Restaurant seating *layout*: spacing, aisles and space per cover

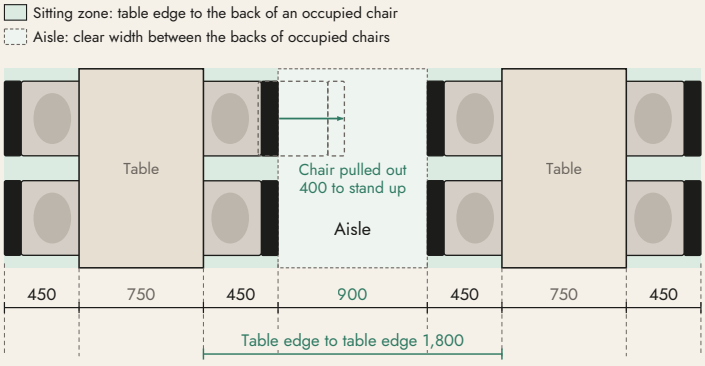
Restaurant table spacing, chair pull-out, aisles and space per cover in millimetres, drawn in plan, with what Approved Documents B and M do and do not say.

Compliance guidance. Regulated figures are from Approved Document B volume 2 (2019 edition incorporating the 2020, 2022, 2025 and 2026 amendments) and Approved Document M volume 2 (2015 edition incorporating the 2020 and 2024 amendments), both for England, and an HM Government guide to fire risk assessment for places of assembly, all read on 5 November 2026. Every other layout figure is plan geometry or practice, not regulation. Escape widths, occupancy, access and licence conditions are set for each project by the fire engineer, building control, the access consultant and the licensing authority. Guidance, not legal or engineering advice.

AT A GLANCE

Dimension	Range (mm unless stated)	Basis	Notes
Table, per diner and depth	600 to 750 long per diner; 700 to 900 deep	Practice	Fine dining at the upper end. 750 deep is used in the drawings.
Dining chair footprint	about 450 wide x 520 deep	Drawing example	Take it from the chair maker's drawing; arms and swivel bases are larger.
Sitting zone (A)	400 to 500	Derived from chair depth	Table edge to the back of an occupied chair.
Chair pull-out (B)	300 to 450	Practice	The room to slide back and stand. Confirm on a mock-up.
Aisle (C)	750 to 900 service; 1,000 to 1,200 main	Practice	Between the backs of occupied chairs.
Table edge to table edge (T)	1,650 to 2,100	T = 2 x A + C	Diners back to back. Not the aisle.
Dining floor per cover, four-tops	1.2 to 1.7 m2	Arithmetic from the module	Net: walls, bar and service areas add to it.
Escape route or exit width	750 (60 people), 850 (110), 1,050 (220)	Approved Document B vol 2, Table 2.3	Between fixed obstructions (D4). England.
Corridors and passageways	1,200 unobstructed	Approved Document M vol 2, 3.14(b)	For the access consultant: does an aisle count?
Occupant number, restaurant	1.0 m2 per person	Approved Document B vol 2, Table D1	A counting factor, not a space per cover.

Millimetres. The first seven rows are plan geometry and practice used in the drawings, to be confirmed by the partner workshop and the operator; the last three are from the documents named (England; editions in the notice).



Two four-seat tables in plan, to scale, with example values: chair 450 wide x 520 deep, tucked 70 mm under the table; table 1,200 x 750; sitting zone 450; aisle 900; T = 1,800. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.

WHAT THE DOCUMENTS SAY ABOUT WIDTHS

Document (England)	Gives	Does not give
Approved Document B vol 2 (2019 edition, 2026 amendments)	Table 2.2: 1 exit up to 60 people, 2 up to 600, 3 above. Table 2.3: 750, 850 and 1,050 mm for 60, 110 and 220 people, no interpolation below 1,050. D4: width measured between fixed obstructions. Table 2.1: travel 18 m (one direction), 45 m (more than one).	An aisle width between tables. How loose chairs count.
HM Government guide, small and medium places of assembly	Routes free from obstruction; two exits above 60 people (p. 60). 750 mm: up to 100 people; 1,050 mm: up to 200, normal risk (p. 64). No standing or sitting in gangways (p. 60, seating and gangways text).	An aisle width between tables. The 305 mm and 1.05 m on p. 60 are for fixed audience seating.
Approved Document M vol 2 (2015 edition, 2024 amendments)	3.14(b), (c): corridors 1,200 mm unobstructed, passing places 1,800 x 1,800. 4.16(a): all users reach all parts of a refreshment facility.	An aisle width between tables, or wheelchair space at a table.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

LAYOUT DRAWING

Furniture layout as drawing [ref] revision [ ], dimensioned to table edges. Chairs shown at the occupied position (back of chair [450] mm from the table edge) and, along main aisles, pulled out [400] mm. Clear width between the backs of occupied chairs not less than [900] mm on service aisles and [1,200] mm on main aisles. Escape routes and exit widths as the fire strategy [ref, edition]. Layout subject to the approval of [building control body / fire engineer] and to the premises licence conditions.

TABLE AND CHAIR FOOTPRINTS

Tables [1,200 x 750] mm (four-seat) and [700 x 700] mm (two-seat), top height [745] mm above finished floor level. Dining chair overall footprint [450 x 520] mm to the chair maker's drawing [ref]. Dimensional tolerance [ ] mm. Any change to a footprint to be re-checked against the layout drawing before production.

ACCESSIBLE TABLES

[ ] tables to be accessible, spread across the room as agreed with [access consultant], each with a chair that can be removed and a clear route from the entrance not less than [1,200] mm wide. Dimensions and knee space from [BS 8300-2:2018 / the access consultant's drawing], not from this specification.

TERMS USED

Chair pull-out
The extra space needed behind a chair so a diner can slide it back and stand up. It is added to the table edge when planning gaps and aisles.

Sitting zone
The distance from a table edge to the back of an occupied chair. It is part of the layout that the diner uses, so it is counted with the table, not with the aisle.

Aisle (circulation zone)
The clear width left for people to walk between the backs of occupied chairs. Which aisles are also escape routes or accessible routes is decided by the fire engineer and access consultant.

Floor space factor
A figure in square metres per person, from Approved Document B volume 2, Table D1, used to count the occupants of a room when the number is not known. It is not a design allowance per cover.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- Approved Document B, Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings (2019 edition incorporating 2020, 2022, 2025 and 2026 amendments; England): Table 0.1, Tables 2.1 to 2.3, paragraphs 2.6, 2.9, 2.16 to 2.21 and 4.2, Appendix D (D1 to D4, Table D1) read.
- Approved Document M, Volume 2 (2015 edition incorporating 2020 and 2024 amendments; England): paragraphs 3.11 to 3.14 and 4.12 to 4.16 read.
- HM Government, Fire safety risk assessment: small and medium places of assembly: gov.uk page updated 28 August 2024; printed pages 60, 63 and 64 read.
- BS 9999, BS 8300-2:2018 and BS 5588-6: named in the documents above; not read: confirm against the current editions.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/restaurant-seating-layout-and-spacing. 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.