



TUNDRA[®]
RESTAURANT SUPPLY
www.etundra.com

WALK-IN COOLER PARTS BUYING GUIDE



WALK-IN COOLER PARTS

BUYING GUIDE

Keep your walk-in cooler running for the long haul with the right parts.

Walk-in coolers are one of the biggest investments you can make to the back of the house. Simple updates can make a big difference in the performance of your restaurant equipment and help you drastically reduce your energy costs. In this buying guide, we'll walk you through all of the components that make up your walk-in cooler.

<i>Construction of a walk-in cooler</i>	<i>p.2</i>
<i>Door hinges and latches</i>	<i>p.2</i>
<i>Walk-in cooler lighting</i>	<i>p.3</i>
<i>Door closers</i>	<i>p.3</i>
<i>Refrigeration gaskets</i>	<i>p.4</i>
<i>Refrigeration systems for your walk-in cooler</i>	<i>p.4</i>
<i>Walk-in cooler accessories</i>	<i>p.5</i>

SHOP BY BRAND



CONSTRUCTION

OF A WALK-IN COOLER

When thinking about maintaining your walk-in cooler for the long haul, it's helpful to know its construction.

Many walk-in coolers are simply sheets of metal encasing foam insulation (either extruded Polystyrene or Polyurethane). Both of these insulation options consist of gas-filled cellular plastic, which has great moisture resistance.

Due to the nature of a walk-in cooler, the biggest threat to your equipment is the development of rust. When the metal surrounding your insulation corrodes, it becomes less effective at maintaining a low internal temperature, and thus causing your equipment to work harder to keep things cool. Common metal skins for your walk-in cooler include: Galvalume, G90 Galvanized Steel, Aluminum, Painted G90 Galvanized and Stainless Steel. Galvanized has long been used for walk-in coolers, however they are prone to developing "white rust" that, if not treated, can develop into red rust. Aluminum on the other hand is very resistant to corrosion (except in salty areas, like the beach), however it often needs to be embossed with another material like stucco to increase strength. Galvalume is steel-coated with a combination of both aluminum and galvanizing material. The result is the strength of steel but much more resistant to corrosion than just galvanized material alone. The most durable (and expensive option) is stainless steel, which is extremely strong and rust resistant.



DOOR HINGES

AND LATCHES

By far the walk-in cooler parts that experience the most wear and tear are the hinges and door latch. These mechanical pieces are moved back and forth many times throughout the day. When it comes to this hardware, look for high quality pieces (like those made by Kason) for a stronger, long-lasting unit that's resistant to rust and corrosion.

When purchasing a replacement hinge for your walk-in cooler, you first need to determine if it is a flush mount or raised mount hinge. A flush mount hinge indicates that the wall and door will be at the same level, whereas with a raised (also called offset) hinge, the door will sit slightly out from the wall. Next, find out the brand and part number, which is located on the back of the hinge (this can be seen once you remove the hinge from the door).

WALK-IN COOLER

LIGHTING

Lighting is a well-known energy guzzler in the foodservice industry.

Not only that, but traditional incandescent bulbs emit a tremendous amount of heat that your walk-in has to combat to keep internal temperatures cool. For many years, fluorescent lights became the standard in new walk-in installations due to their low cost and better performance over incandescent bulbs. That said, technology found in today's LED lighting options offer serious advantages to today's restaurateurs. LEDs thrive in low temperatures and aren't bothered by humid environments either. LEDs also emit significantly less heat than their fluorescent counterparts - try 3.4 BTUs per hour versus a fluorescent light's 30 BTUs per hour. Plus, they turn on instantly, don't require a "warm up" period to reach full brightness, and don't contain mercury should a bulb break.



Note: So why don't more people use LEDs in their walk-in coolers today? Primarily, cost. Though the price of LEDs continue to drop, they are still more expensive than fluorescent options. That said, many restaurateurs are looking at the energy savings long-term. In many cases, businesses have seen energy savings up to 85%, and with many local municipalities offering energy rebates to upgrade to more efficient lighting, you may find the choice to go energy efficient with LED lights is easier than you think.

DOOR CLOSERS

Door closers are a simple invention, but they can save you a lot in unwanted energy bills. Door closers do just that - close doors. When your staff is going in and out of the walk-in cooler all day, it's easy to forget to close the door completely after leaving. These handy devices help do the closing for you so you're not letting that precious cold air escape.



REFRIGERATION GASKETS

The gasket of your walk-in cooler is a small, rubber lining that creates a tight seal around the door to keep the cold air in, and the warmer “outside” air out. These small parts seem simple, but they’re one of the most important (and commonly overlooked) parts of your walk-in! When your equipment struggles to maintain a cold temperature, it works harder and causes more wear than called for; plus, have you noticed your energy bills rising because it’s always running? Not only that, consider how fluctuations in temperatures can create a serious food safety risk for all of your product - the health inspector, and your customers, are not fans.

Be sure to inspect your gaskets every 6 months or so to ensure there are no gaps or cracks in your gasket. Signs that your gaskets may need replacing also include frost build up on your shelves, the gasket always seems compressed, or more urgently, you can feel cold air coming out of your cooler. Replacing your gasket is easier than you think, and with a little elbow grease you can avoid the cost of calling out a service technician.



Like most things in the foodservice industry, the best way to prolong the life of your gasket is to keep it clean. Add the task of wiping between gasket grooves to your staff’s daily cleaning routine. Keeping the gasket free from food and dirt prevents unwanted grime from wearing your gasket prematurely.

REFRIGERATION SYSTEMS

FOR YOUR WALK-IN COOLER

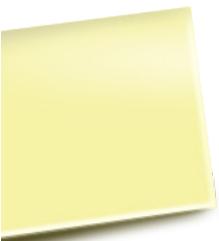
The refrigeration system of your walk-in cooler consists of a condenser (located outside of the unit) and evaporator (located within the unit). These systems come in a variety of configurations, but it’ll primarily be up to the size of your cooler, and the space in which it resides, that will dictate what type of refrigeration system you can acquire. Also keep in mind that the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007 requires that walk-in coolers must be equipped with high efficiency motors. To save money in the long run and be compliant with current laws, always seek out EISA compliant refrigeration equipment.

Refrigeration systems can be remote systems, top mount or side mount.

REMOTE SYSTEM: Remote systems are set up so that the condenser is located outside of the building while the evaporator is inside. If you lack enough clearance for the required circulation inside chances are you’ll need this type of system. While they are the least expensive to purchase, they do require professional installation.

TOP MOUNT SYSTEM: Unlike remote refrigeration systems, top mount systems are self-contained and come completely pre-assembled. The drawback to these systems is that the evaporator hangs down inside of the walk-in cooler, taking up some of your storage space. This system should be installed by a qualified technician as well.

SIDE MOUNT SYSTEM: Side mount systems are an option for areas with lower ceilings, as the refrigeration system is self-contained and mounted on the side. You will lose some shelf space due to the evaporator coil and it should also be installed by a qualified technician.



Note: With any refrigeration system, follow the units regular cleaning and maintenance schedule for a long and happy life. The efficiency of your walk-in cooler is dependent on the movement of air freely throughout the unit. Before cleaning, be sure to disconnect the main power supply. Use a stiff bristle brush to dislodge dirt and dust from the condenser unit, and then use a vacuum to suck up the loosened debris.

WALK IN COOLER ACCESSORIES

SHELVING: Make the most of your walk-in cooler by getting smart shelving units to maximize your storage space. Because your walk-in has a humid environment, avoid chrome-plated wire shelving units unless it has been coated in an epoxy resin that protects it from rust and corrosion.



STRIP CURTAINS: One of the easiest ways to improve the energy efficiency of your walk-in cooler is to add vinyl strip curtains to the doorway of your walk-in. Strip curtains (also known as PVC strip doors) are made of clear or tinted overlapping, flexible material that provides a secondary barrier when your door is open for long periods of time (think loading in weekly deliveries). Not only do strip curtains help keep the cold air inside of your walk-in cooler, but they protect against dirt and other contaminants from reaching your food.



THERMOMETERS AND TEMPERATURE TRACKING: Food safety is a top priority for anyone within the foodservice industry. Rightfully so, because not only does it put guests at risk for serious illnesses, but any case linked to your restaurant or commercial kitchen could elicit bad press and put you out of business. That's why many restaurateurs invest in a data logger for their walk-in cooler. A data logger is a small device that records regular temperature and humidity readings. Many of these readings can be downloaded into a spreadsheet (which health inspectors love), but you can also easily calculate average temperatures and identify potential problems before they become issues - for example, is your product cooling down quickly enough? Is your walk-in rising in temperature at the same time every day, perhaps a result of an employee leaving the door open? The best part about data loggers is that you can be confident in the accuracy of your data, instead of relying on employees to record temperatures consistently (or correctly).



ABOUT TUNDRA



GET TO KNOW TUNDRA

Since 1993, Tundra Restaurant Supply has been providing innovative solutions for the restaurant industry. Simply said, we're the foodservice industry's one-stop-shop for everything you need to run your business.



SAVE WITH PARTS

Our huge parts selection makes it simple to find what you need, but if you want a little help our experts are happy to do the research for you. We'll also share DIY maintenance tips to save your restaurant time and money.



YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER

Tundra's goal is to be more than just a single source provider for parts, smallware and equipment. We want to help you focus on your customers and business so that you can sustain and grow. We believe true partnerships are ones in which we share insights and experiences to keep you ahead of potential problems and challenges.



Call us at 800.447.4941 to get in touch with one of our experts and we'll make sure you get the restaurant parts, equipment and supplies you need!