A Designing Quiet Resource

The Privacy Pod Specification Checklist

A practitioner-led working document for specifying, evaluating, and verifying acoustic privacy rooms

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PROJECT INFORMATION

This document is yours. Start by making it the project's.

Fill in the project details below. As you complete each phase, the document becomes a record of the work done, the decisions made, and the verifications confirmed. Save it with your project files. Share it with your team.

PROJECT NAME

CLIENT OR ORGANIZATION

PROJECT NUMBER / REFERENCE

PROJECT LOCATION

SPECIFIER NAME

SPECIFIER ROLE / FIRM

DATE STARTED

ANTICIPATED INSTALL DATE

NUMBER OF PODS ANTICIPATED

POD TYPES ANTICIPATED

PROJECT CONTEXT AND GOALS

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

Built for the moments between brief and install.

Specifying a privacy pod looks simple from the outside. A pod fits a brief, lands in a budget, gets ordered, gets installed. In practice, the gap between specification and installation is where most acoustic privacy fails. The pod that arrives is rarely the pod that was specified.

This checklist is built for the moments where that gap opens up. It moves through four phases of the work: defining what the space needs, evaluating vendors and proposals, confirming what is being specified, and verifying what is actually installed.

It is manufacturer-neutral. It does not endorse any pod brand or push any particular product. It is written from the practitioner's view, the seam between the manufacturer and the design community, where the gap between specification and installation actually lives.

All checkboxes, text fields, notes fields, and vendor comparison cells are interactive. Tick items off, fill in project-specific information, and save your progress in a PDF reader. Print it and mark it up by hand if you prefer. It is yours.

Four phases, one document.

Phase 1 establishes the space's actual needs. Phase 2 evaluates vendors and proposals. Phase 3 confirms specification before the order is placed. Phase 4 verifies what arrives matches what was specified.

PHASE ONE

Defining what the space actually needs.

Before evaluating any pod, define the working conditions the pod has to meet. Most pod failures are placement failures, and most placement failures are conditions that were not properly defined at the brief stage.

PURPOSE AND USE

- [ ] Primary intended use is defined

  Phone call, focus work, two-person meeting, multi-person collaboration, video conferencing, regulated conversation (legal, medical, financial).

- [ ] Expected occupancy is defined

  Number of people, duration of use, peak vs. average occupancy.

- [ ] Frequency of use is defined

  Hourly turnover, hours per day, days per week.

- [ ] Booking or scheduling model is defined

  Drop-in, reserved, hybrid. This affects placement and quantity.

PURPOSE AND USE NOTES

ACOUSTIC REQUIREMENTS

- [ ] Speech privacy class is identified

  Confidential, normal, or marginal speech privacy. Regulated industries may have minimum requirements.

- [ ] Surrounding ambient noise floor is measured or estimated

  Open plan, library, hospital corridor, classroom, transit hub each have different background levels.

- [ ] Sound transmission target is defined

  NRC, STC, NIC, or Speech Privacy Class targets appropriate to the use case.

- [ ] Vibration and structure-borne noise is considered

  Floor type, neighbor proximity, mechanical equipment nearby.

ACOUSTIC REQUIREMENTS NOTES

PHASE ONE / CONTINUED

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

- [ ] Site dimensions are confirmed

  Width, depth, height available. Include doorways and corridors the pod must pass through during delivery.

- [ ] Floor load capacity is verified

  Especially on raised floors, mezzanines, or upper levels.

- [ ] Floor surface and levelness are assessed

  Carpet, vinyl, concrete, raised access flooring.

- [ ] Ceiling height and overhead clearance are confirmed

  Including air handling, lighting, sprinklers, and structural beams.

- [ ] Access route from delivery point to install location is mapped

  Door widths, elevator dimensions, turn radii, ramps, thresholds.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS NOTES

INTEGRATED SYSTEMS

- [ ] Electrical service requirements are defined

  Power needs for lighting, ventilation, technology, climate. Confirm circuit availability at site.

- [ ] Data and connectivity requirements are defined

  Wired ethernet, Wi-Fi coverage, AV requirements, cable management.

- [ ] Ventilation and air quality requirements are defined

  ASHRAE standards, CO2 thresholds, sensor integration.

- [ ] Lighting requirements are defined

  Task lighting, dimming, color temperature, integration with surrounding lighting controls.

- [ ] Climate and thermal comfort requirements are defined

  Heating, cooling, occupant control, integration with building HVAC.

INTEGRATED SYSTEMS NOTES

PHASE ONE / CONTINUED

ACCESSIBILITY AND CODE

- [ ] ADA / accessibility requirements are confirmed

  Door width, turning radius inside, threshold height, accessible controls.

- [ ] Fire and life safety requirements are confirmed

  Sprinkler coverage, smoke detection, egress requirements, fire-rated assemblies.

- [ ] Local building code requirements are confirmed

  Including occupancy permits and structural review where required.

- [ ] Sensory accessibility considerations are documented

  Quiet pods serve users with sensory sensitivities; specifications should reflect this.

ACCESSIBILITY AND CODE NOTES

PHASE ONE SUMMARY

UNRESOLVED ISSUES, OPEN QUESTIONS, OR ITEMS REQUIRING FOLLOW-UP BEFORE MOVING TO PHASE 2

PHASE TWO

Evaluating vendors and proposals.

Compare vendors side by side against your defined requirements. Document what each one has provided. Avoid feature-by-feature comparison; evaluate against your project needs.

VENDOR COMPARISON MATRIX

CRITERION			
Manufacturing model (in-house, subcontracted, import)			
Years in privacy pod category			
Reference installations in similar sector			
Customer support and warranty terms			
Independent acoustic test data provided			
Customization options and limits documented			
Lead time from order to delivery			
Pricing transparency (freight, install, support)			
Material sourcing and certifications			

End-of-life and take-back program			
Modular update / refresh path			
Country of manufacture			

PHASE TWO / CONTINUED

VENDOR EVALUATION CHECKLIST

- [ ] Each vendor has provided complete specification sheets

  Including acoustic ratings, materials, dimensions, weight, electrical, ventilation.

- [ ] Each vendor's acoustic test data is from an accredited third-party lab

  Not manufacturer's internal claims alone. Verify lab name and test date.

- [ ] Each vendor's customization options are documented in writing

  What is configurable, what is fixed, what is bespoke.

- [ ] Each vendor's pricing structure is fully transparent

  Including all line items, not just the base pod price.

- [ ] Reference customers have been contacted directly

  Where possible. Vendor-supplied references are often curated.

VENDOR EVALUATION NOTES AND QUESTIONS

A note on acoustic ratings.

Acoustic ratings from a manufacturer's internal testing are not the same as ratings from an accredited third-party laboratory. Always ask for independent test data with the specific test method, the lab name, and the date. Numbers without provenance are marketing claims, not specifications.

VENDOR SELECTION

SELECTED VENDOR

REASONING FOR SELECTION

PHASE THREE

Confirming the specification.

Before the order is placed, walk through the specification one more time. The cost of catching an error here is small. The cost of catching it after the pod is built is significant.

SPECIFICATION SIGN-OFF

- [ ] Final dimensions are confirmed in writing

  External and internal dimensions. Verify they still meet site conditions documented in Phase 1.

- [ ] Final finishes are confirmed in writing

  Including any value-engineered changes from the original specification. Flag any substitutions before approval.

- [ ] Final acoustic specification is confirmed in writing

  Confirm the acoustic class has not been reduced through value engineering.

- [ ] Final electrical, ventilation, and lighting are confirmed in writing

  Including any integrations with building systems.

- [ ] Final accessibility features are confirmed in writing

  Especially if the pod is being deployed in a setting with accessibility requirements.

SPECIFICATION SIGN-OFF NOTES

ORDER AND DELIVERY

- [ ] Final order documentation is signed by all parties

  Designer or specifier, end client, vendor, dealer if applicable.

- [ ] Delivery date and install date are confirmed in writing

  And documented in the project schedule.

- [ ] Site readiness checklist is shared with all parties

  Floor, electrical, data, access route, surrounding furniture, debris removal.

- [ ] Install team logistics are confirmed

  Crew size, equipment, time required, expected disruption to occupants.

PHASE THREE / CONTINUED

PROJECT SIGN-OFF

Capture the parties responsible for the specification decision and the date of sign-off.

SPECIFIER / DESIGNER NAME

DATE SIGNED

CLIENT / END-USER REPRESENTATIVE

DATE SIGNED

VENDOR REPRESENTATIVE

DATE SIGNED

DEALER REPRESENTATIVE (IF APPLICABLE)

DATE SIGNED

SIGN-OFF CONDITIONS, CONTINGENCIES, OR NOTES

PHASE FOUR

Verifying what was installed.

The pod is installed. The truck has left. This is the moment to verify that what arrived matches what was specified. Issues caught now can still be resolved. Issues missed now become live deployments.

INSTALL DATE

VERIFICATION DATE

VERIFIED BY

PHYSICAL VERIFICATION

- [ ] Dimensions are verified against specification

  Width, depth, height, internal clearances.

- [ ] Finishes are verified against specification

  Panel materials, color, texture, grain direction, edge details.

- [ ] Hardware is verified against specification

  Door type, handle, latch, locking mechanism, hinges.

- [ ] Integrated systems are verified against specification

  Lighting, ventilation, electrical outlets, data ports, AV components.

- [ ] Door and latch are tested for proper seal

  Sealing surfaces, gap consistency, smooth operation through full range.

PHYSICAL VERIFICATION NOTES AND DISCREPANCIES

PHASE FOUR / CONTINUED

ACOUSTIC AND PERFORMANCE

- [ ] Acoustic performance is tested in situ where possible

  On-site performance can differ from lab testing due to surrounding conditions.

- [ ] Ventilation is tested under occupancy

  Air movement, CO2 levels after sustained use, fan noise level.

- [ ] Lighting is tested at all dimming levels

  Including color temperature consistency and flicker.

- [ ] Door seal performance is tested with sustained closure

  Confirm seal holds, latch operates smoothly, no air or sound leakage.

- [ ] Surrounding environment impact is assessed

  Does the pod affect adjacent workstations, sight lines, traffic flow, or fire egress?

ACOUSTIC AND PERFORMANCE NOTES

DOCUMENTATION HANDOVER

- [ ] Operations and maintenance manual is delivered

  Including warranty terms, service contact, recommended maintenance intervals.

- [ ] Cleaning and care instructions are delivered to facilities

  Including approved cleaning products for all finishes.

- [ ] Replacement parts inventory and ordering process is documented

  Especially for high-wear items: doors, seals, casters, lighting elements.

- [ ] Warranty registration is completed

  Confirm dates, coverage scope, and contact for service requests.

PHASE FOUR / POST-OCCUPANCY

Tracking how the pod actually performs.

Specification is the hypothesis. Use is the truth. The most useful data about whether a pod is working comes from the people using it daily, weeks and months after the install.

30-DAY REVIEW

30-DAY REVIEW DATE

INITIAL USER FEEDBACK, COMFORT, EASE OF USE, LIGHTING, VENTILATION, ACOUSTIC PERCEPTION

SIX-MONTH REVIEW

SIX-MONTH REVIEW DATE

WEAR PATTERNS, LATCH FUNCTION, ACOUSTIC PERFORMANCE, OCCUPANCY DATA, USER SATISFACTION

PHASE FOUR / POST-OCCUPANCY

TWELVE-MONTH REVIEW

TWELVE-MONTH REVIEW DATE

LIFECYCLE EXPECTATIONS, REFRESH DECISIONS, PLANNING FOR ADJACENT DEPLOYMENTS

What clients say at six months matters more than what they say at install.

Specification is the hypothesis. Use is the truth. The most useful data about whether a pod is working comes from the people using it daily, six months after the install. Build that feedback into the project.

PROJECT CLOSEOUT

LESSONS LEARNED, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS, VENDOR PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

A NOTE FROM CARLA

Why this exists.

I spent nearly a decade inside the privacy pod industry, watching what gets specified, what gets value-engineered out, what gets installed wrong, and what clients say six months after the install. Most of what designers struggle with on a pod project is not the pod itself. It is the gap between specification and installation, where small assumptions become large problems.

This document is what I wish I could have handed designers eight years ago. It is the working tool I would build for myself, if I were specifying a pod tomorrow. It is meant to be filled in, marked up, saved with your project files, and returned to across the life of the project.

It is yours to use, adapt, and bring to your projects.

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For more practitioner-led resources on acoustic privacy and workplace design, including the forthcoming book Rooms Within Rooms: The Practitioner's Guide to Privacy Pods, visit carlabostock.com.

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Practitioner-led guidance for architects, interior designers, and workplace planners.