



PC Cases Buying Guide Quick Reference Handout

Choosing the right PC case is a crucial step in building your computer. The case not only houses your components but also plays a significant role in cooling, aesthetics, and overall functionality. Whether you're building a high-performance gaming rig or a compact home theater PC, this guide will help you navigate the key factors to consider when selecting the perfect case for your needs.

[Scan the QR Code to read the full buying guide](#)

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1. Determine your build needs

- Purpose: Decide on the main purpose of your PC (gaming, workstation, media center).
- Components: Make a list of your components, including GPU size, number of drives, cooling systems, and other peripherals.
- Future Upgrades: Consider if you'll be upgrading components in the future and ensure the case supports it.

2. Choose the right size

- Full Tower: Best for high-performance builds with multiple GPUs, extensive cooling, and future upgrades. Supports E-ATX, ATX, and smaller motherboards.
- Mid Tower: The most common size, balancing space and compactness. Supports ATX, Micro-ATX, and Mini-ITX motherboards.
- Mini Tower: Ideal for compact builds or home theater PCs. Supports Micro-ATX and Mini-ITX motherboards.
- Small Form Factor (SFF): Perfect for ultra-compact builds. Supports Mini-ITX motherboards and often has limited expansion options.

3. Cooling and airflow considerations

- Airflow: Look for cases with good ventilation, multiple fan mounts, and dust filters. Front, top, and rear vents improve overall airflow.
- Water Cooling Support: If you plan to use liquid cooling, ensure the case has radiator mounts and enough space for pumps and reservoirs.
- Fan Compatibility: Check the number of pre-installed fans and additional fan slots. Larger cases often allow for more and larger fans.



4. Aesthetic and design features

- Tempered Glass Panels: Adds visual appeal by showcasing internal components.
- RGB Lighting: Customize the look of your build with RGB lighting options.
- Cable Management: Ensure the case offers cable routing options and enough space behind the motherboard tray for clean cable management.
- Build Material: Choose cases made from high-quality materials like steel, aluminum, or tempered glass for durability and aesthetics.

5. Front panel and connectivity options

- USB Ports: Look for cases with a good selection of USB 3.0, 3.1, or Type-C ports on the front panel.
- Audio Jacks: Ensure the case includes easy access to headphone and microphone jacks.
- Other Controls: Consider additional front panel features like fan controllers, power/reset buttons, and LED controls.

6. Storage and expansion options

- Drive Bays: Choose a case with enough 2.5" and 3.5" drive bays for your SSDs and HDDs.
- Tool-less Design: Look for tool-less drive bays and expansion slots for easier upgrades.
- Expansion Slots: Check the number of PCIe expansion slots for GPUs, sound cards, and other peripherals.

7. Budget and brand considerations

- Budget: Determine your budget before shopping. Higher-priced cases often offer better materials, more features, and improved build quality.
- Brand Reputation: Choose reputable brands known for quality and customer support, such as Corsair, NZXT, and Cooler Master.