Pre-staging and Rack Test Checklist

SECURE TRANSPORTATION SINCE 1996



Introduction

A successful IT relocation or data centre deployment starts long before equipment reaches site. Pre-staging and rack testing reduce installation risk, minimise downtime, improve first-time fix rates, and ensure your project team has full visibility before go-live.

This checklist is designed to help project managers, infrastructure teams, and deployment leads verify that hardware has been received, inspected, configured, tested, documented, and packed correctly before dispatch.

Use this checklist before:

- Server relocations
- Data centre migrations
- Office IT rollouts
- Multi-site technology deployments
- Rack and stack projects
- UK and European hardware shipments

1. Goods In and Asset Receipt:

Confirm all equipment has been received and booked in correctly before pre-staging begins.

- [ ] Delivery note checked against purchase order or manifest
- [ ] All boxes and pallets visually inspected for external damage
- [ ] Quantity of items confirmed against expected shipment
- [ ] Asset types recorded by category (servers, switches, PDUs, storage, accessories)
- [ ] Serial numbers captured for all relevant items
- [ ] Any shortages, oversupply, or transit damage logged
- [ ] Photos taken of any damaged packaging or suspect items
- [ ] Quarantine area used for damaged or unverified assets
- [ ] Client or vendor informed of discrepancies where required

Notes:

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2. Asset Audit and Identification:

Ensure every asset can be identified, tracked, and reconciled throughout the project.

- [ ] Asset tag applied or verified on each unit
- [ ] Serial number matched to asset register
- [ ] Make and model confirmed
- [ ] Rack position or deployment location assigned
- [ ] Device ownership or project allocation recorded
- [ ] Labels printed clearly and fixed securely
- [ ] Accessory kits matched to parent device where applicable
- [ ] Chain of custody started for all critical equipment

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3. Physical Inspection

Confirm equipment is physically suitable for deployment before any installation or testing begins.

- [ ] Chassis inspected for dents, cracks, missing panels, or broken ports
- [ ] Rails, brackets, ears, bezels, and cage nuts checked
- [ ] Power supplies present and seated correctly
- [ ] Fans and removable modules secure
- [ ] Cables and transceivers present where required
- [ ] No obvious signs of previous use or hidden damage
- [ ] Correct hardware revisions confirmed if applicable
- [ ] Items cleaned and presentation-ready for install

Notes:

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4. Rack and Stack Preparation:

Confirm all items are ready to be racked efficiently and accurately.

- [ ] Rack elevation plan reviewed
- [ ] Correct U positions allocated
- [ ] Weight distribution checked across rack
- [ ] Rail kits fitted or prepared
- [ ] Mounting hardware available and complete
- [ ] Airflow direction checked where relevant
- [ ] Patch panel, switch, and server sequencing confirmed
- [ ] PDU layout checked against power plan
- [ ] Clearances confirmed for front and rear access
- [ ] Labelling convention agreed before rack install

Notes:

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5. Power and Boot Testing

Verify equipment powers on correctly and basic hardware health checks pass.

- [ ] Device powered on successfully
- [ ] PSU redundancy tested where applicable
- [ ] Fans operating normally
- [ ] No hardware fault lights present
- [ ] BIOS / firmware screen accessible
- [ ] RAID or storage controllers visible
- [ ] NICs / interfaces detected
- [ ] Basic health logs reviewed
- [ ] Date and time settings verified if required
- [ ] Any failures logged and isolated for review

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6. Configuration and Firmware Readiness:

Check that equipment is configured or prepared according to project scope.

- [ ] Firmware version checked
- [ ] BIOS version checked
- [ ] Required updates applied or flagged
- [ ] Hostname / asset naming convention applied if required
- [ ] Management IP / console access configured where in scope
- [ ] RAID or storage configuration prepared
- [ ] Network settings loaded where approved
- [ ] Golden image applied where relevant
- [ ] Device returned to agreed handover state after testing

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7. Cabling and Connectivity Check

Ensure all rack and patching requirements are understood and prepared in advance.

- [ ] Power leads checked for type and quantity
- [ ] Patch leads checked for length and colour coding
- [ ] Fibre modules / DACs / transceivers matched correctly
- [ ] Cable labels prepared
- [ ] Port mapping reviewed against design
- [ ] Front and rear cable routes considered
- [ ] Excess cable management planned
- [ ] Any specialist connectors identified in advance

Notes:

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8. Burn-In and Stability Test:

Where required, verify equipment remains stable under controlled runtime conditions.

- [ ] Burn-in test duration agreed
- [ ] Device remained stable throughout test period
- [ ] No unexpected shutdowns or alarms
- [ ] Temperature remained within expected range
- [ ] Performance or health logs reviewed after test
- [ ] Any intermittent issues captured and escalated

Notes:

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9. Documentation and Reporting

Make sure the deployment record is complete and usable for installation and audit.

- [ ] Asset register updated
- [ ] Serial reconciliation completed
- [ ] Rack elevation updated
- [ ] Photos taken of pre-staged rack or individual assets
- [ ] Test results documented
- [ ] Fault log completed if applicable
- [ ] Packing list created for dispatch
- [ ] Client-ready report prepared if required
- [ ] Chain of custody updated before dispatch

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10. Packing for Dispatch:

Confirm the staged equipment is protected and clearly packed for transport.

- [ ] Equipment packed in original packaging or approved protective materials
- [ ] Anti-static protection used where required
- [ ] Shock-sensitive items clearly marked
- [ ] Pallets or cages labelled with project and destination
- [ ] Rack-ready groups packed together logically
- [ ] Loose accessories bagged and labelled
- [ ] Documentation pack attached or enclosed
- [ ] Tamper seals applied where required
- [ ] Photos taken before outbound load

Notes:

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11. Dispatch Readiness

Final release checks before assets leave the pre-staging facility.

- ☐ All checklist sections completed
- ☐ Outstanding issues reviewed and accepted
- ☐ Client approval received where necessary
- ☐ Delivery schedule confirmed
- ☐ Site access time confirmed
- ☐ Vehicle type confirmed
- ☐ Chain of custody handed over to transport team
- ☐ Contact details for receiving site verified

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Final Sign-Off:

Pre-staging completed by:
Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Quality check / supervisor review:
Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Client approval (if required):
Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____