



How to Pick and Install Drawer Slides

Whether you're installing new drawer slides or replacing old ones, Lowe's has all the hardware you need to get it done. Learn about different types of drawer slides including soft-close and self-close styles, as well as different mounting options so you can choose the best option for your drawers

What Are Drawer Slides?

Drawer slides are a type of cabinet hardware that install on to the exterior of a drawer, making it possible to easily slide the drawer open and closed. They're ideal for a variety of drawer types including kitchen drawers, dressers, nightstands, filing cabinets, and other types of furniture.



Cabinet Drawer Types (Framed Versus Frameless)

Before choosing drawer slides, you'll want to know which types of cabinets you're working with, as this can affect installation. Like the name suggests, framed, or face frame, cabinets are designed with frames, which cabinet doors and drawers attach to. Frameless cabinets are built without frames, meaning cabinet doors and drawers fit directly on to the cabinet.

Type of Drawer Slide (Ball Bearing Versus Rolling)

There are two common mechanisms that work to open and close drawer slides. One type is a ball bearing mechanism, which smoothly and quietly opens and closes drawers. Many ball bearing drawer slides feature a lever release, allowing for simple removal of the entire drawer. The other mechanism type is rolling. Rolling drawer slides are typically more affordable than ball bearing. Like ball bearing slides, they also offer smooth operation. However, they usually don't extend as far as ball bearing slides and can't hold as much weight.

Drawer Slide Mounting Type

There are a few different ways to mount drawer slides onto a drawer. Below, we'll discuss the differences of each one. Before installing drawer slides, familiarize yourself with mounting types.

Side Mount

Side mount drawer slides are the most common. This mounting style comes with slides that attach to both the cabinet and the drawer. Side mount drawer slides are visible when a drawer is open.

Drawer Slide Extension Options

Not all drawer slides offer a full extension. There are two other options including $\frac{3}{4}$ extending slides and over-travel extending slides. If it's important for your drawer to fully extend, choose a drawer slide that allows the drawer to completely open, allowing the back contents of the drawer to be visible.

Soft Close Versus Self Close Drawers

There are a few drawer types including soft-close and self-close drawers. Soft-close drawers are designed with a slowing damper that slides smoothly so the drawer closes softly and silently. Self-closing drawer slides are constructed with a mechanism that, when pushed, quickly closes the drawer.

Drawer Slide Length

Not all drawer slides can be extended as fully as others. Full extension drawers make it possible to pull the drawer out completely, allowing for full access to the interior of the drawer. 3/4 extension drawer slides allow for partial access. Some applications, such as office filing cabinets, require full extension drawers. On [Lowes.com](https://www.lowes.com), you can shop for drawer slides by their maximum extended length in inches.

Weight Bearing Capacity

Not all drawer slides are built to bear the same amount of weight. If you're using drawers to store anything other than smaller household items, be sure to check the load capacity of the slides you're purchasing. Common load capacities include 20-lbs., 35-lbs., 75-lbs., and 100-lbs. For heavier items, consider heavy-duty drawer slides designed to support more weight.

Choosing the Right Drawer Slides

If you're replacing old drawer slides, you may not need to take any measurements to choose new slides. When purchasing drawer slides for the first time, make sure to measure the drawers you're purchasing slides for. These measurements should include both the length and the width of the drawer.

How to Install Drawer Slides

Follow the assembly instructions included with your drawer slides for step-by-step instructions. Below are general steps you can follow.

1. Remove the drawer and the existing drawer slides, if applicable, from the interior of the cabinet. Make sure to have a screwdriver on hand for this step.
2. Measure the length and width of the drawer. Drawer slides come in a variety of sizes.
3. Attach the drawer slide on to the cabinet's interior with the screws included. Use a drill to fasten the slide into place. For this step, you may want to use a level to ensure the slide is installed correctly.
4. Attach the drawer slide on to the drawer that will be placed into the cabinet. Use the same process referenced in the step above.
5. Once both parts are installed, put the drawer into place on its tracks and test it by opening and closing it. If installed correctly, the drawer should open and close easily and smoothly.