

## BUYERS GUIDE: Retractable Barriers

At Discount Displays we have a large range of retractable barriers from the feature packed industry leaders Tensator with their premium Tensa barriers (we are authorised distributors), to entry level systems such as the queue master. With so many options, choosing the right system can be a difficult task, whilst buying retractable barriers can be a large investment, meaning you want to get it right first time.

With this in mind we have used our experience to put together this buyers guide to help you make the right choice. These are just some of the things you should consider when buying crowd control equipment.

### Where are Retractable Barriers used



You will have seen retractable belts at airports, in cinemas, conference halls and even schools. Anywhere you need a flexible way of controlling the flow of people. Ask yourself how hard your barrier is going to have to work? Is the system going to stay in the same place or are you going to be changing the configuration on a daily basis to alter crowd flow during busy periods? If the barrier system is going to be placed in a high footfall area or use often, then investing in one of our top of the range systems such as a premium Tensator barrier or our ProQ range with a higher spec is the way forward.

### Cheap Barriers - issues to look out for



a) Materials: Mild steel will rust and is only a short term solution. Powder coating offers better protection but stainless steel is the most durable solution. But not even all stainless steel is of the same quality. A marine grade 304 stainless will last much longer than 201 stainless. If your units are being used outdoors on a permanent basis look for 304 or expect rust in the long term.

b) Base and Pole construction: When barriers have been constructed poorly from thin and cheap materials the connection between base and pole can become weak. This can lead the pole to bend and eventually break. Look for a sturdy base, in particular one that has two pins and a substantial bolt.

b) Cassette Quality: The main part of a retractable barrier, our units are engineered to last and tested up to a minimum of 10,000 cycles. Some units allow you to fit new belt cassettes yourself so there is no need to buy a whole unit in case of damage.

### Indoor or Outdoor



The suitability of a barrier to be used indoor or outdoors comes down to the materials that have been used and the weight of the bases. The most durable material for outdoor use barrier is stainless steel. However, not all stainless steel is of the same quality 304 stainless will last much longer than 201 stainless. If your units are being used outdoors look for 304 or expect rust in the long term



## Tape Length



The average length of a barrier tape is around 2m to 2.5 meters long, however opting for a longer barrier length may save you money overall. Using our 3.4m long QueueMaster solutions means that you need 45% bases than a 2m tape however the individual post will be slightly more expensive and you will lose some flexibility. When buying barriers consider the overall length you require as you may find it cheaper buying fewer longer units. The listed length of the tape is the maximum possible length, so due to the clever retractable mechanisms used, barriers can be positioned at any distance apart up to this amount. Our tape lengths are range from 2 meters up to an impressive 4.6 meters.

## Release mechanism



You will find different release mechanisms. Why does this matter? for two reasons. When you have a long line of barriers your staff may want to take a short cut which means releasing and re attaching the belt. Secondly If someone inadvertently walks into the barrier rather than the pole falling over some belts have a safety release mechanism preventing that happening.

## Belt safety Breaking



Belt breaking is a premium safety feature seen on some retractable belt barriers. If the belt is unclipped and inadvertently let go it will slide slowly back into the cassette unit making it much safer for passers by and puts much less strain on the hardware itself.

## Plain or printed



Most units we sell have plain tape in a choice of different colours. We also offer pre-printed tape with warning messages such as NO ENTRY, AUTHORISED ACCESS ONLY and more. The other option is to have custom printed tape with your company Logo or custom printed text. Both our Tensor and Queue master barriers include this printing option.



**Caution-Do Not Enter**

**Authorised Access Only**

**ntry No Entry**

## Types of base



Simple bases are likely be made from mild steel, however this can rust and cause staining to the floor. Outdoor bases have a very simple concrete base that is covered by an outer cover, a more affordable option which is simple and functional, but there is a risk the concrete may crack in half. Our ProQ range has a durable High density polypropylene case filled with sand with a high concentrate of iron making it heavy and stable. Most bases are of a similar diameter, so the determining factor for stability is the weight. The other option you will see with bases are slotted U shaped bases that allow units to be stacked together if storage is an issue and bases with wheels which make moving barriers simple. Both these options are more suitable when you intend to move the barriers around often.

## How belts attach



The simplest units have a 4 way belt attachment which means that you can create 90° bends in your run of belts, or a central post that has 4 others connect to it. Some premium barriers have 8 way connectors whilst other, more advanced systems have mechanisms that allow you to take barriers off at any angle and add up to 17 other belts connecting to one post. Such systems just give you more flexibility to designing your barriers to suit your needs. Belts can also be wall mounted to save space. The end of the tape can either be attached to another wall or a free standing post.

## Optional Accessories



Some Retractable barriers have the ability to add accessories such as Sign holders, Product bowls or small writing desks allowing you even greater flexibility to make the most out of your system.

Synonyms for Retractable Barrier: Belt barriers, Tape barriers, Queue barriers, Crowd Control barrier



Contact us at: [sales@discountdisplays.co.uk](mailto:sales@discountdisplays.co.uk)  
or call  
0844 800 1020.