

THE GUIDE TO **THE IDEAL SEMINAR SET-UP**

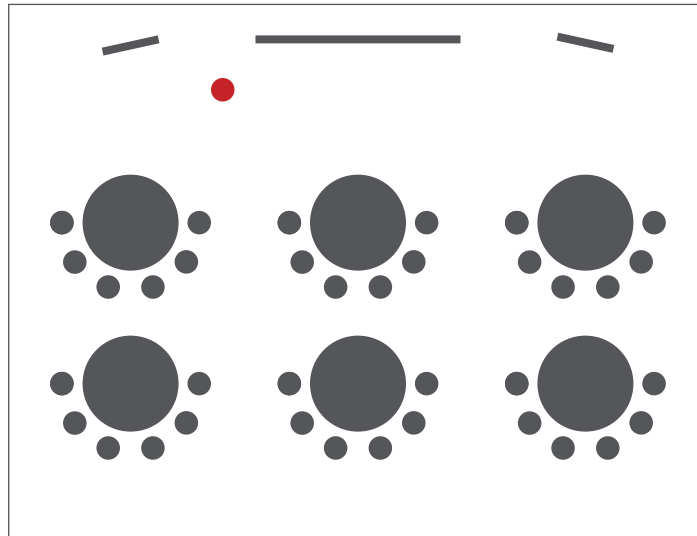
When vetting the optimal venue for your next seminar, it is critical that you assess a number of factors. The comfort of your guests, visibility of the presentation, room acoustics, ability of wait staff to move easily about the room and your own ease of mobility throughout the presentation are all **very** important. To help you secure the best room possible **and** leverage the optimal seating layout, we have assembled the following helpful tips!



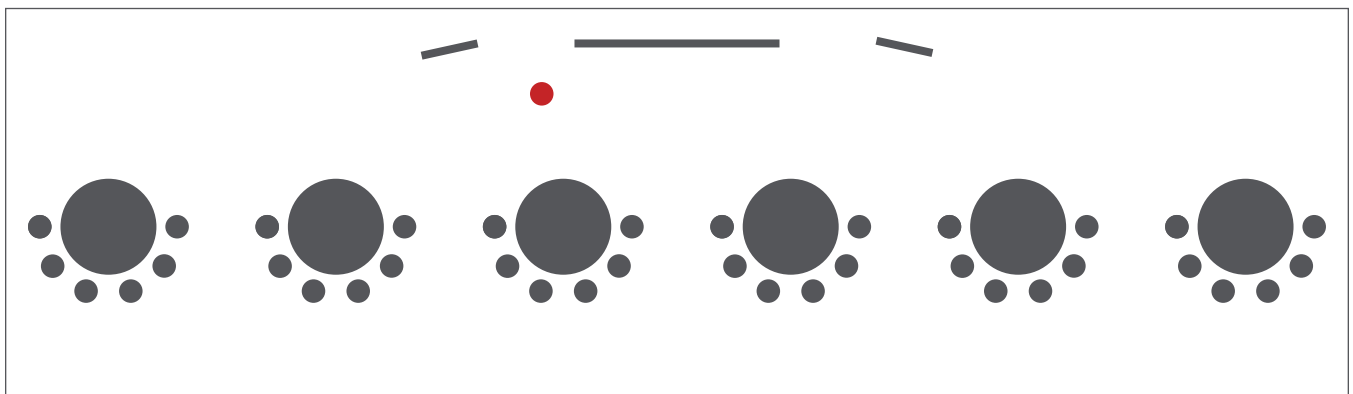
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ROOM SHAPE

While few **perfectly** square rooms exist in restaurants and other venues, a relatively square meeting room should be your goal. A space that is essentially as wide as it is deep generally allows for great visual presentations (meaning attendees won't struggle to see projection screens, flip pads on easels, etc.) and optimal acoustics.

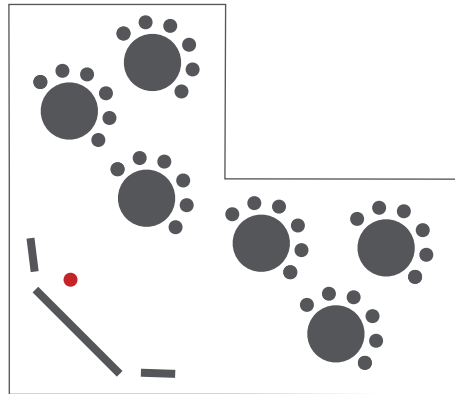


Conversely, when using a highly rectangular room, you are inherently putting guests in positions that will strain at least some of them to see or hear.



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It is also virtually impossible to connect with an audience using an odd-shaped room or a venue with large beams, corners or other obstructions breaking up attendees' field of view.

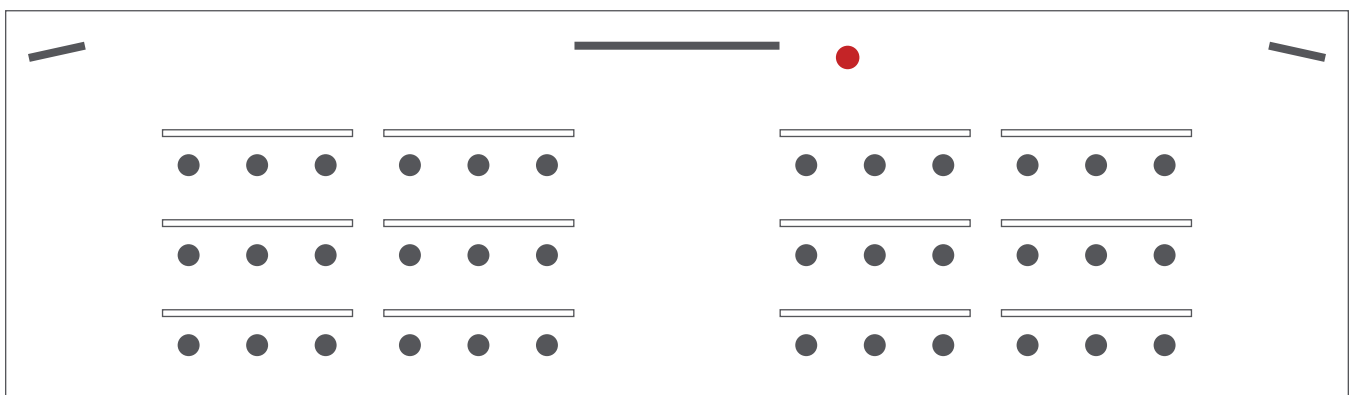


SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

There are several possible seating arrangements used in seminars, but be careful here – the vast majority of them are not conducive to forging real connections with your audience. If at all possible, do **not** let venue management or the constraints of a room's size or shape force you into one of the following unideal arrangements:

CLASSROOM STYLE: This style reflects the seating found in a school or lecture theatre, with chairs and trestle tables aligned in consecutive straight rows.

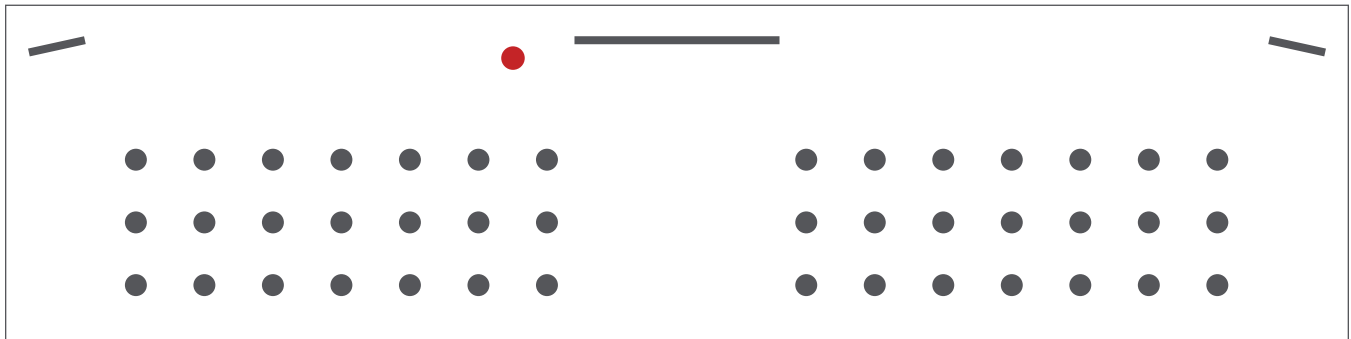
- The audience is closed in, making it difficult for audience members to be seated or exit.
- Attendees are far less likely to interact as they are not facing each other.
- Wait staff will often have a very difficult time maneuvering between rows to deliver meals.



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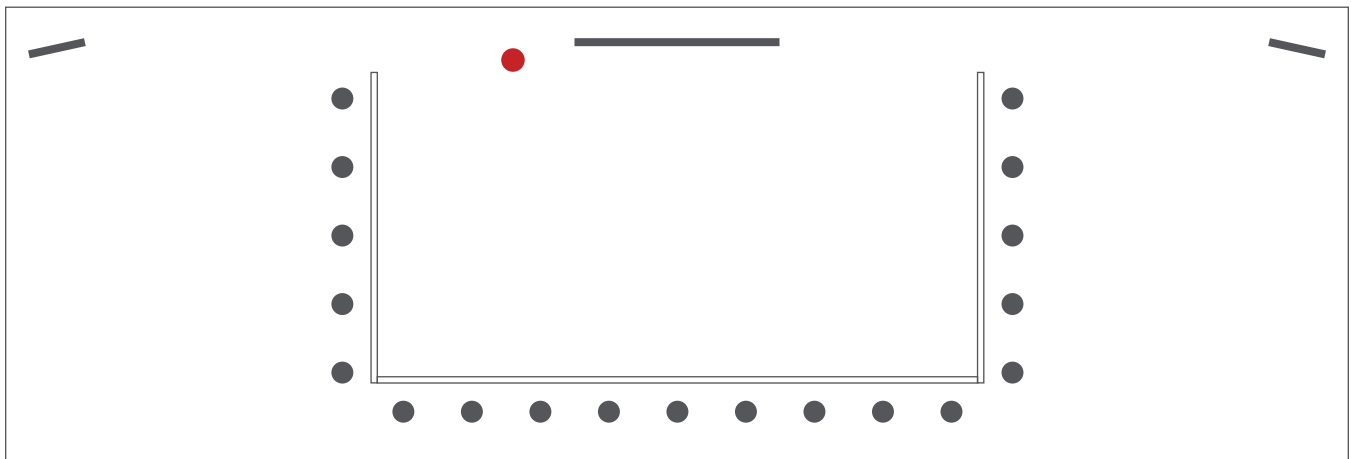
THEATER STYLE: This style is very similar - reflecting the seating found in a theatre or cinema with chairs aligned in consecutive straight rows.

- The audience is still very boxed closed in, with it difficult to enter or exit.
- Attendees interaction is still very unlikely, and there is no possibility that this seating style can be used for dinner seminars as there are no tables used.
- In addition, there is no provision for attendees to take notes as there is no flat surface on which to do so.



U-SHAPE STYLE: As the name suggests, this style is in the shape of the letter U, with the tables & chairs arranged in an open-ended configuration with the audience facing inwards toward the presenter (and the projection screen if applicable).

- While audience interaction may be enhanced with this arrangement, it is still not optimal.
- This style also does not make efficient use of floor space, reducing seating capacity and accommodating far fewer guests.
- A large number of your guests remain seated "parallel" to the presentation, requiring them to view it from the side versus taking it directly on.

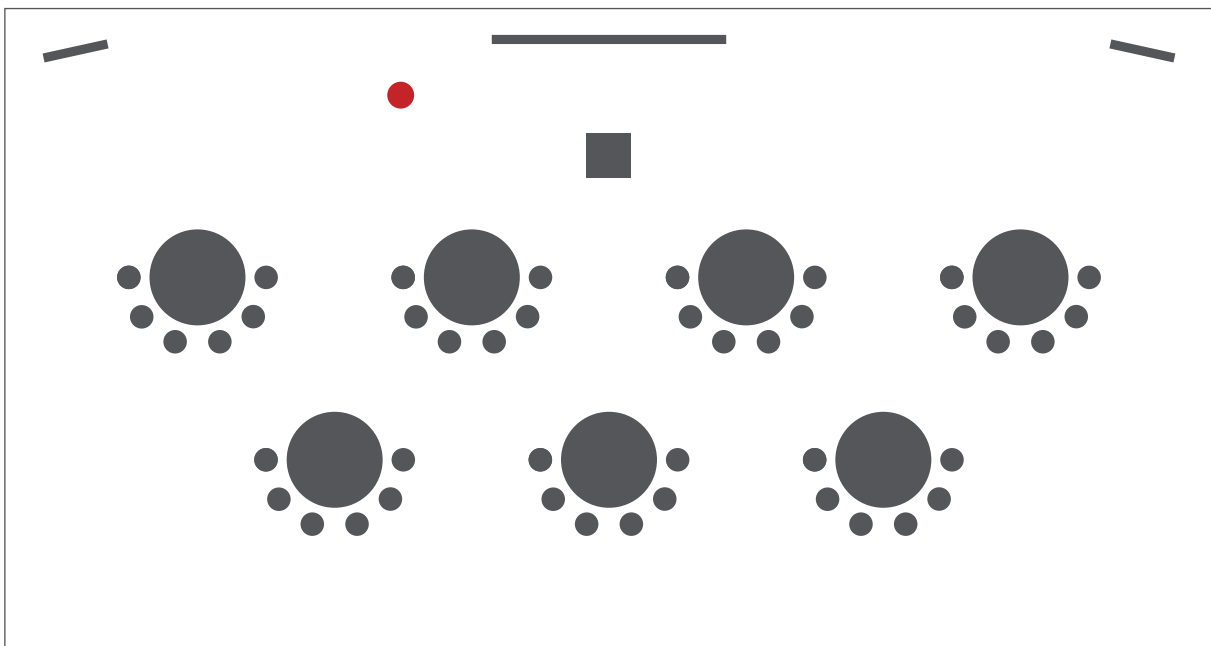


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Above **all** other seating styles, we recommend the use of banquet style seating with half-rounds. All other variables being equal, this seating arrangement lends itself to the greatest comfort level for your guests, optimal presenter-attendee connection and the greatest ease of venue staff serving your attendees.

BANQUET STYLE WITH HALF-ROUNDS: This style is similar to using round dinner tables, but guests are only seated around half of the table – ensuring no attendee has their back to the presenter. Ideal table size for the banquet style is a six-foot round.

- This arrangement allows for optimal audience interaction with one another before and after the presentation as it allows guests to be facing one another.
- This style is also the most like a casual meal setting, putting attendees more at ease.
- Because it doesn't pack attendees in like some of the other styles might, it may not be the most efficient use of room space, but it will generally be the most comfortable for guests which is ultimately what matters most.
- Because the arrangement allows for spaces between the tables, it allows the presenter to be mobile throughout the presentation – moving amongst attendees, engaging them by their names and through physical proximity.
- Wait staff can easily maneuver about the room serving guests their meals.



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IDEAL ROOM SIZE

Remember, cramped seating leads to spacious appointment books. No one will ever confess they didn't set an appointment because you wedged them into uncomfortable seating in a room which was far too small for your event. They just won't set an appointment. So, don't let the temptation to pack a room to the gills inadvertently sabotage your conversion ratios.

There are a number of meeting space calculators available online for your use which allow you to enter in the style of seating you wish to use and the number of guests you anticipate having – quickly computing approximate space needed. However, as a general rule of thumb, you can use these guidelines:

- For 20 guests, reserve a room no smaller than 350 sq. feet.
- For 35 guests, reserve a room no smaller than 550 sq. feet.
- For 50 guests, reserve a room no smaller than 700 sq. feet.
- For 65 guests, reserve a room no smaller than 850 sq. feet.

*(*Assuming banquet style with half-round seating using six-foot circular tables)*

IDEAL ROOM COMPOSITION

While it is often not considered, a key factor to check when vetting a venue is the composition of the room. Factors such as flooring surface, wall composition, ceiling height and any partitions should all be taken into consideration. For instance, while a high-end restaurant with marble walls or floors may **seem** very appealing, those features **may** also create an acoustic nightmare as sound from speakers reverberates throughout the room or guests' chairs screech throughout the presentation. Similarly, not taking into account beams, pillars or decorative draperies which can obstruct your audience's view can be a costly mistake, so be sure those are not obstructions in your chosen venue.

NOISE CONSIDERATIONS

When vetting a venue, be sure to sit in your prospective presentation room **during** the time at which you would be giving an actual seminar. Listen for whether or not external restaurant noise from other patrons will interfere with your audience's ability to hear. Likewise, pay attention to kitchen and wait staff chatter and commotion, ensuring neither of these would be an issue either. Finally, pay attention to seemingly trivial noises such as ornate water features or white noise machines. While some restaurants employ these to mute or muffle other noises throughout their building, if they do not offer power and/or audio controls within your presentation room, you may find yourself actually competing against them for the ears of your guests.



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