

## Before you purchase a scale...

### Where do you begin?

Before purchasing a scale for commercial use, you must have answers to a few basic questions...

### Do I need a scale?

YES! If you are buying or selling any products or services that are required to be sold by weight, then you need a scale.

### What type of scale do I need?

The type depends on its intended use. You will want to consider:

- Legal requirements for commercial use
- Type of product being sold
- Scale capacity needed
- The division size of the scale
- Where the scale will be used

## Basic Requirements

Consider the following when purchasing a scale:

### Suitability

Scales are required to be suitable for their intended use and environment. Different types are used for selling different products and

services. Scales may be designed for countertop use to compute pricing and some hang from a support to only register weight indication. A scale for selling produce at a market will have different features and requirements than the one used to ship packages. Commodities are required to be sold by NET WEIGHT, which is the weight of the product excluding the packaging material. A suitable scale for weighing wrapped packages will have a TARE feature to deduct the weight of the packaging material.

### NTEP

Scales used commercially in Ohio must have an NTEP Certificate of Conformance. The National Type Evaluation Program (NTEP) issues certificates for devices that meet specific laboratory and field-testing requirements. A registered scale dealer or your County Weights & Measures Official can tell you if a scale is recognized under NTEP.



NIST NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Capacity & Division Size

Scales manufacturers offer scales in many capacities and division sizes. Common retail

food scales have a 30-pound capacity and .01-pound division size. The division size is determined by the intended use and legal requirement of the scale. Small scales should not be used for their first 20 divisions.

### Scale Installation

Scales must be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions. The scale location must be easily viewable by customers watching their purchases being weighed.

### Inspection & Testing

Scales are required to be tested and approved before commercial use. Have your local County Inspector test, approve, and seal your new scale prior to use. This approval seal shows it is functioning properly, and all scales are to be tested every time they are serviced or repaired. The local inspector tests periodically for continuity.

### Equipment Maintenance

Owners of weight and measure devices are required to keep them operating properly. Scales are to be clean, level, supported, positioned correctly, accurate and on ZERO before the start of any transaction. Regular service is a must.



## About the Office of Weights & Measures for Trumbull County, OH

The county auditor serves as the sealer of weights and measures for the entire county.

According to the Ohio Revised Code, Section 319.55,

"The auditor shall see that all state laws relating to weights and measures are strictly enforced throughout their county and shall assist generally in the prosecution of all violations of such laws."

The county auditor is responsible for testing the accuracy of weighing and measuring devices used in the purchase and sale of commodities.

The Director of Agriculture is the State Sealer of Weights and Measures. The Ohio Department of Agriculture is the custodian of the Ohio primary standards of weights and measures, which are traceable to U.S. standards of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in Gaithersburg, Maryland. The international standards are kept in Paris, France.

As consumers, the products we buy are sold by weight, volume, length, count, or measure. The time-tested methods of verifying weight, volume, and pricing are being replaced by computerized devices. There are positives as well as cautions involved with the advances in technology. As U.P.C. pricing and computers are replacing price stickers, consumers receive faster service, but they cannot visually verify each item's price.

Therefore, Weights & Measures officials and merchants must work harder to provide customers with pricing and measuring confidence.

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## Purchasing a Scale for Commercial Use



## Legal Requirements for Small Capacity Scales in Ohio

Trumbull County Auditor's  
Office of Weights & Measures

