

CHECKLIST:

Visual Merchandising & Design Tips for Your Retail Store

Visual merchandising (the way you display products) and design (the look of your store) work together to attract shoppers into your retail store, lead them through your displays, attract their attention to specific products, and persuade them to buy. Effective visual merchandising and design incorporates these elements:

STORE LAYOUT

What sections or departments will your store have?

How do you want foot traffic to move through your store? Visualize a path that you want customers to follow and use lighting, signage and displays to draw them along. Use planogram software such as [SmartDraw](#), [GoPlanogram](#), [DotActiv](#) or [PlanoGraphics](#) to help.

How will you lay out your merchandise?

- Rows (like a supermarket) can be good for highly organized stores with a lot of SKUs, such as a hardware store or beauty supply store.
- A circular path (like Kohl's or Ikea's) can help to draw customers throughout your entire store.
- Islands (like Anthropologie) are ideal for creative, artistic products such as fashion or home décor

FIXTURES

What types of fixtures will you use? List the type and number

- Shelves
- Display cases/counters
- Clothing racks
- Mirrors
- Mannequins
- Fitting room fixtures (mirrors, hooks or hangers, seats)

Look for modular fixtures that allow the flexibility to move displays around and change your space.

LIGHTING

What mood do you want to create with lighting?

What type of overhead or ambient lighting will you use for the store overall?

Where will you use spot or accent lighting to highlight specific products, areas or displays?

DISPLAYS

Note your ideas for designing displays in each section of the store.

- Group similar items (i.e., display of neckties together)
- Group complementary items (i.e., half-mannequin wearing necktie, shirt, blazer and sunglasses)
- Use display to tell a story (i.e., a display of clothing for a job interview with a mannequin in a suit and tie carrying a briefcase)

DO MY DISPLAYS...

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Highlight the most desirable, exciting merchandise? | <input type="checkbox"/> Allow and encourage shoppers to touch? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feature high-margin items at eye level? | <input type="checkbox"/> Break up long aisles to make customers slow down and examine the merchandise? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use the Rule of Three (arrange items in groups of three) or the Pyramid Rule (place a focal item at the top of the display with related items below)? | <input type="checkbox"/> How often will I update or rotate displays? |

SIGNAGE

List the types of signage you need including wording and how many of each.

- Directional signage to help shoppers find their way
- Informational signage that explains policies or pricing
- Engaging signage that “sells” products by highlighting benefits/features
- Outdoor signage
- Display window signage

ARE MY SIGNS...

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easy to read? | <input type="checkbox"/> Visible from a distance? | <input type="checkbox"/> In line with my brand? |
|--|---|---|

INTERIOR DESIGN

Note your plans for:

- Wall covering (paint, paneling, wallpaper, etc.)
- Flooring (linoleum, tile, wood, carpet, rugs, etc.)
- Decor (murals, art work, wall hangings, etc.)
- Furniture (benches or chairs, etc.)

MAINTENANCE

Determine frequency (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually) for the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ● Sweep or vacuum floors | ● Straighten merchandise and signage |
| ● Clean walls, windows and doors | ● Dust displays |
| ● Wipe down surfaces and fixtures | |

Get visual merchandising and design ideas by viewing photo galleries at [Design:Retail](#) and [VMSD](#).