

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. So many options can be a consuming and buying retractable barriers can be a large investment so you want to get it right.

We have used our experience to put together this buyers guide to help you make the right choice. These are some of the things you should consider when buying crowd control equipment. Check out the key points below and then download the full buyers guide PDF.

Where are Retractable Barriers used



You will see retractable belts at Airport in Cinemas, in Conference halls or 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 pretty much 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 have a hard life then investing in one of our top of the range systems such as the Pro Q range, which are engineered for this role is the answer.

Cheap Barriers - issues to look out for

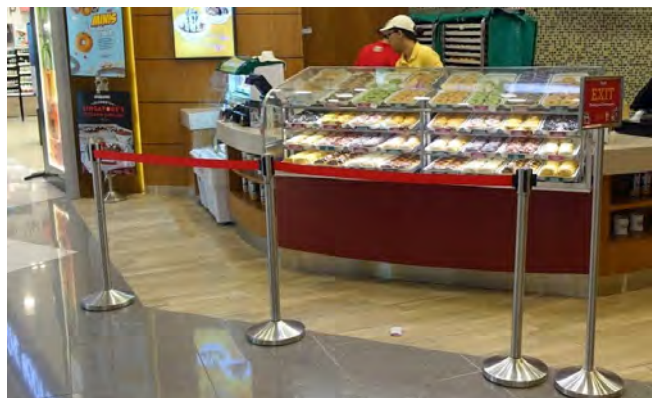


- a) Materials. Mild steel will rust and is only a short term solution. Powder coating offers better protection but stainless steel is the most durable solution. But even here a word of caution not all stainless steel is of the same quality. A marine grade 304 stainless will last much longer than 201 stainless. If your units are being used outdoors on a permanent basis look for 304 or expect rust in the long term.
- b) Where the connection between the base and pole is weak. This can lead to the leaning tower of Pisa effect. Look for a sturdy base. In particular one that has two pins and a substantial bolt.
- c) The other is the cassette all 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.

Indoor or Outdoor use



Comes down to the material that has been used and the weight of the bases. The most durable material for outdoor use barrier is stainless steel. 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.



What length tape



The theory goes that the longer the tape is less posts you need, so you could save money. The units are a little more expensive but you should still save money. You will lose a certain amount of versatility you need and more posts create more of a visual barrier than just tape. Most tapes are 2 to 2.5m long. If you opt for 3.4m belt length such as our queue master belts you need 45% less bases or with the even longer 4m In our pro Q range you need 50% less. The length of the tape is the maximum. Because they are on springs like seat belts then you could have the posts positioned at any distance up to the maximum.

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. The other option is to have custom printed tape with your company Logo. Both our Tensor and Queue master barriers have this option.

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 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.



Types of base



Simplest base would be made from steel this can rust and stain the floor. Other bases have a very simple concrete base that is covered by an outer cover. Simple and functional but there is a risk the concrete may crack in half. Our Qpro 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 attractive when you intend to move the barriers around a lot.

How belts attach



The simplest units have 4 way belt attachment. Which means that you can create 90 bends in your run of belts which for most applications or a central post that has 4 others connect to it. Some have 8 way connectors and others have systems that allow you to take barriers off at any angle and up to 17 other belts connecting to one post. Such systems just give you more flexibility designing your queue flow solution.

Belts can be wall mounted to save space. The end of the tape can either be attached to a wall or a free standing post.

Release mechanism



Some Retractable barriers have the ability to add accessories such as Sign holders, Product bowls or small writing desks.

Synonyms for retractable barrier: Belt barriers, Tape barriers, Queue barriers



Contact us at sales@discountdisplays.co.uk or
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