

Your Definitive Guide to Planning for FF&E Shipments



In FF&E, there's no such thing as too much preparation.

From start to finish, every step of your project relies on the foundation you build when you develop your FF&E plan.

Inadequate preparation when receiving FF&E product can place your project completion in jeopardy.





Planning enables hoteliers to make better development decisions regarding the project, product and participation required.

START WITH PREPARATION

Your Project



Are you diving into a Property Improvement Plan or breaking ground on a new build? Either way, schedules and timelines are the heartbeat of a successful project.

The optimal FF&E receiving sequence involves:

- **Unloading** – Unpacking the truck first and ensuring everything is on the ground
- **Inspecting** – Making sure all product quantities are correct and in good condition; photograph and report any issues
- **Staging** – Setting product in an organized area
- **Distributing** – Delivering each item to the appropriate location in preparation for installers
- **Installing** – Placing the product in its final location

You need to be cognizant of the install schedule to ensure it lines up with your FF&E delivery plan in a sequential order.



Your Participation



Knowing what you need and when is the most basic part of an FF&E plan, especially when receiving a shipment.

A carrier will typically allow two hours (or less) to unload their truck, so you'll want to:

- **Ensure you have enough staff** on hand to receive deliveries.
- **Allow sufficient time** to offload and inspect shipments.
- **Have the right equipment** for quick, efficient offloading.

Note: Most FF&E deliveries are “tailgate” deliveries, meaning the carrier is not obligated to help you unload.

To help clients confirm they receive the correct amount of product, [Invision Hospitality provides a master delivery report](#) for order-to-shipment comparison.



Your Products



Part of planning involves an understanding of the product that is being delivered. As you prepare to accept an FF&E shipment, ask yourself:

- **How is the product delivered?**
- **What are your product installation needs?**
- **How does construction impact installation?**

Your Products



How is the product delivered?

Be aware of case packs in deliveries. If you order twelve chairs but only six boxes are delivered because two chairs were packaged together, for example, relying on your delivery report alone wouldn't be enough. You want to know how items will be packaged and delivered in advance so you can eliminate confusion when receiving product.

What are your product installation needs?

Sequential Order - Your FF&E logistics plan should support the sequential order of your product installation schedule. Products requiring hanging and assembly are typically brought in first, followed by those that just require placement beginning in the guest rooms and finishing out in the public areas.





How does construction impact installation?

Delivering FF&E product while your hotel is still under construction could potentially push your project over budget for the following reasons:

- **Added labor costs** for double handling of product
- **Unplanned storage costs** for improper staging and assembly areas
- **Loss and/or damage** of product
- **Added installation cost** for delaying the install schedule



You will receive many different types of products through an FF&E project.

TYPES OF PRODUCTS

Throughout an FF&E project, you will receive many different types of products.

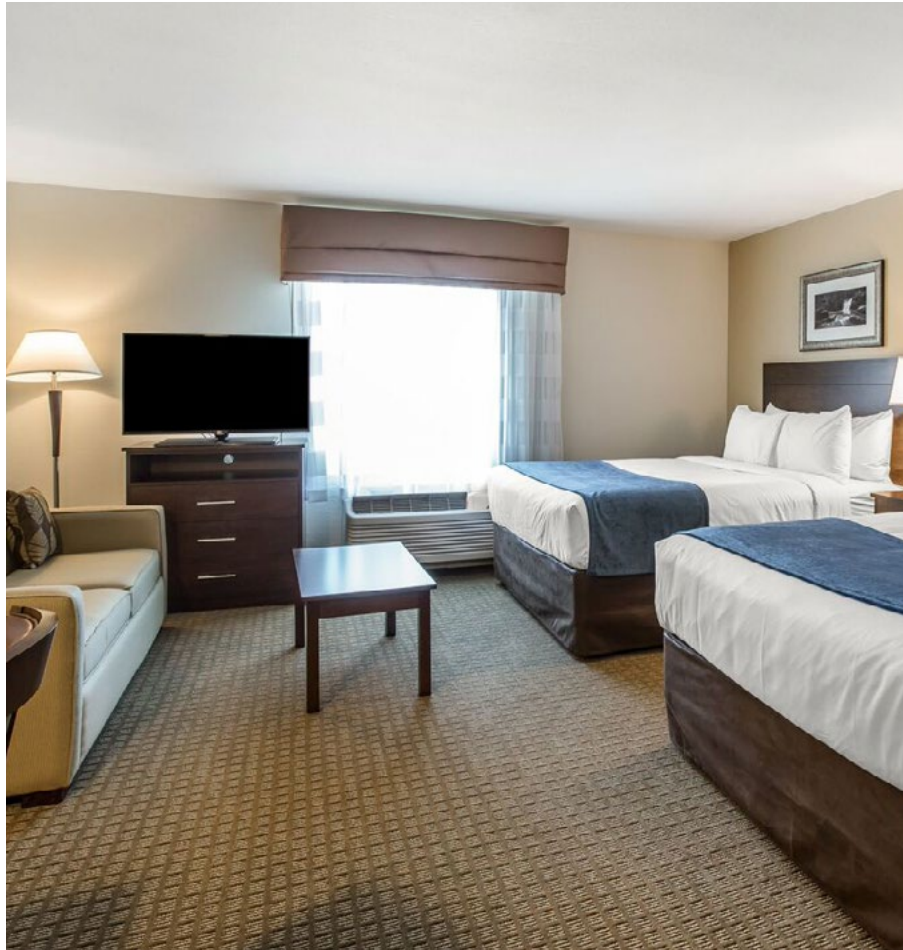


- Contractor Products
- Case Goods & Furniture
- Art & Mirrors
- Lighting
- Seating
- Window Treatments
- Fitness Equipment
- Mattresses

Contractor Products



Contractor products are items installed by the general contractor, subcontractor or designated installer.



Contractor products consist of...

- Shower Units
- Floor & Wall Tile
- Wall Vinyl
- Plumbing Fixtures
- Carpet, Carpet Base & Pad
- Hardwire Lighting
- Backlit Vanity Mirrors

Follow these steps when receiving and unloading contractor products:

1. Collaborate with your general contractor.

Schedule delivery of contractor products so that they support and facilitate the overall construction process. Before you place an order, keep in mind that you must coordinate with your general contractor to confirm product quantities. Clarity and communication are the keys to ensuring your deliveries align with the overall construction schedule.

2. Schedule contractor products delivery for two weeks before the install date.

Contractor products are typically stored onsite until ready for installation. Our project consultants recommend having products delivered within a one to two week window before the install date.

3. Plan for appropriate equipment and staff.

In most cases, contractor products will require specialized equipment such as a forklift, pallet jack, carpet pole or lift gate to properly unload. Determine how many pallets or rolls of contractor products will be delivered to ensure the appropriate equipment and staff are on-hand.

Note: If products do not arrive palletized, you will need to unload them by hand.

Receiving Contractor Products: A Step-by- Step Guide



Case Goods & Furniture



When you submit a case goods order, your vendor will prepare a shop drawing for approval of dimensions for each piece before going to production. This helps to ensure proper fit during installation.

With that in mind, we recommend that you ask the questions below before receiving a case goods or furniture shipment.



What will the lead time be upon approval of the shop drawings?

The drawing approval process could take a few days or up to a week or more. Monitor the process carefully to avoid extending the lead time and missing the install date.

Will the case goods be manufactured domestically or internationally?

Determine where your products are coming from ahead of time. In the event of a project delay, you'll want to communicate with the product manufacturer to avoid product arriving too soon. When products are manufactured internationally there are many moving parts, so you must be aware of the cutoff date prior to production.





How is the product packaged?

Your case goods and furniture may be cartoned, crated or corner guarded and wrapped. If palletized, you will need to know how many pallets are arriving. **Packaging and quantities** affect the equipment and staff required to receive the product.

Where will products be placed? What are the install and assembly needs?

To prepare your team, obtain drawings and assembly instructions for each product. This information is critical to help you determine where products are placed upon delivery.

Note: Assembly requirements may inform your overall budget, as they often impact installation cost.





How do I best schedule trucks for case goods and furniture delivery?

Although trucks can be unloaded in a variety of ways depending on the install plan, we recommend unloading by order of install, hangables, and assembly items first. Most carriers allow two hours or less to unload, so don't forget to schedule sufficient time for unloading and inspection.

Art & Mirrors



Because art and mirrors are hangable items, they are typically among the first FF&E products delivered on a project.



Consider the following when receiving art & mirrors:

- When estimating lead times, keep the approval period in mind.
- Back-lit vanity mirrors may be hardwired or plug-in.
- Provide elevation drawings to your installer early in the planning process.
- Know where electrical outlets and switches are located.

Note: For easy transport, art and mirror products are typically packed in boxes or wooden crates mounted to pallets. In certain cases, mirrors may be shipped on wooden A-frame pallets, but the product itself will be corner-guarded in bubble wrap.

Follow these steps when receiving and unloading art and mirrors:

1. Locate mounting hardware right away.

Mounting hardware may be shipped separately or within one of the crates. It will be marked with red tape or a red banner on that specific box. When receiving art and mirrors, you should locate the hardware immediately to confirm you have sufficient hardware to complete the installation and to avoid accidentally throwing it out.

2. Inspect all boxes and crates for any potential damages or count discrepancies.

Depending on the manufacturer, boxes and crates are numbered to easily identify damages or count discrepancies and can be cross-referenced to the packing list. In the event damages are discovered, take pictures to document the issues. Be sure to report all issues immediately.

3. Stage, distribute and install.

After inspecting and documenting any potential product damages, complete the optimal receipt sequence. Place the product in an organized area, deliver each item to the appropriate location and finally, install the art and mirrors.

Receiving Art & Mirrors: A Step-by- Step Guide



Lighting



The key to lighting is knowing what's hardwired and what's not. Plug-in fixtures, including floor and table lamps, certain wall sconces, and desk lamps are all considered FF&E products.

Lighting



Don't forget the light bulbs!

Remember to order light bulbs if not included with your fixture order. **Not all lighting products will include bulbs.** Schedule delivery for both products within the same period so you can ensure fixtures are in working order.

Be aware of how the product will be delivered.

Most FF&E lighting product is boxed and shipped on pallets. Unloading palletized product may require specialized equipment, such as a forklift.



Lighting



Prepare your staff accordingly.

Due to the fragile nature of these fixtures, care must be taken when unloading and moving product. As with any FF&E delivery, **you must also inspect product for any potential damages or count discrepancies upon receipt.** Note any crushed, dented or ripped boxes on your delivery receipt.

A Note on Hardwired Lighting

Certain lighting products will require installation by a licensed electrician. These fixtures may consist of, but are not limited to:

- **Vanity lights**
- **Wall sconces**
- **Ceiling lights**
- **Recessed can lighting**
- **Pendants**

You must coordinate these product deliveries with your general contractor, as these products should be installed before the main [FF&E installation](#) schedule.



Seating



Seating is typically delivered after case goods, artwork and lighting. As you prepare to receive seating products, we recommend that you ask the questions below before receiving a seating shipment.



Where is the product manufactured?

Determine where your products are coming from in advance.

If you experience project delays, you'll want to communicate with the manufacturer to avoid a premature product arrival.

International manufacturing involves many moving parts, so you must be aware of any cutoff dates before production.

How is the product packaged?

To prepare for unloading and installation, **identify whether your product will be boxed or wrapped before it arrives.** Be aware of case packs, which may contain more than one item.



Seating



What is the product weight?

Another item to consider in preparation for receiving seating is the total weight of the product. If you have limited staff available, you may need to **request specialized equipment such as a lift gate to unload heavier products** such as sofa sleepers or large banquettes.

What are the space requirements for staging?

Space planning is a critical element of receiving and staging product. To properly stage seating products, you must identify space requirements. In the event of project delays, potential storage may be required.



Seating



Where will products be placed?

Be aware of the final placement location, whether it's a guestroom or public area, prior to installation. In the pre-planning phase, ensure your team understands where to place seating items upon delivery.

Follow these steps when receiving and unloading seating:

1. Understand staffing and equipment needs.

If your renovation project has minimal staff on hand, you may require a lift gate or additional special equipment to ensure a quick, efficient unload.

2. Take care when opening boxes.

One of the most frequent causes of product damage is simple human error when using box cutters and utility knives. Encourage careful use of these tools to minimize damages.

3. Consider trash removal.

An often-overlooked aspect of receiving and installation is packaging disposal. Be prepared to remove and dispose of all seating packaging.

Receiving Seating: A Step-by- Step Guide



Window Treatments



As one of the final phases of any FF&E installation, receiving window treatments involves extensive up-front planning.

In addition to the optimal FF&E receiving sequence (Unload, Inspect, Stage, Distribute and Install), the window treatment process requires pre-measuring each individual window to correctly identify how much fabric yardage is required for each window, minimizing errors in this very specific phase of the project.

Construction delays, such as not having the hotel ready for pre-measure or install. In the event of a delay, you must communicate with the window treatment vendor and understand production lead times.

Fabric delays due to certain fabric orders with lengthy lead times. To avoid delays, determine the lead times for your fabric and place these orders early in the project.



**Two major factors
may impact your
window treatment
receiving and
installation schedule.**

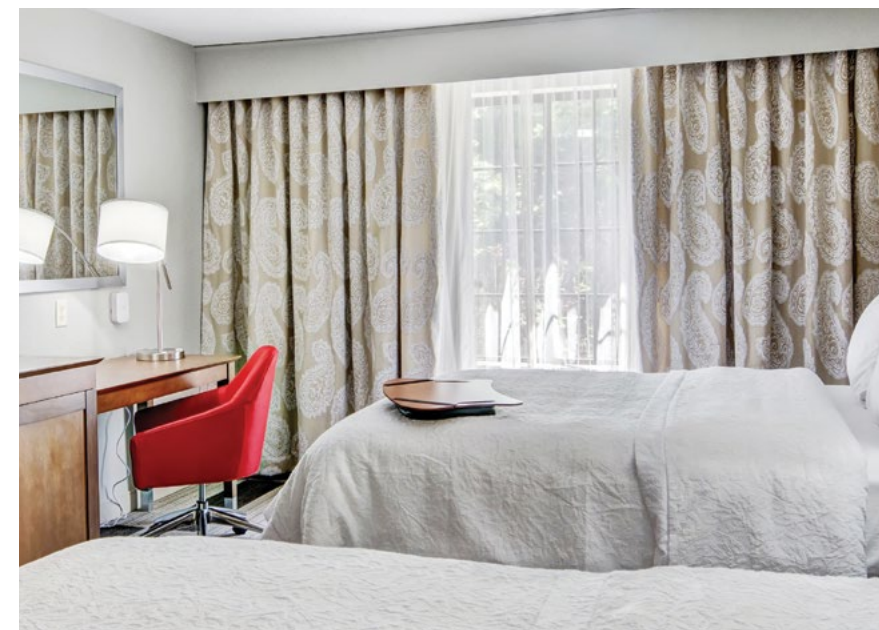
PREMEASURING



New Construction

To determine the latest allowable date to pre-measure on a new construction project, you must subtract the longest production lead time from the install date and add one week for shipment transit time. To avoid the cost of additional trips, confirm hotel readiness with your general contractor, ensuring all guest rooms and public areas are ready to measure. Note: The first floor is the last to be completed.

VS



Renovation

Pre-measurement occurs in the earliest stages of a renovation project. Since the property is already open and operational, this allows your team to measure each window with minimal disruption to guest experience.

INSTALLATION



New Construction

With new construction, you must confirm all hotel areas are ready prior to the window treatment installation. To maximize cost-effectiveness, new construction projects should be installed in one trip.

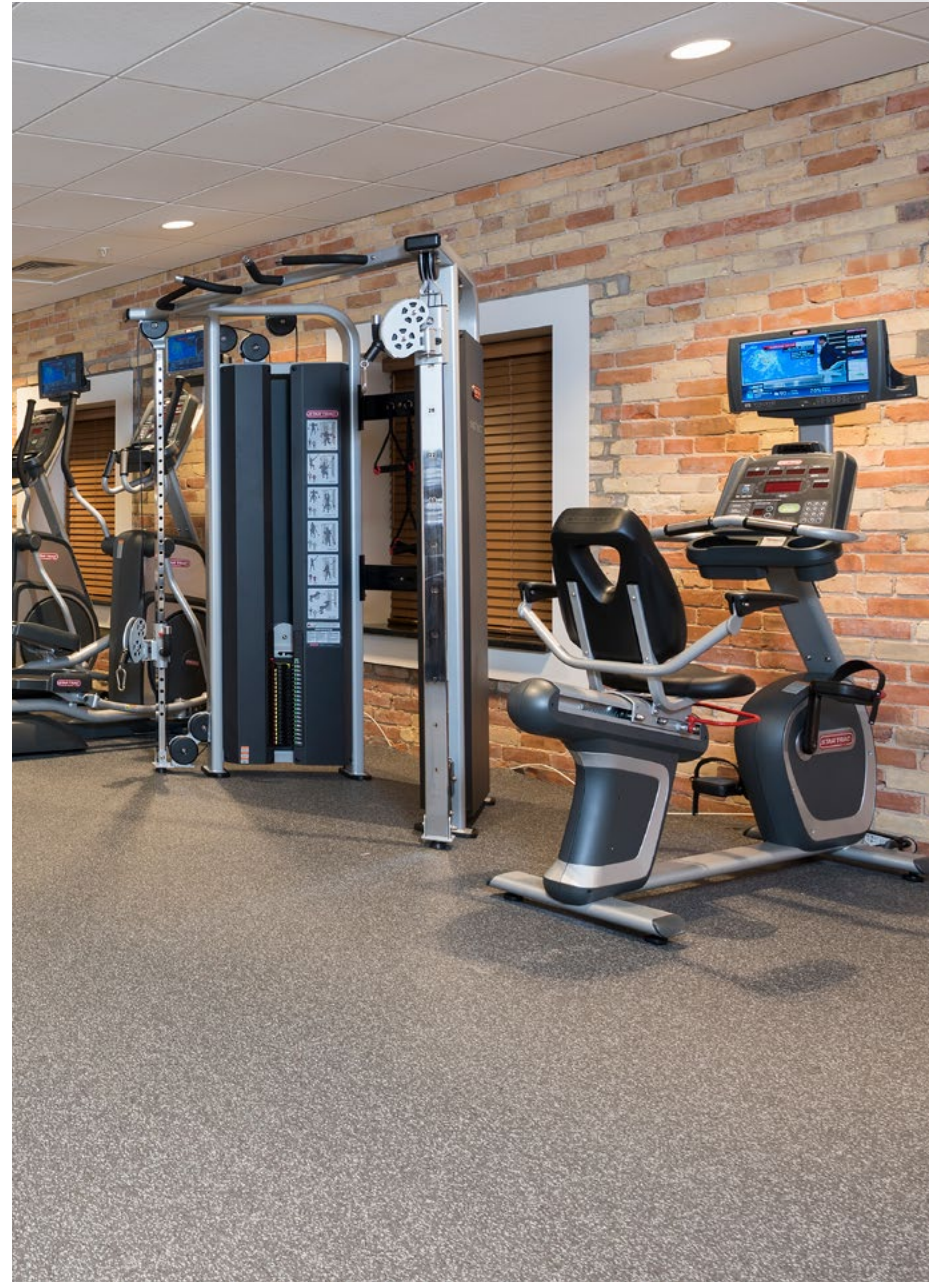
VS



Renovation

Determine your earliest possible installation date for a renovation project by adding the production lead time plus one week transit time. All product should be produced at once and can either be shipped all together upfront or by phase. This should be confirmed with the vendor. Renovation projects may require multiple trips and need to be coordinated with the construction schedule. You will be charged for the complete installation and for each trip.

Fitness Equipment



Delivery and installation of approved or preferred fitness equipment must be coordinated through all phases of new construction or renovation projects, including:

- **Plumbing**
- **Electrical/Low-Voltage**
- **Flooring**
- **Wall Covering**
- **Painting**
- **Equipment Installation**

Fitness Equipment



When receiving and unloading fitness equipment, consider the following:

GC Communication

Communicating with your general contractor is vital to the success of any property completion, especially in the case of fitness equipment. In the pre-planning stage, collaborate with your GC on the following steps prior to receiving these items:

- **Obtain equipment layout from your equipment vendors.** The equipment layout is critical to know where to place electrical outlets, TV outlets and any specific low-voltage access.
- **Be aware of where TVs will be mounted,** and what type of TV mount will be used. Specific blocking requirements may be necessary.
- **Ensure proper plumbing is in place prior to drywall.** This is especially crucial if you are planning to have a water fountain or cooler installed.

Specialized Installation Team

You'll want to coordinate product arrival with specialists who are familiar with the product and are aware of how to handle and install this sensitive equipment. Many fitness equipment vendors provide delivery and installation of cardio equipment. Consider requesting this valuable service if available with your preferred equipment vendor.





Accessibility

Another important aspect of receiving fitness equipment is accessibility.

Be prepared for equipment vendors to ask the following questions:

- **What floor is the fitness room on?**
- **How far away is the fitness room from the main entrance?**
- **What size are the doors leading into the fitness room?**

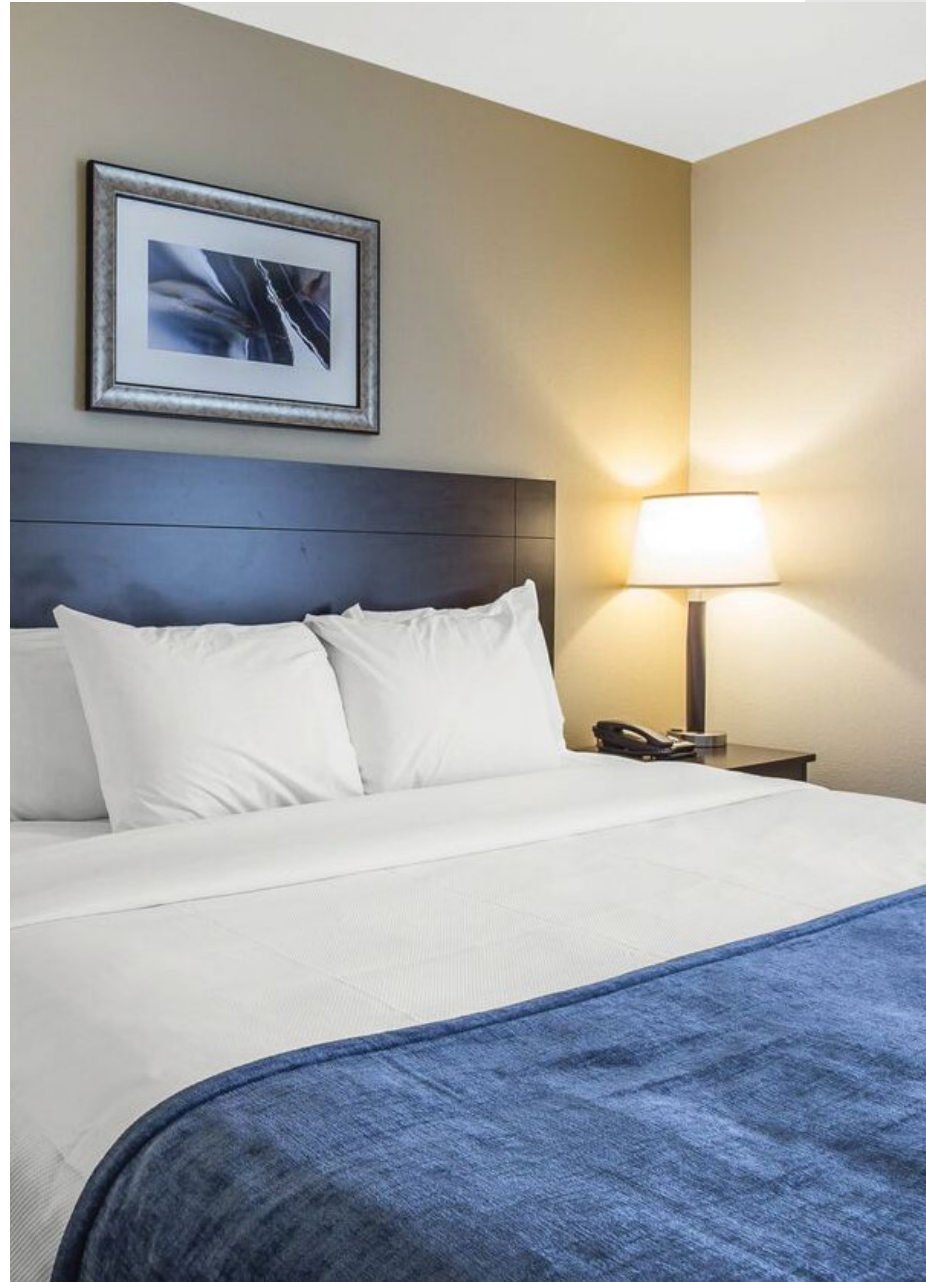
Because this equipment is a very specialized product, you want to ensure your installation team has access to the fitness room for immediate placement, to minimize product damage and maintain all warranties.

Other Items to Consider

Most major hotel brands publish their minimum equipment requirements to assist owners in what equipment to purchase. Free weights, benches, mats and any non-motorized equipment is typically shipped directly to the site for the FF&E team to receive and install, per the layout provided by the vendor.



Mattresses



Mattresses are essential to ensuring guest comfort. After all, what's a hotel or resort without beds?

There are five questions you need to ask before receiving a mattress and box spring delivery.



What factors affect product availability?

Most mattress manufacturers produce product to order.

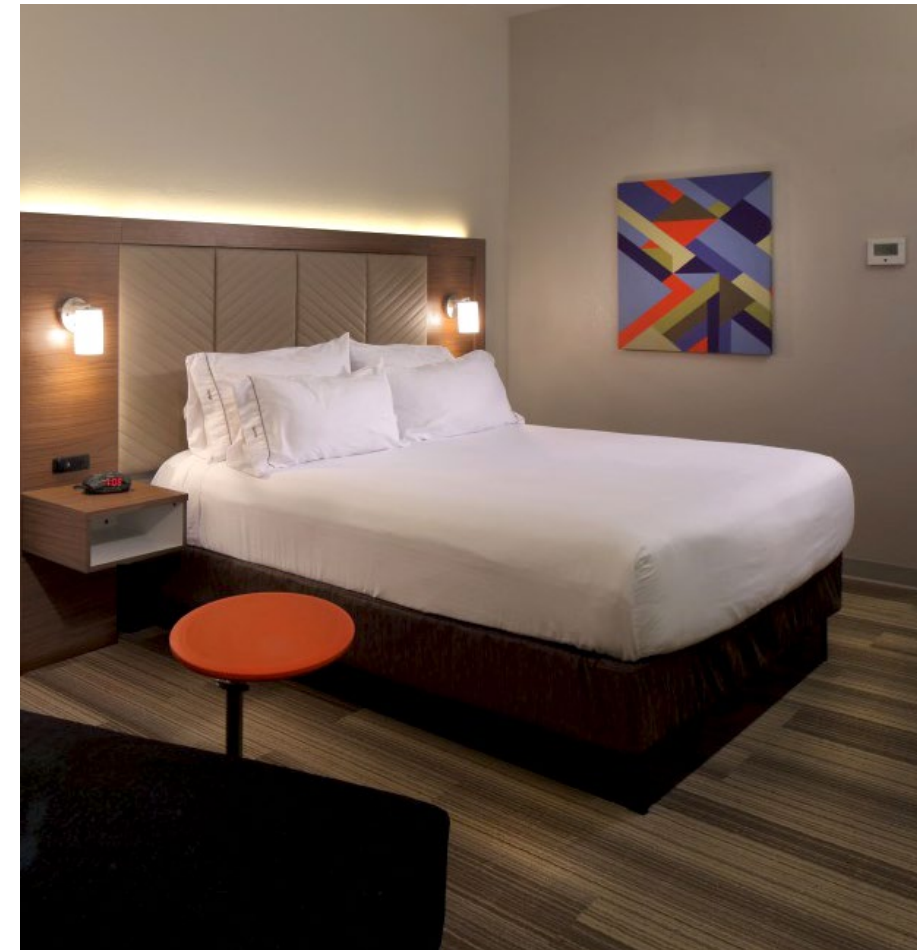
Availability of product will depend on the number of sets you order. While most mattress companies offer free freight when you order ten or more sets, keep in mind the offer varies by manufacturer.

Mattresses

When should mattress sets be delivered?

To allow your installation crew time to set them up, have bed bases and frames delivered at least one week before the mattress sets. Bed bases and frames will be palletized and are best unloaded with a forklift depending on the quantity ordered.

Note: The installation of bed bases and frames typically affects new construction projects.



Mattresses



How do I best schedule trucks for case goods and furniture delivery?

The answer depends on your order size.

For example, orders that are 90 - 110 total pieces will fill a 53-foot trailer and will be delivered on direct trucks, which you can schedule for the required day and time.

Mattresses

What if the order is below 90 total pieces?

Orders under 90 total pieces, including mattresses and box springs, will most likely be delivered on a route truck. These trucks will have multiple deliveries and may only be in your area at certain days and times. Delivery time will depend on the order of their route, and you can expect to be given an estimated delivery window on the day of delivery.



Mattresses



How should each trailer be filled?

Each trailer should be filled with similar product, such as all Queen or all King sets (King sets will have two Twin box springs), which will help facilitate delivery and install by only having to count one product. Keep in mind that should the order fall under 90 total pieces, the balance will deliver on a route truck.

Receiving Mattresses: A Step-by- Step Guide

Follow these steps when receiving and unloading a mattress delivery:

1. Unload all product

Upon arrival of your delivery, you'll want to unload all product first to the ground.

This step is typically completed under the porte cochère at the entrance to the hotel.

2. Check for discrepancies before you sign

You must confirm the count and note any damages, shortages or overages before signing the delivery receipt.

3. Final Distribution

As a final step, begin to distribute mattress box springs first, followed by the mattresses.

Special Tip: Delay removing the protective plastic strap on each mattress until the guest room is completely set up.



NEXT STEPS

Ready to start your project? To learn more about preparing for a successful FF&E project, [contact one of our Procurement Specialists.](#)



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