carpet but they will help you to be sure that spatially you can live with the building.

## WINDOWS

While windows add character as well as light to a library, they take up valuable wall space, thus reducing shelf space. Mention to your architect/designer that you would like your windows at least 45” off the finished floor so that at least low shelving can be used.



## ELECTRICITY AND DATA

Wireless internet has done away with much of the need for data connections; however, we need electric more than ever due to notebook computers, tablets, smart phones and iPods. Again, analyze your space and determine where to place electric. Electric outlets are relatively inexpensive when bidding the construction phase of the project, but are very expensive as a change order or an afterthought. Ask your architect what can be done to ensure flexibility in the future. Remember, electric not only pertains to the building, but the furniture as well; circulation and reference desks, carrels, tables and even shelving



## CHILDREN



Today's preschooler is tomorrow's adult patron and maybe more importantly, tomorrow's donating patron. In years gone by, if a township was building a 15,000 square foot library, they grudgingly set aside 3,000 or so square feet for children's books. Today, the area is known as the children's library and those with a vision realize it may be the most important square footage in the library.

Think about it, when a child shows up, he brings a mom or a dad; if the library is both an educational as well as a fun experience, mom and dad tell their friends. Once again, through word of mouth advertising we have now turned the library into a family outing.

Furnishing a children's library requires much thought; do we make the library a mini version of the adult areas, or do we make it its own entity? Over the last 10 years much research and development has gone into children's furniture providing inviting items for children. The latest trend is theme libraries for children; i.e. the children's area is a circus, a zoo, an aquarium, the knights of the round table. Remember, themes are fun, but once you have established a theme, you have to live with it.

## YOUNG ADULT/TEEN AREA



Over the last decade, much emphasis has been placed on young adults. For decades material for the group of patrons between childhood and adulthood was split up. Some materials were shelved with the children's materials while some were placed with the adults. Today; however, almost every library realizes the need for special young adult collections and the special needs of teens.

When planning a teen area one must remember that while they are not little ones they are still somebody's children and in need adult protection and supervision. We at J. P. Jay realize that your library is not a day care center, nor is it in the staff's job description to be babysitters, but the reality is oversight is necessary. With this in mind we see most libraries creating spaces that give the allusion of privacy, but for the most part are in plain sight. One Pennsylvania library we have been involved with created a room; the first 3 feet of the wall constructed of wood the remainder glass, this scenario is ideal. Other libraries have developed this area in a far corner of the library, but a corner still visible from the circulation desk.

What is the goal when creating a young adult area? We think there are a number of goals: create a fun area that makes teens want to spend time in the library, provide an area that provides a good study environment, provide some fun and intellectual recreation, and define an area that is unique when compared to the rest of the library and one that provides subjects important to the young adult.



Some items used in teen areas are; cafe style booths, fun lounge chairs, funky shelving and shelving colors (please excuse the word funky I could not think of a more sophisticated word) cafe style tables and stools, game tables, computers, video games, themes. Computers, Computers, Computers!



In conclusion this is an important component of your library and you are going to spend money on it anyway, put considerable thought into it and maybe bring in some teens and ask what they would like to see in their area.

## SENIOR LIBRARY SPACE

The senior citizen more often than not gets lost in the shuffle, forgotten. The same holds true in most libraries. We provide a children's library, a young adult library why not a senior library. Think about it, the needs of seniors are far greater than any of the aforementioned groups. The library that pays little attention to the senior population is making a serious mistake. Children do not have checkbooks, young adults do not have checkbooks but seniors, who control the vast amount of wealth in this nation, they have checkbooks.

We at JP Jay have always promoted the children as the future of the library and we still believe this to be true but those 50 and over are today and would welcome a place they can go to and easily find the subjects important to seniors. Medical, financial, travel, entertainment and much, much more.



So what do we suggest? Define an area, furnish it in a mature but fun fashion, separate materials from the rest of the collection that pertains to them, add computers, provide programs that would be of interest to them and have fun with it. Last but not least do not be afraid to advertise the need for donations. Like I said earlier seniors have checkbooks.

## GROUP STUDY



In the world of academia, group study has become the rule rather than the exception. There is not much to say on this subject other than when creating a group study area if you cannot create rooms complete with walls and doors, then you need to position these study areas where they will not disrupt the rest of the library. Group study can get a little loud. If you have the ability to create conference type rooms for group study make sure they are glass so you can ensure the rooms are

being used for what they were designed for. Many libraries require that group study rooms be reserved and have a minimum of 3 or more people using them. Some group study areas are made up of cafe style booths or lounge chairs with tablet arms.

From our experience every institution has their own idea on what group study should be, but keep in mind the following: Should there be electric and data connections? Are white boards necessary? Are computers necessary? Is special group study software necessary? Do you want it casual or formal? Do you want furniture that is on wheels for flexibility? To name a few options.



The above are just some things to think about; however, please feel free to call on us. We can point you to some of the more successful institutions using group study as well as show you the different products available to help create the environment you are looking for.

Group study is an area where flexibility really pays off.

## SELECTING WOOD LIBRARY FURNITURE

There was a time when the library made the decision as to what furniture was going to be used; today this is often not the case. An architect or designer will pick a design and many times have woodworkers who have never had any experience in building library furniture build it.

I do not agree with this. My experience tells me that better quality furniture comes from one of the big seven. The big 5 are Palmieri, Brodart, Worden, Mediatechnologies and TMC Furniture. These manufacturers have factories that you can visit. They have research and development teams, standard products but can do custom work. They have track records, many in excess of 30 years, building just library furniture and they have long warranties. Last but not least, they support your efforts year after year by spending money to support organizations such as the American Library Association by exhibiting at very expensive national shows as well as state shows. Consistency is what I see from these companies; library after library, their work is flawless. Think about it, 10 years from now when you go to add a table or a dictionary stand, these folks have the products that will exactly match what was originally purchased. As an added benefit, these products are usually less expensive and on State Contract.

On a self serving note, please visit our website [www.jpjay.com](http://www.jpjay.com), go to our blog and look at the blog named "*A Library Revisited 17 Years Later*".

**\*\*NOTE:** While the above still holds true in the last couple of years, many libraries have opted to go to office furniture companies to purchase their furniture. We are finding out that 9 out of 10 times office furniture cannot hold up to the rigors of library use. Turn to the companies who are featured at your library conventions; this way you will not be looking for budget money to replace your furniture in 5 years or less.

## CIRCULATION/REFERENCE/SERVICE DESKS



Times they are a changing. Circulation and Reference desks are very often today being called service desks. Many question if they are even needed today. An argument can be made that they are way overpriced and take up entirely too much floor space. To continue the argument, a couple of well paced Kiosks

or small desks can perform most of the functions. Some in the library community feel as Apple does. Look at Apple, I do not think I have ever seen a cash register in their store. The idea is simple, people cost a lot of money; is it not better that they are roaming the floor helping the customer? The same could be said for a library. It is a radical departure from what we are used to and I am not so sure most libraries are ready for it but you will see it more and more. This is a good time to bring up a subject that will be mentioned later self-checkout. To accomplish the above self-check is mandatory.



If you are going to stay traditional your architect and designer is probably going to want the general contractor to build the desk. The fact that a general contractor is building your desk is not in itself a problem as long as you make the decisions as to how the desk will function. All of the manufacturers mentioned earlier have printed literature on desk components and proper sizes; make sure to insist industry standards are used and you should be fine.



The most successful desks today are simply shells with movable components; i.e. file drawers, open shelf units, cupboard units, etc. This allows you flexibility should your needs change. Remember you need an area for ADA, the rest of the desk can be designed to meet your philosophy. Also, remember custom desks are unlike desks made by the

forementioned manufacturers and are not built in reconfigurable components. Therefore, you must spend a lot of time and effort making sure this is the desk you want because you will have to live with it as is for many years to come.

Once again data and electric placement are important; add to this phone, charge out devices, permanent computers and in some cases cash registers.

Always, always, always ask for a 3 dimensional drawing of the desk with all the details before your approve it.



# COMPUTERS

Many libraries today do not want to permanently assign space for computers so more and more we are seeing libraries handle computers in the following manner. A patron comes in hands the librarian his or her library card and is handed a notebook computer which can be taken anywhere in the facility as long as wireless is available. This eliminates the need for permanent and expensive computer stations, saves on the need for many outlets and data ports and allows the patron to work where he or she is most comfortable. Almost all libraries still have stationary computers and the thought is having the computer face an area where monitoring can be done; however, in reality more often than not this does not work and certainly monitoring cannot be done with notebooks.

For OPAC often this is being done in the stack area like this:



## COMPUTER FURNITURE

This subject is changing almost monthly, is different depending on what part of the country you live in and economic conditions.

Today, much of the time the computers are placed on tables that have low racks to separate areas. All electric and data is handled under the table/computer carrel. The low racks make the computers easier to monitor and are less expensive than full racks. The most efficient way to handle banks of computers is again a rectangle. While the hex computer tables look interesting and offer some privacy they take up a tremendous amount of floor space.



With today's hardware becoming smaller as a result of the flat screen monitor and smaller PC's, the furniture need not be as large as it was in the past. If possible, however, provide a big enough area to allow for writing. All types of CPU holders are available to fit a variety of conditions. Many computers today are self contained units.

Remember, computers are needed in multiple areas of the library; i.e. the adult area for OPAC and internet, the children's area for the same reason, at the end of shelving rows, again for OPAC and at the circulation and reference desks. I can only advise PLAN, PLAN, PLAN; the computer is so important in today's libraries.



One possible way to save money is to use wall space and hang a counter to hold computers. Counters do not look bad, function the same and cost less than half of what computer furniture costs; THINK ABOUT IT.

One last point, while we want people to have privacy on the computer, we do not want them to have so much privacy that they feel confident they can get away with inappropriate behavior. Having said this there are times when patrons may need to look up sensitive health issues; if your library will allow it, an area should be set aside for such occasions.

## TYPES OF SHELVING

The only 3 types of bookstack you would want to consider for your library are: wood bookstack, steel bookstack and case-type shelving.



While wood bookstack is beautiful, it has two drawbacks; first, most budgets won't support it and second, it does not offer much flexibility when it comes to media items.



Steel cantilever bookstack is the product of choice; it is almost half the cost of wood bookstack and comes with dozens of accessories for media type items. As new types of media become available it is simple to design a shelf that will fit into the existing shelving frames. When ordering cantilever bookstack, make sure to investigate the new brace built systems; they look better, take less space and have more accessories to offer. This type of shelving can take on any design you need it to by simply designing the end panels to fit the desired look. If budget is a major issue, it can be used without end panels until money becomes available to purchase them.



Case-type shelving may be the least attractive of all the systems; it is expensive and does not offer flexibility.

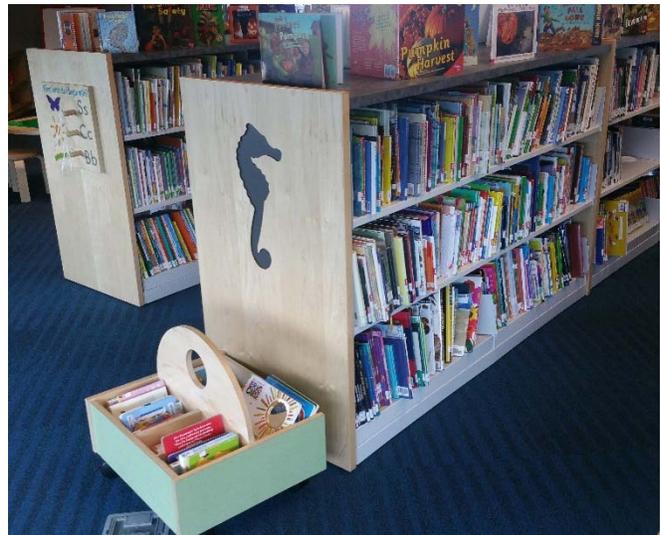
## TYPES OF SHELVING (continued)

# Rolling Shelving

Today's library is finding that rolling shelving is the only way to go; flexibility, flexibility, flexibility.



Rolling shelving can be provided with visible casters as shown on the left, or concealed casters as shown below.



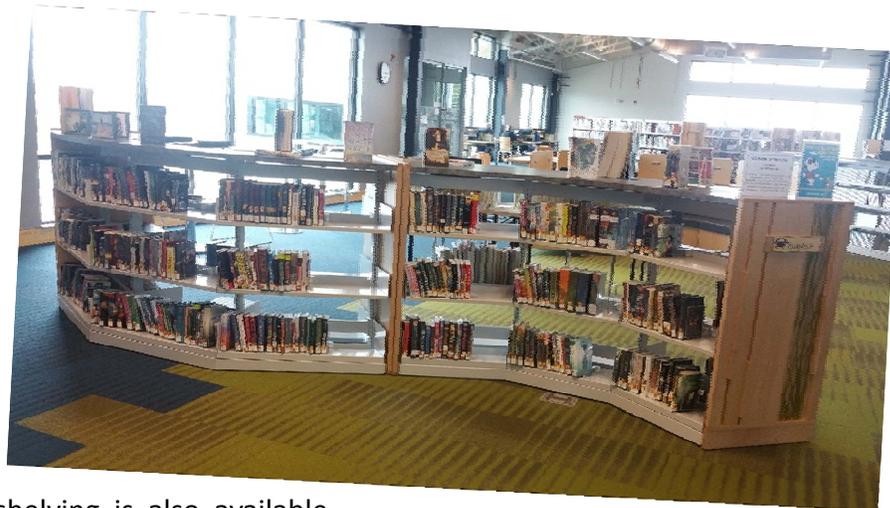
It can also be done omitting the kick plate if so desired.

There are nothing but advantages to having rolling shelving in your library.

## TYPES OF SHELVING (continued)

# Curved shelving

Curved shelving allows you the opportunity to make use of what could be an awkward wall or area or add interest to an area or collection.



Curved shelving is also available with casters so it can be just as reconfigurable as straight shelving.

## TYPICAL SIZES OF SHELVING

### NUMBER OF SHELVES PER FACE

Height of Shelving	Integral Back	Divider	Hinged Periodical	Multi-Media
48"*	3	3	2	4
60"	4	4	3	6
66"	5	5	4	7
72"	5	5	4	8
78"	6	6	5	8
84"	7	6	5	9
90"	7	7	6	9

\*The shelving comes standard at 42"H; however, this is unpractical and we generally use 48".

### SHELF CAPACITIES (Per Shelf)

	Reference	General Collections	Bound Periodicals	Paperback	Children's Fiction
Integral Back	15	25	15	32	36
	Picture Books				
Divider	50				
	Newspapers	Magazines			
Hinged Periodical	2	3.5			
	CDs	Audio Tapes	DVDs	VHS	Paperback
Multi-Media	30	24	45	25	32

#### General Notes:

- Shelf depths for books – nominal sizes most often used are 10" and 12".
- Most popular size – 10" used for 80% of the collection
- While 8" is still available as a standard, it is rarely used anymore
- 12" most often used for children and reference and sometimes bound periodicals.
- Standard width of shelf – 36" wide (35-1/2" usable)
- It is important to determine the height of the books going into a particular area; 10" tall books require an 11" clear opening height, 11" tall books require a 12" opening height, etc.
- If you are not using canopy tops, you can overfile the shelving; if you are using them, you are locked into clear vertical shelving space.

## TABLES

The table is so important. It is a place for a person or group of people therefore they cannot be too big or too small with this in mind we mix up our sizes. Below are the most popular rectangular sizes but today more and more libraries are going with geometric shaped tables that can be moved around to make different size and shaped tables to accommodate the ever changing needs of the library

The most popular table sizes used in libraries today are 36" x 60", 36" x 72" and 48" x 72". 48" Diameter round tables are still very popular. These are considered 4-place tables. Tables today are often equipped with electricity, data and table lamps. Table lamps add a lot of character to the library and can have data and electric in the base of the lamp. Lamps, however, are very expensive, sometimes more than the table itself. More often they are used for effect, not light.

My opinion, for what it is worth, use them in an area you want to accent, but leave most of your tables unencumbered with obstructions on the table surface. If you use lamps, you may want to consider using a lamp with a bulb that cannot be used in a lamp at home since standard 60 watt light bulbs have been known to disappear.



### NUMBER OF SEATS PER TABLE

Table Size	Leg Style	End Frame Style
36" x 24"	1	N/A
48" Round	4	N/A
48" Square	4	N/A
36" x 60"	6	4
36" x 72"	6	4
48" x 72"	6	4
48" x 84"	8	6
48" x 90"	8	6
48" x 96"	10	8

## TABLES (continued)

### TABLE HEIGHTS

25"	Tiny tots to 3 <sup>rd</sup> graders
27"	Typing height/young adult height
29"	Standard adult height/today's ADA height
32"	Old ADA height
39"	Standing height

\*Having said that the most popular table sizes in libraries are 36" x 60", 36" x 72", and 48" x 72", many libraries are using small one-person tables that can be grouped.



### SELF CHECK OUT

If you do not have self check-out now, you will probably have it in the next five years. Libraries that have it find it to be a benefit because it allows your precious few staff members to use their time more productively. As one library director said at the West Virginia Library Convention, checking out books is not the best use of a staff member's time.

From a patron's standpoint, they have privacy and they don't need to wait in line to check out. I really is something to consider because as I said above, if you don't have it, you will soon enough. It's a sign of the times.

## STUDY CARRELS

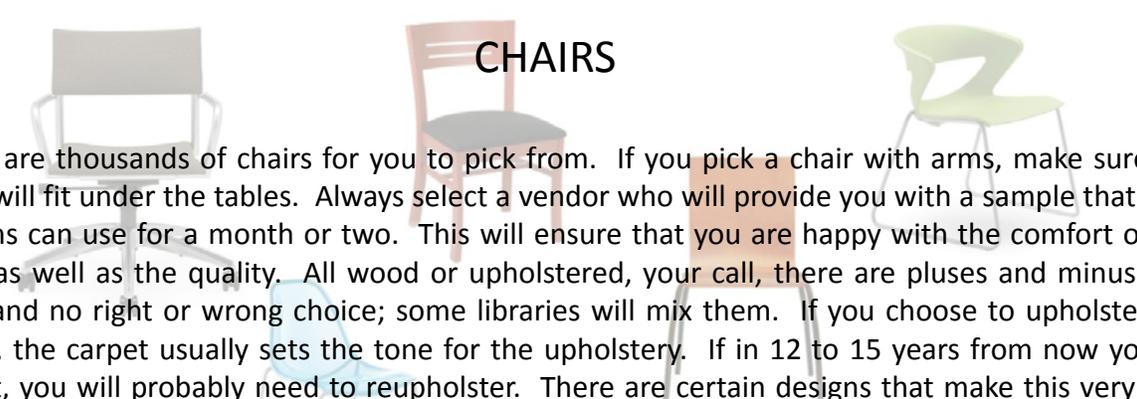
The study carrel is always a subject of much debate. On one hand, they offer privacy, a defined work area and add character to the library; on the other hand, they only seat one. Standard 36"W x 27"D study carrels do not offer much work space and they are expensive seating; a one-place carrel can cost as much as a four-place table.



Your choice, however, my suggestion would be not to overdo the use of study carrels. Whenever I visit a library (all types; public, university and special) I see the public gravitating to the tables where they can spread out. Remember often today a patron may have with him or her a book, a notebook, a notebook PC, a backpack, a cup of coffee, lunch and an urn filled with great granddads remains. In other words, we don't travel light anymore and more often than not we need a lot of space.

When deciding to use some carrels, consider larger ones and give thought to whether they need lighting, electric and data. Also decide whether you will need full height racks, low racks or tapered racks.



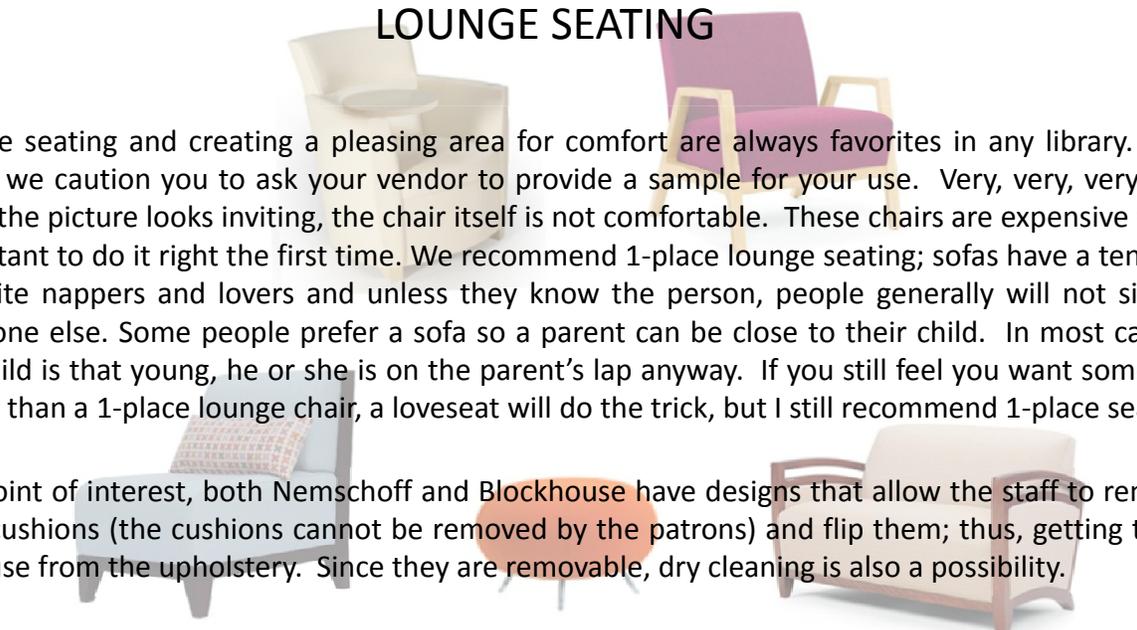


## CHAIRS

There are thousands of chairs for you to pick from. If you pick a chair with arms, make sure the arms will fit under the tables. Always select a vendor who will provide you with a sample that your patrons can use for a month or two. This will ensure that you are happy with the comfort of the chair as well as the quality. All wood or upholstered, your call, there are pluses and minuses to both and no right or wrong choice; some libraries will mix them. If you choose to upholster the chairs, the carpet usually sets the tone for the upholstery. If in 12 to 15 years from now you re-carpet, you will probably need to reupholster. There are certain designs that make this very easy and others that make it impossible and more practical to just buy new chairs.



Just a note of experience, in the past couple of years, we have provided new upholstery at Drexel University, Thomas Jefferson University and Wyeth Laboratories. Because structurally good chairs were purchased originally, today these chairs look brand new.



## LOUNGE SEATING

Lounge seating and creating a pleasing area for comfort are always favorites in any library. Here again, we caution you to ask your vendor to provide a sample for your use. Very, very, very often while the picture looks inviting, the chair itself is not comfortable. These chairs are expensive so it is important to do it right the first time. We recommend 1-place lounge seating; sofas have a tendency to invite nappers and lovers and unless they know the person, people generally will not sit with someone else. Some people prefer a sofa so a parent can be close to their child. In most cases, if the child is that young, he or she is on the parent's lap anyway. If you still feel you want something bigger than a 1-place lounge chair, a loveseat will do the trick, but I still recommend 1-place seating.

As point of interest, both Nemschoff and Blockhouse have designs that allow the staff to remove the cushions (the cushions cannot be removed by the patrons) and flip them; thus, getting twice the use from the upholstery. Since they are removable, dry cleaning is also a possibility.

## REFERENCE

This area is growing smaller by the month.

This area, by its nature, has to be in a location where staff is available to answer questions. More often than not, we see reference by the circulation desk. Today 50% of circulation desks have the reference desk built into them; the other 50% have a separate desk. In any case planning is required. Today's plans must provide for the fact that the area probably will shrink due to the advances in technology.

This also is an area where a small Kiosk can do the trick.

## STAFF AREAS

If at all possible provide a nice lounge area for the staff. Space is always a problem, but the library personnel need some place to periodically just sit away from the patrons. Obviously a sink, a refrigerator, tables and chairs, a microwave and a sofa would be nice if possible. A Jacuzzi would be even better, but I am guessing that won't happen.

## WORK AND STORAGE ROOM

As much square footage as is reasonable should be set aside for a work room. The public need not be subject to much of the functions that go on behind the scenes. In any good work room lockable storage cabinets, shelving, file cabinets a work table and chairs are a necessity. If possible, a location right behind the circulation desk is ideal. If the room is large enough and has to double as the staff area so be it, but if you can keep the areas separate it is always more desirable.

## DISPLAYERS

I do not need to tell you that today's library is not all about books. As a matter of fact, more and more emphasis is being placed on DVD's, Books on Tape, CD's, VHS, etc.

There are literally dozens of manufacturers who provide holding devices for the aforementioned items. Please keep in mind that technology changes; today's 8-track tape is tomorrow's cassette tape which becomes tomorrow's CD and so on; think in terms of flexibility. Is the product you are looking at flexible enough to change as the media changes? If not, in four to five years, you will be stuck with some very expensive and useless displayers. Also be careful what you buy because some of these displayers look fine in the catalog, but are really plastic junk and can quickly trash up the look of your library. It may cost a little more to do it right, but you will be glad you did.



## DISASTER PLAN

This has nothing to do with library furniture, but keep an up-to-date disaster plan in tact. If you think you can't have a disaster, ask Charlie Jamison from Ursinus College (215) 409-3000. While at home on Christmas break, he gets a phone call that water from the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor has been visiting the second and first floor for a couple of days and that much of the collections are wet as well as carpets, furniture. etc. Fortunately for Mr. Jamison, the College was insured properly and with his leadership a functioning library was up and running for the students quickly. Bottom line, things happen. In my 30 plus years of doing this I have had 2 customers have floods and 2 fires; that averages an incident every 7 1/2 years for just J. P. Jay customers. It takes a little time to write a plan and hopefully you will never need to go to it, but it is worth taking the time to do. If you have any questions I am sure Charlie would be glad to speak to you.

Since I wrote this and in the last 3 years 3 more burst pipes it does happen.

## ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER

- ◆ Minimum aisle space in bookstack is 36"; if going to a dead end, it is 60" (allows a wheelchair to turn around).
- ◆ If lighting is running down the aisles on 24" deep (or less) double-face shelving, 5 ft. centers will allow for 3 ft. aisles. If shelving is greater than 24" deep, adjust accordingly.
- ◆ Distance between tables should be 4 ft. minimum.
- ◆ All building codes today require that your shelving be 18" lower than your sprinkler head; i.e. if your sprinkler head is at 102" from the floor, the bookstack can be no taller than 84".
- ◆ High pressure laminate on writing surfaces should be somewhat smooth (for writing) and contain some type of a pattern to it to help hide fingerprints. Unlike wood, a deeply scratched laminate surface is pretty much a ruined surface.
- ◆ The carpet usually sets the tone for all of the upholsteries used.
- ◆ If the budget permits, carpet squares are a nice way to go; accidents are fixable and when the time comes in 12 to 15 years for new carpet, more options are available.
- ◆ Coffee bars are very popular at present. Really think this one thru; many who have put them in have taken them out. Typically if it can be confined to a specific area, it is easier to police.
- ◆ Many community libraries today are providing meeting rooms which the public can use. These rooms should be planned with their own outside entrances, rest rooms and doors that can be locked off from the main part of the library. This way, the meeting room can be used when the library is not open without fear of unwanted visitors.

**Be very careful to make sure you understand the furniture you will be getting. Many designers do not understand or take into consideration the abuse library furniture must withstand. Why? Because the public uses it for long hours and sometimes 7 days a week. Many libraries have been stuck with office furniture. While it looks great, it is not designed to stand up to the rigors of everyday use in a library. We see evidence in libraries all over the country of furniture failing at the 3 and 4 year mark. Our recommendation is to select products from manufacturers that are normally seen at the ALA Convention and only those capable of offering at a minimum 5-year warranty at least.**

Today's library is a challenge, there seems to be no standard anymore. Who places emphasis on maker space, teen or children's areas? Do we want desktop computers or only notebooks? Rolling shelving or stationary? How about the height of the shelving? Nowadays we are seeing libraries that can be completely emptied in a matter of hours by using solid surface floors and rolling furniture. Our services desks can be easily moved and are more comfortable than ever before.

Please keep in mind the 21<sup>st</sup> century library is not your grandparents' library; print media is not the key to the success of today's library, as a matter of fact it can be a detriment. If you occupy so much space with print that you cannot provide the services that the patrons expect today, simply put you will lose potential patrons and when you lose patrons, you lose interest in the community and ultimately in the end you lose funding. **Stay creative and you will stay relevant.**

We at J. P. Jay Associates are always available to assist you in looking at ways to get the most value from your library.

# WEBSITES TO RESEARCH WHEN PLANNING A LIBRARY

[www.jpjay.com](http://www.jpjay.com)

## **WOOD FURNITURE**

[www.tmcfurniture.com](http://www.tmcfurniture.com)  
[www.palmierifurniture.com](http://www.palmierifurniture.com)  
[www.wordencompany.com](http://www.wordencompany.com)  
[www.brodartfurniture.com](http://www.brodartfurniture.com)  
[www.thomasmoser.com](http://www.thomasmoser.com)  
[www.bretford.com](http://www.bretford.com)

## **STEEL SHELVING**

[www.mjshelving.com](http://www.mjshelving.com)  
[www.tennsco.com](http://www.tennsco.com)  
[www.librarybureaushelving.com](http://www.librarybureaushelving.com)  
[www.borroughs.com](http://www.borroughs.com)  
[www.montel.com](http://www.montel.com)

## **SEATING**

[www.jasperchair.com](http://www.jasperchair.com)  
[www.jasperseating.com](http://www.jasperseating.com)  
[www.havaseat.com](http://www.havaseat.com)  
[www.sitonit.net](http://www.sitonit.net)  
[www.ideondesign.com](http://www.ideondesign.com)  
[www.davidedward.com](http://www.davidedward.com)  
[www.allermuir.com](http://www.allermuir.com)

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

[www.electri-cable.com](http://www.electri-cable.com)  
[www.gaylord.com](http://www.gaylord.com)  
[www.demco.com](http://www.demco.com)  
[www.highsmith.com](http://www.highsmith.com)  
[www.cramerinc.com](http://www.cramerinc.com)

## **BOOK RETURNS**

[www.kingsley.com](http://www.kingsley.com)