



## Choosing the right vacuum cleaner for use in the professional environment

### Gopher Expert says...

Laying a carpet is often a costly undertaking and it is important that it is regularly vacuumed, removing the build-up of dirt and debris.

If in doubt about which is the correct vacuum cleaner to use, please seek guidance from us.

### The importance of choosing the right vacuum cleaner

Choosing a vacuum cleaner for commercial or institutional use involves a different set of criteria than in choosing a machine intended for domestic use.

A commercial vacuum cleaner will generally need a powerful motor as it will probably be used more often and in larger areas than a domestic vacuum. However, a small company or institution with limited floor space will have different cleaning needs than a firm that spans several floors of an office building.

Researching commercial vacuum cleaners may take a little effort but becoming an educated consumer you will ultimately get the right vacuum for your needs and the best value for money from your purchase.

### The different types of commercial vacuum cleaner

Commercial vacuum cleaners come in a number of shapes and sizes and it is important to choose the type that best meets your needs. The main types are:

#### Upright vacuum cleaners

In essence an upright vacuum cleaner has a horizontal revolving brush head onto which a housing unit for dust collection and handle are attached. The dust bag is always vertically positioned within the housing unit.

The main advantages of upright vacuum cleaners are:

- High dust capacity, reducing the frequency of dust removal
- Typically long hose range to enable stairs to be easily vacuumed
- Typically larger head to cover more surface area and reduce vacuuming time
- The drop down handle allows access under tables, chairs and so on.

Against this, some disadvantages compared to cylinder machines are:

- Generally heavier, which makes the vacuum cleaner harder to push and lift
- Can be more difficult to manoeuvre in space restricted areas
- The revolving brush head is less suitable for hard floors



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### Cylinder vacuum cleaner

Cylinder (or drum) machines have a motor and dust collector in a separate unit, mounted on wheels connected to the vacuum head by a flexible hose.

The main advantages of cylinder machines are:

- Smaller and lighter, making them easier to use
- Ideal for cleaning hard to reach areas, such as stairs and under furniture
- Wide cleaning radius because the suction head is separate
- Typically compact for storage
- Suitable for cleaning a wide range of surfaces, including carpets, rugs, upholstery and hard floors

The main disadvantages of cylinder machines are:

- Less dust capacity than an upright, so you'll need to empty the bin or bag more often
- Less suitable for vacuuming large carpeted areas

### Handheld vacuum cleaner

As the category name implies, handheld vacuum cleaners are small machines designed for reaching difficult to access areas or cleaning up spills. There are many variations in terms of size, dust capacity, tool attachments and whether battery or mains operated.

### Back-pack machines

Backpack machines are generally 'standard' commercial machines where the motor and dust bag are backpack mounted, together with a battery unit. They are ideal in situations where there is no easy access to power. Typically they are used for cleaning areas at elevation or in situations where it would be difficult to use a upright or cylinder vacuum cleaner.

### Wet/Dry vacuum cleaner

Wet/dry vacuum cleaners give you the option to also clean up liquid spills. Wet/dry vacuum cleaners come with a bag for dry pick up and a large tank for wet vacuuming. They can be used in the place of conventional cleaning methods such as using a traditional mop and bucket. They are extremely useful for sucking up any kind of liquids and large surfaces of water such as floods and pools of water can be picked up with ease by these types of vacuums.



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### Key factors to consider when buying a commercial vacuum cleaner

#### What type of material will you be vacuuming up?

In some areas there may be wet as well as dry substances to clean and you may need to consider a wet/dry machine.

#### Where is the carpet or surface that you are going to vacuum?

Portable or back-pack type cleaners can be more suitable for areas such as stairs or hallways, whereas upright or floor cleaners are more suitable for large areas.

#### Wattage and motor power

Wattage is an important consideration because motor power alone does not guarantee better suction: it depends on the overall design of the unit. If a vacuum cleaner has a high wattage, the motor is more powerful.

#### Dust Pick Up

The nozzle design on both cylinders and uprights can have a dramatic effect on pick up performance. The higher the percentage of dust pick up, which is also measured using the IEC European test standard, the better the performance.

#### Filter types

Filters in vacuum cleaners fall into two main categories:

- Micro filter: The type of filtration found on basic vacuum cleaners. Ideal for general use, some can be washed while others need to be replaced.
- HEPA filter: HEPA filters trap and capture small pollutants and pollen particles, which would otherwise be re-circulated into the air, making them ideal for allergy and asthma sufferers. Most tend to be washable and reusable.

#### Where will you be storing the machine when it is not being used?

Finally, you should think about the physical size, and weight of the machine as well as the functions that it has.

**Disclaimer:** Every precaution has been taken to ensure that the information and advice given in this Gopher User Guide is accurate and reflects current best practice. If you in any doubt on any matter in relation to the information or advice given then you should always take further professional advice. No responsibility for loss occasioned by any corporate body or individual acting or refraining from action as a result of using any material contained within any User Guide shown on this site can be accepted by Gopher Supplies or its associated companies.