

Categories of Supplies based on Usage Levels for Surgical Case Carts

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Categorizing Supplies, based on Usage Levels
is a **critical first step** in designing a Case Cart System.

- minimize costs
- optimize availability

Always Used: supply items that *will be used* with a high degree of probability [within a predetermined %] for use on a particular case, i.e. drapes, prep kit, anesthesia tubing, gowns, and basic instrument set, are usually very predictable.

Routine Supplies: supply items that are required in *highly variable* quantities. For example, the number of lap sponges, 4x4's, needles, and sutures have highly variable usage levels from case to case [within a predetermined %]

Specialty Items: supply items that *might be needed* for a particular case. For example, arterial grafts, orthopedic implants, and intraocular lenses are items for which the surgeon generally cannot specify exactly which item will be used prior to the case. There are also instruments or supplies that might be needed only if the case turns out to be more complicated than expected, i.e. an arthroscopic procedure which turns out to require an open incision.

Supplies should be handled based on their usage level. Establishing Categories of Supplies Based on Usage is critical in optimizing inventory levels and minimizing handling costs.
Each category might require a different supply mechanism.

Example of how categories *might* be applied.

- **Always Used: Case Carts** would be used for supply items that have predictable usage levels and can be categorized as 'Always Used' within a probability that is determined i.e. > 75%.
- **Routine Supplies with highly variable usage levels: Room Cart** maintained in the OR Rooms to provide these supply items. The Cart is for routine items that are used in *quantities that vary significantly*. This Cart would be restocked daily.
- **Specialty Items: Specialty Cart** maintained in the OR to provide these supply items. This Cart is for supply items that *might be used* for specialty surgical procedures, i.e. Nero, Ortho, Vascular. This Cart would be restocked daily.

Double handling:

If Items that 'might' be used are stocked on the Case Cart there will be a high level of returned items that will not be used and must be restocked. This is an unnecessary level of double handling. **Minimizing the Double Handling of supply items is critical in minimizing costs.** The same unnecessary double handling will result when 'Routine Supplies' are stocked on the Case Carts in quantities that will meet the supply level demand of *most* cases. Stocking *at this level* means that there will be a high level of supply items that will not be used and restocked [double handled].

Establishing the optimal Stock Level, per Usage level, per Case Cart... is a delicate balance
Establishing 'Categories' and 'Usage Levels' is critical in designing an efficient Case Cart System. The facility must establish the management parameters, i.e. the '% of usage' that will determine if a supply item is stocked in a Case Cart, Room Cart, or Specialty Cart. The **balance between financial costs and clinical outcomes** can only be determined by the judgment of the clinicians and business managers involved.

With proper planning a Usage Rate of > 90% can be achieved.