

# Your Study Guide to 'Space'

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Understanding how to fully utilize & optimize your existing department's space to achieve your goals

Almost every reprocessing department struggles with a lack of room. From inadequate space for additional reprocessing sinks or assembly tables, to a lack of room for supplies and staging, a shortage of square footage in a department can have severe negative consequences:

**For your PEOPLE:**

Crowded, confusing workflows that make day-to-day tasks difficult to complete properly

**For PRODUCTIVITY:**

An inability to adapt to changing operating room schedules and case loads

**For PROCESSES:**

Messy, disorganized workflows and floorplans that create inconsistencies and cross-contamination risks

**And ultimately for PATIENT SAFETY:**

Caused by an inability to provide the tools & infrastructure necessary to meet IFU cleaning requirements, leading to non-standardized processes and mistakes

Whether a department is stuck with an existing floorplan, or fortunate enough to be constructing and configuring a new one from scratch, proper utilization of space can have a significant impact on a department's operations and ability to achieve its goals.

Consider the following critical areas when you're analyzing if your space is fully optimized for its intended purpose.

## Workflow & Future Demands

Reprocessing departments must constantly be attuned to the demand of their operating and procedure rooms. Without proper forecasting of demand and future additions, the ability to plan for adequate equipment investments can be impacted.

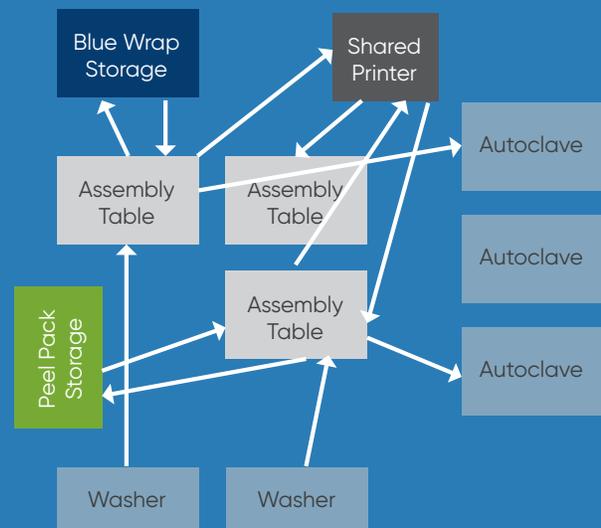
Consider:

- How many surgical procedures do we process?
- What will our case load look like in one year? 5 years?
- Are there any major changes in surgical specialties planned? Does our hospital intend to add OR's, robotic machines, or bring in other specialties/procedures?
- Is there two-way communication with leadership regarding future plans, and what's needed in our department to accommodate those plans?
- Will there be consolidation of reprocessing functions from other areas into our sterile processing department?
- What do our current workflows look like? Is there a purpose behind each reprocessing sink, ultrasonic, assembly table's purpose, or do technicians/nurses use whatever is available to them dependent on case load?
- Could we handle an increase of loaner trays with our existing setup?

### BEFORE

#### This? Varied assembly table layouts

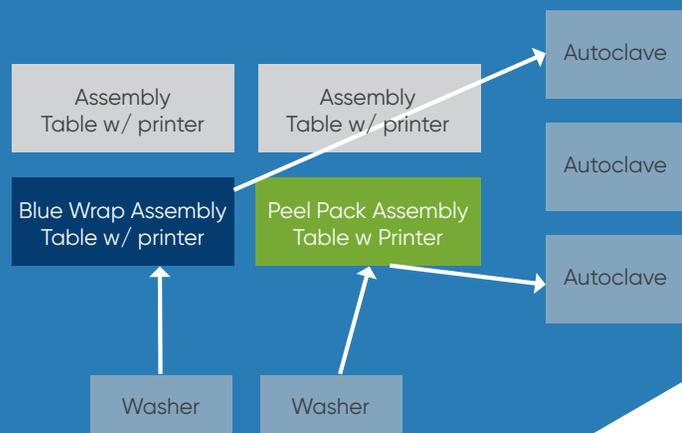
Lost time & energy running for supplies because assembly tables don't include all the necessary tools for technicians.



### AFTER

#### Or this? Optimized stations & workflow

Tables which address specific assembly needs and include all the relevant tools & accessories for assembly.





## Compliance & IFU

Patient safety starts with an adherence and understanding of IFU and reprocessing requirements. When making new equipment decisions or changes to your existing space, answer the following:

- What are the unique considerations for the surgical specialties we support?
- Do our sink basins adequately fit robotic, orthopedic, or flexible scope sizes?
- Do we require critical water access?
- Are my workflows for specialty procedures clearly indicated throughout the department?
- Are my ocular devices separately processed from all other devices?
- Are my ultrasonics properly designated for specific device use?
- Is my workflow unidirectional, or is there risk for cross-contamination?

## People & Ergonomic Concerns

Without well-trained and engaged staff members, nothing happens in sterile processing. Changes to existing spaces, from tweaks to total rehaults, impact staff.

- Is my equipment and area ergonomic for staff? If not, what in the department creates the most risk for staff?
- Are there simple ways to improve ergonomics now, like better lighting or anti-fatigue mats?
- How many people will be required to reprocess the volume of trays the department is responsible for?
- Do I have enough workstations or reprocessing sinks for each individual?
- Do I have the space to add technicians if I need to?
- Are my eye and hand wash facilities easily located and unobstructed in the event of an emergency?
- Are tools/materials at workstations and sinks easily accessible for every team member?





## Utilities & Infrastructure

No department can operate without electrical, water, air, and other critical utilities. When adding or renovating, consider the implications regarding your utilities, as well as the impact for your facilities teams.

- Does our department lack power or electrical outlets? Will we be able to meet the power requirements of additional equipment in the future, such as new ultrasonics, borescopes, decontamination sinks, or low-temperature sterilizers, among others?
- Are our floors, walls, and ceilings in compliance with relevant guidelines? Will modifications need to be made before the installation or addition of new equipment?
- Will we need to consider a pass-through window, or enhancing the existing one we have?

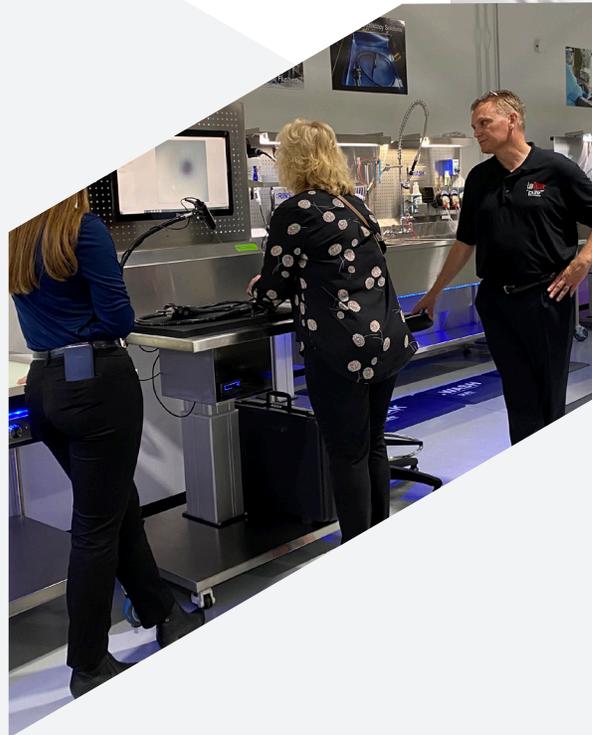
## The Next Assignment

Studying up on all the critical areas where space (and often a lack of it) can have both positive and negative impacts is critical. Any manager, equipment planner, or consultant must consider how space can impact all facets of a reprocessing department, from ergonomics to compliance.

### Tackling your own spatial problems? We'd love to help out.

Through our consultative approach to solving sterile processing problems, Pure Processing considers everything outlined in this study guide (and more) to ensure you're getting the right solution for your space. From a simple mobile cart to a complete departmental overhaul, we're here to help you meet your current and future needs.

[CONTACT US](#)



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