

Pool Table Buying Guide

Pool Billiards, also known as pool, is a popular game around the world. Are you a pool enthusiast? Do you want to invest in a new pool table? Then our buying guide will help you select from the wide varieties of tables available in the market. Make an informed purchase by acquainting yourself with the key issues of buying a new pool table.

What is your budget for buying a pool table?

Pool tables are available at various prices to suit your needs and budget. The quality and workmanship depends on the price of the table.

Least Expensive:

These tables are suitable for your kids. They are mere toys, and are not designed for serious pool players. Their playing surfaces are made of artificial materials like perma slate or honey comb. These tables usually offer very limited guarantees, as the materials used for manufacturing them are low in quality.

Economy:

If you are planning to buy a pool table for recreational purposes, then an economy level table is more than sufficient. It has a 3/4 inch playing surface, and in many cases, manufacturers use a one piece slate or a short slate to cut the cost of production. The cabinet material and top rails are usually made up of particle board covered in low-grade laminate or vinyl. These materials give the table an attractive appearance, but it is important to note that particle board has the tendency to decay or crumble over time and the low-grade laminate or vinyl surfaces can easily tear. The tables cushion and other hardware are also of inferior quality. Most economy level pool tables come with a one-year limited warranty. The average life expectancy of this model is five to seven years. You can expect a fair table performance at this level.

Mid Range:

Mid range level pool tables offer you a good playing experience and come in a wide variety of styles and designs. The slate playing surface is supported by cross and center beams. These beams provide strong support to the interior cabinet and ensure durability. The cabinet and rails are made of thick boards covered in oak veneer or kiln dried hardwood lumber. Mid range tables are constructed with premium materials. The cushion rubber typically has a K-66 blended gum rubber profile. Mid range level tables sports large foot-plants to better support the table's legs. These tables should be viewed as lifetime investments, which is why they usually include unconditional lifetime guarantees.

Custom:

Get the advantages of superior quality materials, intricate designs and quality workmanship by purchasing custom level pool tables. These tables feature exotic veneers and hardwoods. They have all the construction features of the mid range level table but are manufactured with premium grade materials. These pool tables are lifetime investments, as they can be used by many generations. Custom level tables offer greater durability when compared to other models. They are truly works of art. Custom level pool tables come with unconditional lifetime guarantees.

Which is the perfect pool table size for you?

The size of the pool table you buy should be directly related to your room's dimensions and your playing experience. Pool tables are available in three main sizes: 7, 8 and 9 feet. It is important to note that these dimensions do not take into account the size of the rail. The 7 foot pool table is economical and fits perfectly into small rooms. The 8 foot pool table is popularly used in homes. It is recommended for recreational players. The 9 foot pool table is used by professional players. Usually, it is used for professional billiards tournaments. Choose from Murrey pool tables, Harvard pool tables and Mizerak pool tables, among others.

What are the major components of a pool table?

Rails:

Rails make up the top part of the pool table to which the cushions and pockets are attached. Solid wood rails are more suitable for busy billiard parlors while particle board rails are sufficient for recreational play at home. Each rail should have a track strip so that it can sit evenly on the slate and the

cushions can have bounce.

Slate:

The most significant part of the [pool table](#) is the slate. There are two types of slate: 1 piece or 3 piece slate. The 3 piece slate is commonly used in pool table manufacturing. It allows for more precise leveling of your table. A 1 piece slate table is very rare. Slate sizes vary from 3/4 inch, 7/8 inch and 1 inch. The 3/4 inch slate is used on inexpensive tables while 1 inch slate is the standard used for tournaments. The slate is attached directly to the frame of the table with screws and comes with or without wood backing.

Legs:

The tables legs are placed under the frame cabinet and offer support to the entire playing area. A table is generally more durable if its legs are made of solid wood.

Frame Cabinet:

The frame is the part of the table that the legs attach to and the slate lies atop. A rigid frame cabinet prevents the slate from shifting and becoming unlevelled. The frame cabinet is usually made from solid wood or MDF board. Good pool tables will have a center beam and also two cross beams to provide support to the slate. A few manufactures even offer double center beams for extra support.

Cushions:

A cushion is usually made of rubber and is attached to the top rail. Balls come into contact with cushions while playing pool. Molded gum rubber cushions offer the fastest rebound. K-66 style cushions are widely used in tournaments.

Pockets:

The pool tables pockets are attached to the rails and hold the ball when a shot is made. Pockets can be made of leather, plastic or rubber. Plastic pockets are of inferior quality and come with cheap pool tables while rubber pockets are used for commercial tables. Leather pockets are more expensive and have either a leather shield or a decorative fringe.

About the Author

Bob Shanty has been researching and writing articles that help shoppers make more educated buying decisions on [pool tables and pool table accessories](#) for [online shopping](#) mega store BIGshop for years. For more articles by Bob please visit <http://www.bigshop.com.au>.

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