

How To Select Basketball Equipment !

Each year, roughly 50 million Americans lace up their sneakers to shoot some hoops. The country's passion for basketball—more than 10 million list it as their favorite sport—means big business for indoor recreation facilities.

But with huge popularity comes equally big expectations. Patrons will enter your facility with certain expectations in terms of equipment quality and availability.

To ensure you meet the demand, select indoor equipment that balances performance, safety, durability and value.

Here are some tips on meeting those goals:

WHAT'S YOUR TYPE ?

First you must decide what type of basketball system you prefer: portable, ceiling-mounted or wall-mounted backboards. Each has good points. To determine which is best for you, think about who is using the facility, how it's being used, how much storage space you have, what your budget is and the overall look of your building.

Wall-mounted units offer a welcomed blend of flexibility and strength. When they aren't in use, they can be folded up against a wall. They take up zero floor space and can give your basketball court a more professional, authentic feel. They typically require a shorter lead time than ceiling-mounted units. Some manufacturers keep the units in stock, which makes for an even quicker turnaround time.

Portable units usually combine the base, extension, backboard and rim into one system. They are particularly useful in facilities where the courts are used for other activities such as volleyball, indoor soccer or social events. They can be wheeled around easily and do not require a labor-intensive setup. However, they do eat up storage space and often are an expensive option.

Ceiling-mounted units offer flexibility to large, arena-type buildings. They give facilities the freedom to install baskets where they would like, regardless of whether there's a wall nearby. The units, however, cost more and usually must be custom-made. Facilities needing a quick turnaround time probably should consider a different option.

BACK IT UP

Professional, college and high-school leagues all use glass backboards for competitive play because they provide the best ball rebound. If your patrons are trying to hone their competitive skills, glass backboards provide the best possible training ground.

KNOW THE SCORE

They may not be a top priority, but consider putting scoreboards into your construction costs. If you don't do it then, you might struggle to find a spot for such big-ticket items later in the annual budget. If it's not possible to have one when your facility opens, at least install the proper infrastructure so you'll be ready to purchase it as soon as finances allow. The two most common types of scoreboards are incandescent and LED (light emitting diode). Incandescent boards typically cost less than the LED variety, but replacing bulbs can add up over time. LED scoreboards do cost more, but they typically last longer, provide better visibility at severe angles and offer brightness adjustability. They also can come with display screens, such as single-line scrolling or sports-specific programming. Wireless scoreboards are hot, but you might want to have traditional system as a backup. Video scoreboards are even hotter, but you'll need generous budget for this fan favorite.

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