

PROACTIVE UPDATE

Ceiling Solutions

Ceilings are taking on a more intentional role in interior design, evolving beyond basic finishes to support acoustics, sustainability goals, and visual interest. From integrated lighting to expressive forms and textures, overhead surfaces are becoming a key design feature.

Designers are seeking ceiling systems that balance solutions that improve sound control, accommodate flexible layouts, and integrate seamlessly with lighting and mechanical systems while supporting healthier, more adaptable spaces.



Ceiling Categories in A+D Lookup

A+D Lookup has 47 manufacturers and 17 rep groups addressing your ceiling needs. To see who offers these products search:

- Ceilings

This structure helps designers quickly locate and compare products across a crowded marketplace.

Noise Reduction Coefficient

For ceilings, NRC (Noise Reduction Coefficient) measures how much sound a material absorbs versus reflects, on a scale of 0 to 1, with higher numbers meaning better sound absorption to reduce echo in spaces like offices, classrooms, and auditoriums. A ceiling tile with an NRC of 0.7, for example, absorbs 70% of sound waves, making the room quieter and clearer for speech.

Key Aspects of NRC for Ceilings:

- **Definition:** An average rating of sound absorption at mid-range frequencies (250, 500, 1000, 2000 Hz).
- **Scale:** Ranges from 0 (no absorption, pure reflection) to 1 (complete absorption).
- **Purpose:** Reduces reverberation (echo) and improves speech intelligibility in a room.
- **Materials:** Soft, porous ceiling tiles (mineral fiber, fiberglass) have higher NRCs than hard surfaces like concrete or drywall, which have low NRCs (e.g., drywall around 0.15).
- **Importance:** Crucial for creating acoustically comfortable environments, especially in open offices, conference rooms, and schools.



Armstrong and USG

Introducing living and natural elements into the workplace is called *biophilic design*, which includes things like *maximizing natural lighting, purifying airflow, and introducing plant life through green walls and gardens*. Think about how getting back into nature makes you feel refreshed, re-energized, and restored – well, that's what designers are trying to introduce into the workplace to balance out the stress, hustle, and bustle of working life.

Key Differences of Armstrong and USG:

- **Brand vs Product:** Armstrong and USG are brands, like Ford and Chevy; they make similar types of cars (ceilings). You compare specific models, like Armstrong's "Dune" tile versus USG's "Radar" tile.
- **Materials:** Both offer mineral fiber, fiberglass, and often wood/metal options, but with unique formulations and designs.
- **Performance:** Armstrong promotes its *BioBlock* for mold/mildew resistance and high light reflection; USG offers various acoustic and fire-rated options.
- **Innovation:** Both innovate; Armstrong has plant-based binders, while USG provides diverse finishes like wood tones and specialty metals.

Ceiling Innovations

Some of the most striking and functional ways to incorporate ceiling innovation designs include:

- **Wood:** *9Wood* is a speedy, custom wood ceiling company that can take your vision and create a warm ceiling.
- **Baffles:** Free-hanging acoustic panels suspended vertically or horizontally from ceilings to absorb sound, reduce echo/reverberation, and improve speech clarity in large, open spaces like offices, lobbies, gyms, and restaurants, offering both aesthetic appeal (patterns, colors) and effective noise control without sacrificing valuable wall space. Made from sound-absorbing materials like fiberglass, foam, or recycled fibers, they work by trapping sound waves, making environments quieter and more comfortable.

