

# Make your shop practical and convenient

Practical guides  
to optimise your shop

## Summary

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## 23 recommendations for a practical and convenient shop

**From the counter to the fitting rooms, from the doormat to the mirror, a multitude of details can make life easier for your customers.**

These will enhance their experience in your shop, making them more likely to buy. Of course, these modifications embrace ideas from the world of marketing, paying particular attention to ease of movement and buyer psychology. What's more, it's a well known fact: happy customers return! This is significant, as it is estimated that the chance of selling to a new customer is generally 5 to 20%, while the chance of selling to a customer who has previously bought something in your shop is around 60 to 70%. Appealing, isn't it?

### Optimise your till area

Located in the cold area - the least profitable part of the shop - service at the till is a key moment in the shopkeeper - customer relationship. It is therefore important to make this area warm and friendly through appropriate design (soft lighting, warm colours, etc.), and to offer little extras - customers about to complete their purchase are more easily tempted. Choose products that encourage impulse buys. These small items, which the customer did not originally intend to buy, contribute to the turnover of the shop by increasing the average spend per customer, sometimes significantly.

To find out more, visit: <https://music-admix.storychief.io/le-passage-en-caisse-une-opportunit e-souvent-ratee-d-optimiser-la-relation-client>

### Finetune your fitting rooms

70% of purchase decisions in a fashion boutique are made in the fitting rooms! As such, it is worth dedicating considerable care and attention to this area. Safe and out of view, customers must feel comfortable and confident when trying on clothes. In terms of location, it is best to choose somewhere close enough to the tills to ensure they are easily accessible to customers, but far enough away to avoid obstructing the checkout area. In terms of layout, every detail matters: a closing system that provides privacy and insulation, a pleasant floor covering, appropriate lighting, a full length mirror... When chosen wisely, all of these factors can encourage your customers to finalise their purchase.

### Take a little extra care of staff

The "staff and stockroom" area is the most overlooked part of any retail outlet. Although it is, by its very nature, hidden from public view, it is worth giving it proper consideration when planning your store layout. Varying in size and purpose depending on your business, it may include a kitchen, a changing room, toilets, and a shower, as well as the stockroom. This space requires just as much attention as the shop floor. There are three key criteria: safety, functionality and comfort. Just as the till area must be easily identifiable, legible and easily accessible to customers, the "staff and stockroom" areas must be practical and convenient for workers.

To find out more, consult *Am enagements commerciaux: se diff erencier pour r ussir (Retail design: stand out to succeed)*, by Benjamin Stoz.

## Your till, location and appearance matter

1. Do not place your till or reception desk in a high-volume sales area, for instance to the right of the entrance. Instead, choose a so-called "cold" area, which generates few sales, at the rear of the shop for example.
2. Situating your tills at the rear of the shop also forces customers to cross the entire space, thus discovering more of your range.

**Exception: if your mainly sell small items, place the till near the entrance, so a member of staff is always in this area. This strategy can discourage potential shoplifters!**



3. A key area for communicating directly with your customers, your till should not be too imposing: the depth of the counter should allow friendly and comfortable contact. A disproportionately large counter can create symbolic distance.

4. Make the most of your till area; it is the ideal place to encourage impulse buys. Even if you stock cheaper items in this area, they can contribute significantly to your turnover!
5. Placed in trays or display units, these items must be easy for customers to reach and pick up.
6. Make sure that your till is clearly visible to customers and easily identifiable. For example, you could hang a "Till" sign above it, or use neon lettering, to ensure that it is visible from all areas of the shop.
7. The route to the till and the space surrounding it must be unobstructed.
8. The counter itself can be very simple. You can even build one yourself if you are handy.
9. There is no point spending huge sums of money on this unit: a counter salvaged from another shop, or a pretty restored and/or customised second hand table does the job perfectly well!

#### Choose wood!

As it comes from a renewable source, unlike plastic, steel or aluminium, wood is generally considered to be a sustainable material. But how can we choose wood and be sure of its origin?

- Choose Belgian and European producers. Even if it comes from a sustainably managed forest, a wooden object that has travelled thousands of kilometres has a larger environmental footprint than its "plastic" alternative. It is therefore worth checking where the product was manufactured, if possible. Avoid exotic timbers!
- Solid wood furniture treated with natural products is preferable.
- Choose solid wood over composites such as MDF and OSB (orientated strand board), which are difficult to recycle.
- To be certain you are buying wood from a sustainably managed forest, look out for one of these two logos:

To find out more, consult the site: <http://www.ecoconso.be/fr/Du-choix-du-bois-comme-materiau>

## Make fitting rooms a priority!

10. For maximum comfort, each fitting room should measure at least 1 metre by 1 metre 20.

11. Create a lighting environment that is efficient and reassures customers. Choose soft, front-on lighting or indirect lighting using LED strips behind or next to the mirror. Avoid ceiling spotlights: they certainly won't flatter the figure customers see reflected in the mirror.

**In a fashion boutique, 70% of purchase decisions are made in the fitting rooms!**



12. The mirror inside the fitting room must be large enough for customers to see themselves from head to toe.
13. If your strong point is personal shopping, place a mirror outside the fitting rooms, but make sure it is sheltered from prying eyes. This will mean that customers have to leave the fitting room to see themselves, presenting you with an opportunity to build a rapport and offer advice.

#### Children's corner:

**This is not always necessary, but can be very useful, for example if you sell products that require long explanations... resulting in long periods of boredom for children! An area with a sofa or armchair and a coffee table will do the trick, if you have space. Note: for safety reasons, the children's corner should be located as far as possible from the entrance door.**



14. Choose neutral-coloured curtains or doors, which will not affect the appearance of the clothes tried on.
15. Make sure to provide a sufficient number of small hooks inside the fitting room. These must be firmly attached, to support the weight of heavy items such as a bulky handbag.
16. Provide a chair or stool, where customers can sit down to put on and take off their shoes, or leave their bag. A small wall shelf, where they can put down their glasses or phone, is a bonus.
17. Of course, your fitting rooms must be immaculately clean. Both your shop's reputation, and compliance with basic health and safety regulations are at stake.

18. Make sure your customers don't get cold feet when they are in the fitting rooms, especially if your floors are tiled. A small rug is always welcome.

## Don't forget to look after your staff!

The "staff and stockroom" area is the most overlooked part of any retail outlet. Although it is, by its very nature, hidden from public view, it is worth giving it proper consideration when planning your store layout. Varying in size and purpose depending on your business, it may include a kitchen, a changing room, toilets, and a shower, as well as the stockroom. This space requires just as much attention as the shop floor.

19. Make sure dedicated staff areas promote comfort, a sense of well-being, and a positive attitude towards you... in turn, you will be repaid in effort at work and commitment.

20. It is hard to describe a model layout for the staff area, as it necessarily varies depending on the nature of your business.

21. Improve the everyday surroundings and morale of your employees by adding green plants, trendy coloured crockery, tea and coffee making facilities, a fridge, etc.

22. Just like your shop floor and fitting rooms, these areas must be kept clean: it's not just a question of hygiene, but a question of respect!

23. Also consider the comfort of your staff on the shop floor, by providing stools to reach high rails, an ergonomic chair at the till, etc.

The legal requirements issued by FPS Economy are outlined here:

<https://www.beswic.be/fr/themes/ergonomie>

## B

# Who are we?

hub.brussels is the Brussels Agency for Business Support.

hub.brussels is driven by the ambition to make Brussels the most attractive and pleasant place to launch a business.

We offer tailored support, free tools and proven expertise to strengthen your independence, simplify your decisions, and help you succeed in Brussels and beyond.

hub.brussels is also over 200 attentive, dedicated and passionate people, and a promise to support, inspire and propel you, your business, and your most daring projects...

We are hub.brussels; we are with you.

## Contact

Got a question or comment on this practical guide? Want to design a shop interior that is both eco-friendly and on trend? Contact the hub.brussels Retail

Design expert, Thibaut Surin, at the following address:  
[red@hub.brussels](mailto:red@hub.brussels)

## Thanks

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