


CHARGING CART BUYER'S GUIDE

How to choose the right charging cart to maximize device security and utilization





The use of computing devices such as laptops and tablets in the classroom is fast becoming the alternative to textbooks.

Computing devices can improve the quality of teaching and learning by creating a collaborative environment, reducing costs, and supporting project-based learning.

To maximize these benefits, your devices must be kept safe, secure, and be readily accessible so committing to the right cart solution for your school's devices is an important decision. Use this guide for choosing the right charging cart solution for your classroom.

1 CART ADAPTABILITY

The cart you choose should be able to store, charge, and sync a wide range of devices. Technology is always changing and your cart should be able to adapt. A flexible mounting system and interchangeable shelving will not have to be replaced every time you change or upgrade devices. Factor in future growth when determining your storage capacity needs. Choose a cart that allows for reconfiguration and the flexibility to add extra devices.

2 CABLE MANAGEMENT & VENTILATION

Wires and cords can get tangled. So choose a cart that allow you to easily swap out a bad power brick or replace a cord. Another option is to choose a cart that comes pre-wired. Choose a cart with good ventilation. Extreme temperatures can damage valuable equipment. Power bricks can get hot, so be sure there is enough space between each one to facilitate cooling. Carts with fans can add noise to the classroom. To reduce noise, choose a cart with vented panels and doors to help keep equipment cool.

3 QUALITY

Choose a cart that offers a high level of quality and durability so that can it stand up to years of heavy use. Look for carts that are scratch/stain-resistant and constructed of a rugged steel. Carts that have a painted coating can chip or flake. Select a cart with a baked on finish. This will protect against peeling, rust, and corrosion.

4 SAFETY

Ensure that the carts are safe for children to be around. Watch out for tiny openings where fingers can be pinched. Both the front and back of the cart should lock. Any exterior power "pop up" ports should be secure as well. For maximum safety, tablet and laptop carts should have not have sharp edges, unlockable rear access for wiring or ledges that can be climbed on.





5 POWER FOR DEVICES

Consider if you want to be able to sync and/or charge multiple devices while they are being stored. The cart should come equipped with a power strip, at the very least, to handle the load. Some older buildings often do not have electrical circuits that can handle many devices charging at once. In that case, look for carts that offer pre-set timers or built-in power management system that alternates power from one side of the cart to the other. A timer will charge the devices in increments to ensure that the cart never draws more current than the circuit can handle.

6 ACCESS TO DEVICES & POWER

There should be safe and convenient access to any device and power port from either side of the cart. Some carts offer extra power outlets on the outside of the cart and “pop-up” power centers on the top of the cart. Any exterior power ports should be securely attached.

7 CART SIZE & USABILITY

Consider the footprint of the cart in relation to the the classroom. Be sure to measure how much space the door takes up when open. An alternative is to choose a model that has doors that slide into the cart. Also, to maximize your space, some carts can be stacked or used as a podium, a desk or be configured with height-adjustable shelves for additional shelf space. Choose a cart with a non-skid top surface for a stable place for presentation equipment.

8 MANEUVERABILITY

Choose a cart that can easily and safely be moved from place to place. It should roll easily and have big enough wheels for smooth maneuvering. Also, look for locking and swiveling casters for controlled mobility and steering.

9 SECURITY

Choose a cart that offers secure compartments for safe storage of charging of devices and other valuable items. All doors should have either mechanical or electronic locking.

Also, look for a cart with no external fasteners and that is made from high-quality steel that cannot easily be breached.

10 COST & WARRANTY

Determine if the cart comes assembled and what is included in the purchase price. Consider if the cost of the cart accurately reflect its quality and features. A well-priced cart will tend to serve users better in the long run.

Typically, you can tell the quality of a product by the warranty offered. Quality carts should come with an extensive warranty and a lifetime guarantee.

VENDOR COMPARISON CHECKLIST

VENDOR A

VENDOR B

VENDOR C

Is the cart adaptable for current and future use?

YES / NO

YES / NO

YES / NO

Is there good cable management and ventilation?

YES / NO

YES / NO

YES / NO

Will the cart hold up to the demands of daily use?

YES / NO

YES / NO

YES / NO

Is the cart equipped with safety features?

YES / NO

YES / NO

YES / NO

Does it have the proper power capability for stored devices?

YES / NO

YES / NO

YES / NO

Is there convenient and safe access to the devices and power?

YES / NO

YES / NO

YES / NO

Is the cart size acceptable for current and future use? Is it configurable?

YES / NO

YES / NO

YES / NO

Is the cart easily maneuverable?

YES / NO

YES / NO

YES / NO

Is it lockable? Will it keep your devices secure?

YES / NO

YES / NO

YES / NO

Is the cost and warranty in line with the quality and features?

YES / NO

YES / NO

YES / NO

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