

Fireproof Cabinets

1 UL Rating Is the Only Standard That Matters

Don't buy any fire cabinet without a specific UL Class and hour rating. Marketing terms like 'fire-resistant' or 'fire-tested' without a UL rating provide no meaningful protection standard. Require the UL rating label.

2 Check Weight Before Ordering for Upper Floors

Fireproof cabinets are extremely heavy due to insulation fill. A 4-drawer fireproof cabinet can exceed 400 lbs empty. Verify your building's elevator capacity and floor load rating before ordering for any upper-floor installation.

3 Digital Media Needs Class 150, Not Class 350

This is the most common misspecification. Paper documents are protected by Class 350 cabinets. Digital media (USB drives, hard drives) requires Class 150 cabinets — paper cabinets will destroy digital media in a fire. Confirm what's being protected before recommending.

4 Don't Use Fireproof Cabinets for General Filing

Reserve fireproof cabinet space for truly critical documents only. General filing in a fireproof cabinet wastes valuable protected space and makes it harder to find critical items quickly during an emergency.

5 Add Water Seal Protection

A fire event almost always includes water from sprinklers or hose lines. A cabinet with water-seal gasket protection preserves documents from both fire heat and water intrusion. Specify water-seal models for complete protection.

6 Keep an Inventory of What's Inside

Maintain an index of every document stored in the fireproof cabinet. In an emergency, you need to know quickly what critical documents are there. Store a copy of the index in a second location (cloud or offsite).

7 Combination Locks Prevent Lost-Key Emergencies

With a key lock, a lost key means a locksmith. With a combination lock, the code can be reset by the manufacturer or a locksmith. For a cabinet holding critical documents, you don't want to be locked out at a critical moment.

8 Anchor to the Floor, Not Just the Wall

Heavy fireproof cabinets tip forward when drawers are fully extended with a heavy load. Floor anchoring through the base prevents tipping more reliably than wall anchoring alone.

9 Two-Hour Rating for Insurance Compliance

Some business insurance policies and compliance frameworks specify 2-hour fire ratings for document storage. Check your policy before recommending a 1-hour cabinet to a customer with compliance requirements.

10 Buy One Size Larger Than You Think You Need

Fireproof cabinet space fills up faster than expected. Once you identify what truly belongs in the cabinet, there's usually more than anticipated. Buy one drawer size larger than the initial estimate.