

PRACTICAL JOBSITE REFERENCE

Construction Container Buyer's Handbook

A practical guide to size, condition, delivered scope, inspection and ownership for active construction projects.

20FT

TIGHT SITES

40FT

MAXIMUM CAPACITY

1 price

DELIVERED SCOPE

USE THIS IN THE
FIELD

Mark the assumptions, assign an owner and confirm the exact site and container before acting. This guide supports planning. It does not replace carrier approval, project safety rules or the authority having jurisdiction.

SECTION 01

Define the job before selecting the box

Start with operating needs, not a cubic-foot estimate.

01	List the largest equipment and material footprints.
02	Draw shelving depth and a continuous retrieval aisle.
03	Separate daily tools, reserve stock and controlled high-value items.
04	Estimate future projects and between-project storage.

FIELD NOTE	The cheapest unit can become expensive when the crew cannot retrieve what it needs.
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SECTION 02

Choose 20FT, 40FT or High Cube

Use access and retrieval as the first filters.

01	Use 20FT when space, turning or trade separation controls the decision.
02	Use 40FT when the site can receive it and shared inventory justifies the floor area.
03	Use High Cube when tall equipment or stacked stock needs the additional 12 inches.
04	Verify exact interior and door dimensions for critical equipment.

FIELD NOTE	Nominal size supports planning. The exact container controls final clearance.
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SECTION 03

Choose a condition grade

Buy the condition the contents require.

01	One-trip for cleaner appearance and newer components.
02	Cargo-worthy when transport certification or stronger condition is required.
03	Wind-and-watertight for ordinary stationary jobsite storage when appearance is secondary.
04	Write door, gasket, floor, odor and daylight requirements into the quote.

FIELD NOTE	Condition labels are useful only when the written scope explains what they mean.
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SECTION 04

Compare the complete delivered scope

A depot price is not the project cost.

01	Confirm the delivery ZIP and carrier assumptions.
02	List taxes, modifications, special handling and site work separately.
03	Confirm lead time, quote validity and doors-first or doors-last orientation.
04	Compare equal sizes, conditions and access assumptions.

FIELD NOTE	A nearby suitable unit can cost less overall than a cheaper unit with long freight.
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SECTION 05

Inspect and accept the unit

Document the condition before loading begins.

01	Photograph all sides and the interior.
02	Operate both doors and seat every cam.
03	Check gaskets, floor, roof condition and signs of water intrusion.
04	Record serial number and written exceptions.

FIELD NOTE

Delivery photos and a written exception record support maintenance, insurance and resale.

SECTION 06

Plan ownership across several projects

Use the full cash picture.

01	Include purchase, delivery, modifications and site preparation.
02	Budget future moves, maintenance and between-project storage.
03	Compare rental delivery, pickup, minimum terms and delay exposure.
04	Use a conservative resale assumption.

FIELD NOTE	Run low, base and high-use scenarios instead of one optimistic forecast.
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TURN THE PLAN INTO A DELIVERED PRICE

Send the delivery ZIP, preferred size and project use.

A United Container Depot specialist will match nearby inventory, review access assumptions and provide one written delivered price.

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855-525-0902

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