Hinges for joinery: *types, counts* and what to specify

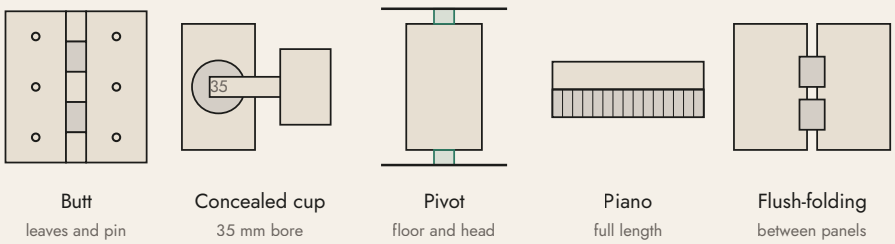
The door decides the hinge: mass, height, width and closer set the count and the grade. On a fire door, the hinge is the certified one.

Compliance guidance. This is not engineering, fire-safety or legal advice. Hinge counts and weights are from one maker's catalogue (2024) and one trade guide to BS EN 1935:2002; neither the standard nor the maker's data for your hinge was read. A hinge on a fire door is part of a tested door set: do not substitute one without the door maker's written confirmation. Hinge makers give the rating for their own hinge on your door.

AT A GLANCE

Hinge type	How it works	Used for	What to specify
Butt hinge	Two leaves and a pin, let into the door edge and the frame	Heavy and tall doors, doors with closers, fire doors (as the certificate lists)	Mass of the door; the hinge grade; the finish
Concealed cup hinge	Cup in a 35 mm bore in the door back, arm to a plate on the carcass	Cabinet and wardrobe doors, small and medium leaves	Overlay or inset; door height, width and weight; count by the maker's chart
Pivot hinge or set	Pins at floor and head, set in from the door edge	Tall, heavy or wide leaves where side hinges would not do	Floor and head ratings; fixing into slab and head; see our pivot door sheet
Piano (continuous) hinge	One long hinge along the whole edge	Flaps, lids, fall fronts and narrow doors	Length, leaf thickness, support along the edge
Flush-folding hinge	Small leaves that lie flat between two panels	Folding screens and bifold doors	Thickness of leaf and panel; the fold angle
Bespoke or hidden hinge	Made to order, with the knuckle or leaf shaped for the design	Special doors, jib doors, decorative metalwork	Evidence, load and grade for a made-to-order part; see our hardware metals sheet

Practice summary of types and uses, not a standard. Load and count figures on this sheet come from one maker's catalogue and one trade guide, and each hinge maker publishes its own.



Five hinge types used in joinery, drawn as simple diagrams. Schematic and not to scale. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

CONCEALED HINGES ON A CABINET OR WARDROBE DOOR

Doors [W-01 to W-04]: concealed cup hinge, [maker, model], [full overlay / half overlay / inset], [110] degree opening, [soft-close / not], [nickel plated / finish], 35 mm bore. Door [2,100 x 600 x 19] mm, mass [12] kg. Number of hinges per door as the hinge maker's chart for this height, width and mass: [4]. The hinge maker's data sheet and count chart are submitted before ordering.

BUTT HINGES ON A HEAVY OR TALL DOOR

Door [D-07], [2,100 x 900 x 44] mm, mass [60] kg as built, closer [none / without back-check / with back-check]. Hinges: [3] ball-bearing butt hinges, [maker, model, 102 x 76 x 3] mm, BS EN 1935 classification [3 7 4 1 1 3 0 11] or better for an effective mass of [mass x 1.2 / mass x 1.75] kg, base metal [stainless steel 304 / solid brass], finish [satin], screws of the same finish. Positions [top at 250 mm, bottom at 250 mm, middle as the maker advises].

FIRE DOORS

Hinges on fire doors [F-01 to F-12] are those named in the door set certificate [door maker, certificate ref]: [make and model], [number] per leaf, position as certified. No change of hinge type, number, size, metal or finish without the door maker's or certifier's written confirmation. A hinge not covered by test evidence for the doorset has its essential components made entirely of materials with a minimum melting point of 800 degrees C (Approved Document B Volume 2, Appendix C, paragraph C10), confirmed by the hinge maker.

HEAVY PIVOTS

Pivot door [D-12], mass [90] kg, height [2,700] mm, width [1,100] mm: floor unit and head unit as [maker, model] with the maker's written confirmation that the pair is rated for this mass, width and height, and the fixing into [slab / screed / head] as the maker requires. The partner states the largest leaf and the heaviest it will guarantee.

TERMS USED

Concealed hinge

A cabinet door hinge that sits in a round hole bored in the back of the door and cannot be seen when closed, with adjustment in three directions.

Butt hinge

A traditional hinge with two flat leaves joined by a pin, fitted into rebates on the door edge and frame.

Overlay

How a door sits relative to its carcase: overlay doors cover the front edge, inset doors sit flush inside the opening. The hinge type depends on which you choose.

Effective door mass

The actual door mass increased to allow for a closer (20 per cent more without back-check, 75 per cent more with, according to a trade guide to BS EN 1935), used to select hinges.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- BS EN 1935:2002: BSI Knowledge, read 7 Nov 2026: Current, Under Review; 15 March 2002. The standard was not read; digits and closer notes are from the Door and Hardware Federation trade guide.
- BS EN 15570:2008 (hinges for furniture, vertical axis): BSI Knowledge: Current, Under Review; 31 October 2008. Listing only; not read.
- Approved Document B Volume 2, Appendix C, paragraph C10: Online version, 2019 edition incorporating 2020, 2022, 2025 and 2026 amendments and forthcoming 2029 changes, read 7 Nov 2026.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/hinges-for-joinery. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.