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## Whiteboards & Boards

### Q1. What's the difference between a melamine, porcelain, and glass whiteboard?

**A:** Melamine boards are the entry-level option — a paper-based surface with a white coating. They ghost (leave permanent marker shadows) after about 2 years of use and are difficult to clean fully. Porcelain boards have a hard ceramic-fused surface — they resist ghosting and staining indefinitely, can be cleaned with standard dry-erase erasers, and hold up in high-use environments for 15-20 years. Glass boards are tempered glass with a white back — beautiful, completely stain-proof, easy to clean, but more expensive and can shatter if struck hard enough. For commercial use, porcelain is the minimum recommended. Glass is the premium choice.

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### Q2. What size whiteboard do I need for a conference room?

**A:** A general rule: 1 linear foot of board width per 2 feet of room length. For a 12-foot-long room, that suggests a 6-foot (72") board minimum. For a 20-foot room, an 8-foot board (96") or two 4-foot boards is appropriate. Also consider the distance from the board to the back row of viewers — at 15 feet, 3" text is readable; at 30 feet, you need 5" text. The further away the audience, the larger the board needs to be. When in doubt, go bigger — you can always use less of a large board, but a small board in a big room is a constant frustration.

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### Q3. Should I get a wall-mounted or mobile/rolling whiteboard?

**A:** Wall-mounted boards are more stable, can be larger, and have a cleaner, permanent look. They're the right choice when the room is dedicated to whiteboard use. Mobile/rolling boards are flexible — roll them where they're needed, store them when not in use. They're ideal for multi-use spaces, training rooms, or classrooms. For collaborative offices without dedicated meeting rooms, a mobile board on wheels is often more practical. For conference rooms with a fixed front wall, wall-mount is the standard.

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### Q4. Can whiteboards damage walls and how do I hang one properly?

**A:** Improperly hung whiteboards can damage walls. A heavy porcelain or glass board should be mounted into wall studs — drywall anchors alone are not sufficient for boards over 15 lbs. Use a stud finder to locate studs and mount the hanging system into at least two studs. Floating mount systems distribute weight across multiple contact points, which is better for large boards. If your wall doesn't have studs in the right location, a heavy-duty wall-mount rail system spanning multiple studs is the solution. For temporary installation, heavy-duty Command strips work for very small (under 5 lbs) boards only.

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### Q5. What are the magnetic vs. non-magnetic options?

**A:** Magnetic surfaces allow you to attach documents, notes, and materials with magnets — a huge functional advantage in collaborative environments. Porcelain boards are inherently magnetic because they're fused over a steel substrate. Standard melamine boards are not magnetic. Glass boards are typically not magnetic unless a ferrous backing is added. If you want to pin up materials alongside whiteboard writing — very common in project rooms and Agile/scrum environments — magnetic is a must-have. Always specify magnetic surfaces for collaborative environments.

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### Q6. How do I eliminate ghosting on a whiteboard?

**A:** Ghosting happens when dry-erase marker ink seeps into micro-pores of the surface. Causes: low-quality board surface (melamine), using wrong markers (permanent markers vs. dry-erase), not erasing promptly, or not cleaning the board with proper whiteboard cleaner periodically. Solutions: use only high-quality dry-erase markers (Expo, Staedtler), erase within 24 hours, clean with diluted isopropyl alcohol monthly, and condition the board with manufacturer's whiteboard cleaner. If a melamine board is ghosted beyond recovery, the only fix is replacement. A porcelain board won't ghost regardless.

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### Q7. What's a glass board and is it worth the premium?

**A:** A glass whiteboard is tempered glass with a white (or colored) backing. The writing surface is glass itself — completely non-porous, completely stain-proof, requires only a damp cloth to clean perfectly. Glass boards are also beautiful design objects — they look premium in any modern office environment. The premium is real: a quality glass board costs 2-4x a comparable porcelain board. The trade-offs: glass can shatter if struck with a hard object (low probability but non-zero), they're heavy, and they require professional installation for large sizes. For executive boardrooms and premium offices where aesthetics matter, glass boards are the right recommendation.

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### Q8. What are tackable panels and where are they used?

**A:** Tackable panels (also called bulletin boards, tack boards, or fabric panels) have a soft fabric-wrapped or cork surface that accepts pushpins without leaving large holes. They're used alongside whiteboards in project rooms, alongside work surfaces for paper posting, and as acoustic panels that also function as display surfaces. Popular in Agile/scrum environments for posting sticky notes and physical kanban boards. Combination boards (half whiteboard, half tackable) are available. For any environment where posting physical materials is part of the workflow, include tackable surface in the specification.

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### Q9. How do I prevent dry-erase markers from being used on the wrong surfaces?

**A:** This is a real problem in offices — permanent markers get mixed in with dry-erase markers, and people use markers on non-whiteboard surfaces. Strategies: buy only one brand of dry-erase marker and store them in dedicated containers, label the containers 'DRY ERASE ONLY,' use cap colors that are distinct from permanent markers in your office, and train staff on the difference. For the board surface, permanent marker accidents can sometimes be resolved by writing over the permanent marks with dry-erase marker and immediately erasing — the solvents interact to loosen the permanent marker.

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### Q10. Are interactive whiteboards worth the investment?

**A:** Interactive whiteboards (like SMART Boards or similar) combine a whiteboard with a touchscreen display, allowing digital content to be displayed and annotated on the same surface. Benefits: seamlessly integrates digital and analog content, annotations can be saved digitally, video conferencing displays on the same surface. Cost: significantly higher than standard whiteboards — \$2,000 to \$10,000+ depending on size and technology. Best use case: organizations with heavy video conferencing, remote team members, or frequent training sessions. For organizations with primarily in-person teams and simple visual collaboration, a premium porcelain or glass board is often the better value.

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