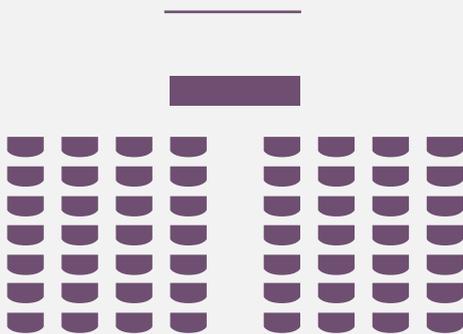# UNDERSTANDING SEATING LAYOUTS FOR
BUSINESS EVENTS

Heritage supports ten standard seating layouts in our meeting/conference rooms, but some rooms are more amenable to particular styles. The following layouts are showcased with how they are commonly used and the pros and cons of each style.

Each of the seating layouts will have a maximum occupancy for the room being used. The maximum occupancy charts are available for each property's rooms from the Conference Team. The ten common seating layouts are:

- Theatre
- Classroom
- Herringbone
- U Shape

- Horseshoe
- Hollow Square
- Boardroom
- Banquet

- Cabaret
- Cocktail

THEATRE

COMMON USES

- Meetings
- Announcements
- Product Launches
- Guest Speakers

PROS

- All of the attendees are facing forward towards the front of the room; ensuring a clear line of view to presenters and the presentation delivered
- This is a maximum seating capacity to set-up a conference room

CONS

- Space can become limited for other activities
- Aisles are required to ensure sufficient access to the seating area
- There is no provision for note taking or food/beverage consumption
- Audience interaction is hindered as audience members don't face each other

This is the simplest layout, reflecting the seating found in a theatre or cinema with chairs aligned in consecutive rows.

CLASSROOM

- Training
- Conferences
- Lectures
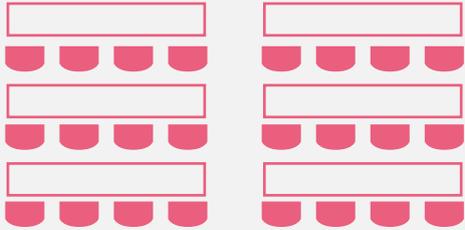
Reflecting seating found in schools or a lecture theatre, with chairs and tables aligned in consecutive rows.

PROS

- All of the seats are facing forwards towards the front of the function room
- Allows for note taking, laptop/tablet use and consumption of plated food & beverage

CONS

- Audience is closed in, making it difficult for audience members to enter or exit
- Aisles are required to ensure sufficient access to seating area
- Seating capacity is reduced by the tables
- Audience is less likely to interact as they are not facing each other

HERRINGBONE

COMMON USES

- Training
- Conferences
- Lectures

Similar to Classroom layout with each consecutive row of chairs, and sometimes tables, angled inwards.
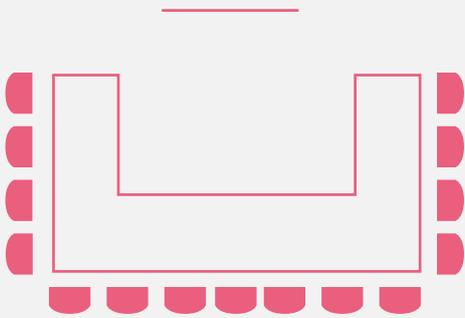
PROS

- All of the seats are angled inward towards the front of the function room
- Allows for note taking and consumption of plated food & beverage (when tables are included)

CONS

- Audience is closed in, making it difficult for audience members to enter
- Aisles are required to ensure sufficient access to seating area
- Seating capacity is reduced by the tables
- Audience is less likely to interact as they are not facing each other

HERITAGE
EVENTS

U SHAPE

U-Shape layout is in a shape of the letter U, with the tables & chairs arranged in an open ended configuration with the audience facing inwards.

COMMON USES

- Training
- Workshops
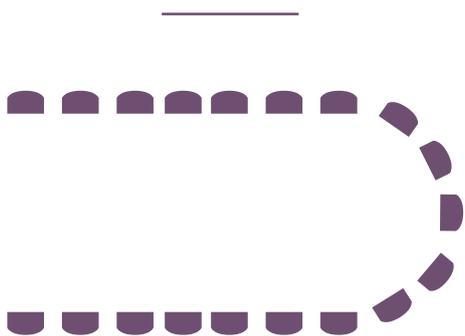- Conferences
- Meetings

(Small to Medium Size Events)

PROS

- The open end allows for a focal point or presentation area
- Allows the presenter to approach and engage with each audience member and interaction is enhanced
- Allows for note taking, laptop/tablet use and consumption of plated food & beverage

CONS

- Inefficient use of floor space with seating capacity reduced
- A large proportion of the audience are seated side-on to the presentation area

HORSESHOE

Similar to U-Shape; however there are no tables (chairs only) arranged in an open ended configuration with the audience facing inwards.

COMMON USES

- Meetings
- Presentations
- Team Briefings

(Small to Medium Size Events)

PROS

- The open end provides a focal point an allows for presentation area
- Allows presenter to approach and engage with each audience member

CONS

- Inefficient use of floor space and reduce seating capacity
- Access points maybe required to ensure sufficient access and egress to seating area
- There is no provision for note taking or consumption of plated food and beverage

HERITAGE
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HOLLOW SQUARE
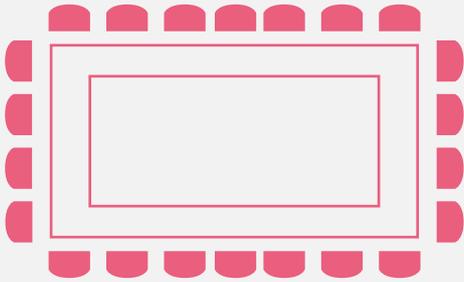
Similar to U-Shape; with four sides and no open end with all the audience facing inwards.
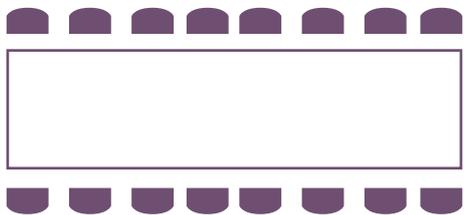
PROS

- Audience interaction enhanced (audience members face each other)
- Allows audience to consume plated food and beverage

CONS

- Reduced seating capacity and number of attendees
- Does not allow for a main presentation area or focal point

BOARDROOM

The traditional boardroom layout is a smaller version of the Hollow Square or U-Shape with a large elongated table with the audience all facing inwards.

COMMON USES

- Board Meetings
- Small Meetings
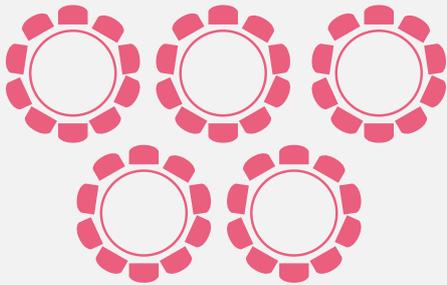- Interviews
- Small Presentations
- Team Briefings

PROS

- Encourages audience interaction as they all face inwards
- Allows for note taking, laptop/tablet use and consumption of plated food & beverage

CONS

- Restricts the position of a presentation area or focal point, typically to the end of the table

BANQUET

This layout is similar to a round dinner table, with the audience seated around the circumference facing inwards with multiple tables set-up through the space.

COMMON USES

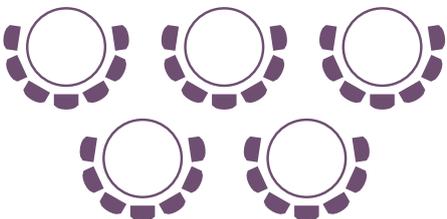- Dining Events (breakfast, lunch & dinners)

PROS

- Audience interaction fully enhanced with audience members all facing each other

CONS

- The audience is closed in, needing to push past other audience members to enter/exit the seating area (where maximum capacity is being used)
- Not ideal viewing for presentations as some of the audience has their backs to the front of the room

CABARET

Similar to Banqueting; however there is an open end to the table seating, with the audience seated in an arc facing forwards.

COMMON USES

- Dining Events (breakfast, lunch & dinners) with speakers
- Training Sessions
- Workshops
- Conferences

PROS

- Open end allows for a focal point or presentation area

CONS

- Inefficient use of floor space with seating capacity reduced

HERITAGE
EVENTS

COCKTAIL

- Social Events

This layout is used where standing spaces is only required as there are no tables or chairs. Sometimes bar leaners can be included around the edges.

PROS

- Most efficient use of floor space for maximum room capacity
- Audience interaction greatly enhanced, with audience members able to freely mingle through the room
- Ideal for canapés to be circulated throughout the room

CONS

- Audience is standing with no opportunity to sit and rest
- Does not allow for note taking or consumption of plated food

WHICH IS THE RIGHT LAYOUT FOR MY EVENT

A summary of the most appropriate seating layouts for your next business events are below to help you in deciding the best layout for your business event:

BUSINESS EVENT	MEETING/ CONFERENCE	LARGE GROUP PRESENTATION	EVENTS/ MEALS	TRAINING
SUGGESTED LAYOUTS	• Theatre • Classroom • Herringbone • U Shape • Horseshoe • Hollow Square • Boardroom • Cabaret	• Theatre • Cabaret	• Banquet • Cabaret • Cocktail	• Classroom • Herringbone • U Shape • Cabaret

If you would like to know more about Heritage Hotels Business Events, call or email Heritage Business Events Team on +64 9 979 7525 or Conference@heritagehotels.co.nz

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