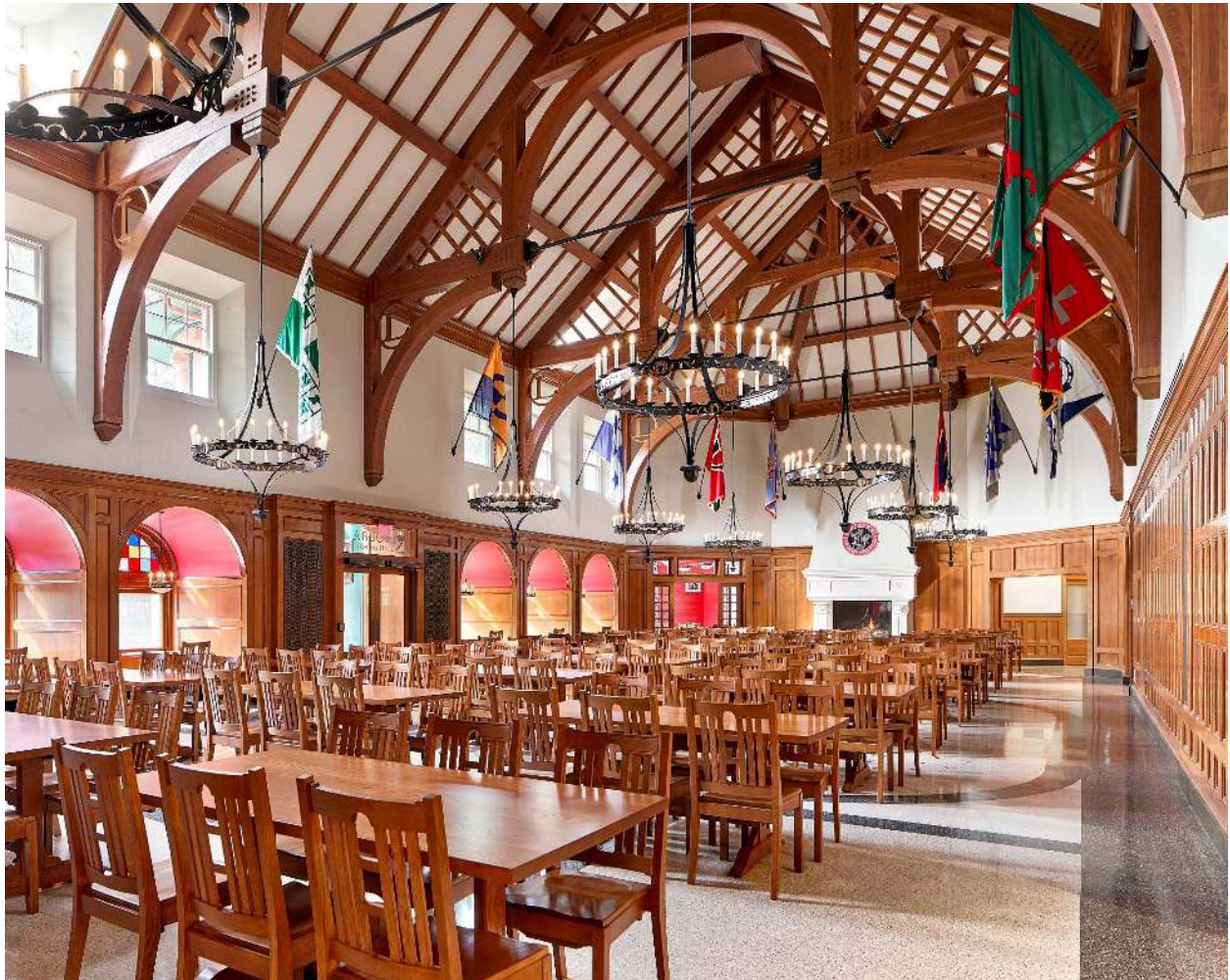


# Social Distancing: A New School Year Presents New Challenges

Advice From a Certified Teacher



As the school year quickly approaches, school districts are in the midst of finalizing their plans for the year. Many schools are being asked to create different classroom arrangements for social distancing. In my local school district, they are looking at classroom arrangements that allow 3 feet of space between students versus 6 feet of space between each student. These are strange times, and suddenly you may find yourself thinking: What are the best classroom arrangements for social distancing?

### **Sample Social Distancing Classroom Arrangements**



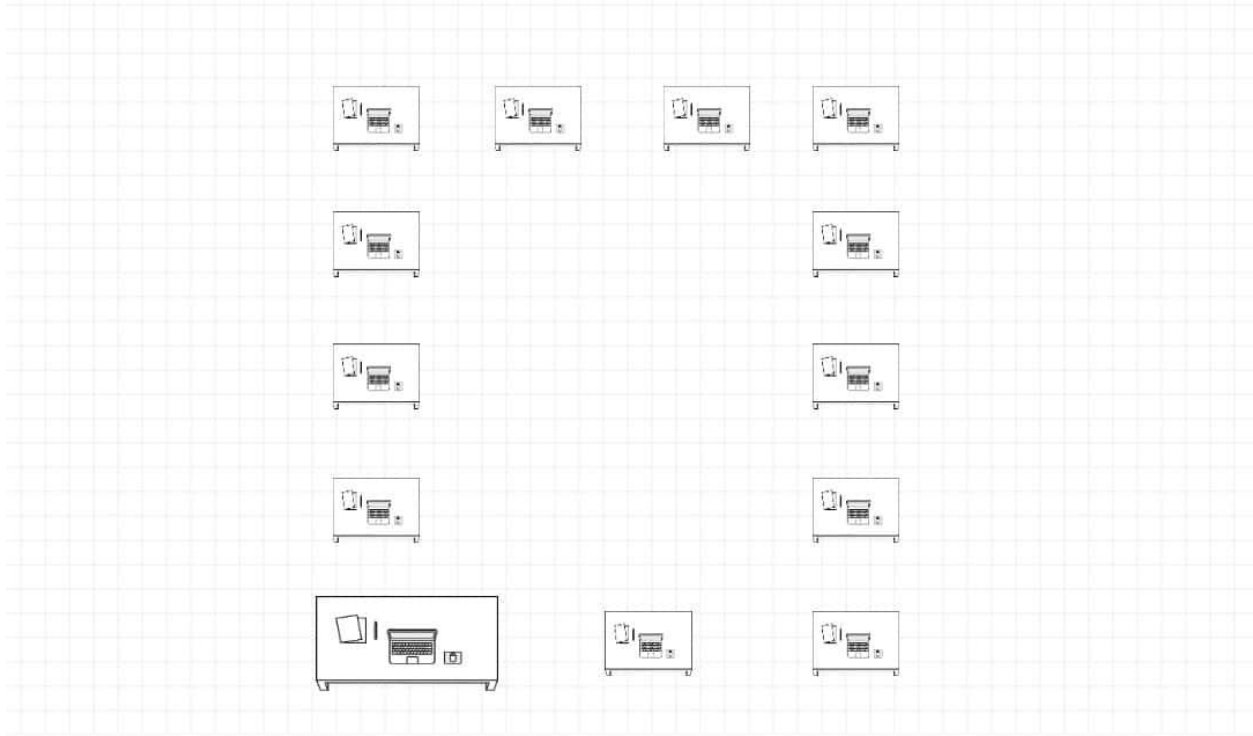
There are many different arrangements for classroom seating with social distancing in place. Classroom seating during social distancing may not be the same as you are used to in the past. Directional walking patterns are one consideration you may have not had to think about before. Directional walking patterns allow for the students to move about the classroom with the maximum amount of space between students.

Classroom Tables may need to have only one or two students at each table versus four to six students that would traditionally sit there. It will take a little more consideration and planning to allow for social distancing of chairs or desks in the classroom. Teachers are problem solvers. You can do it.



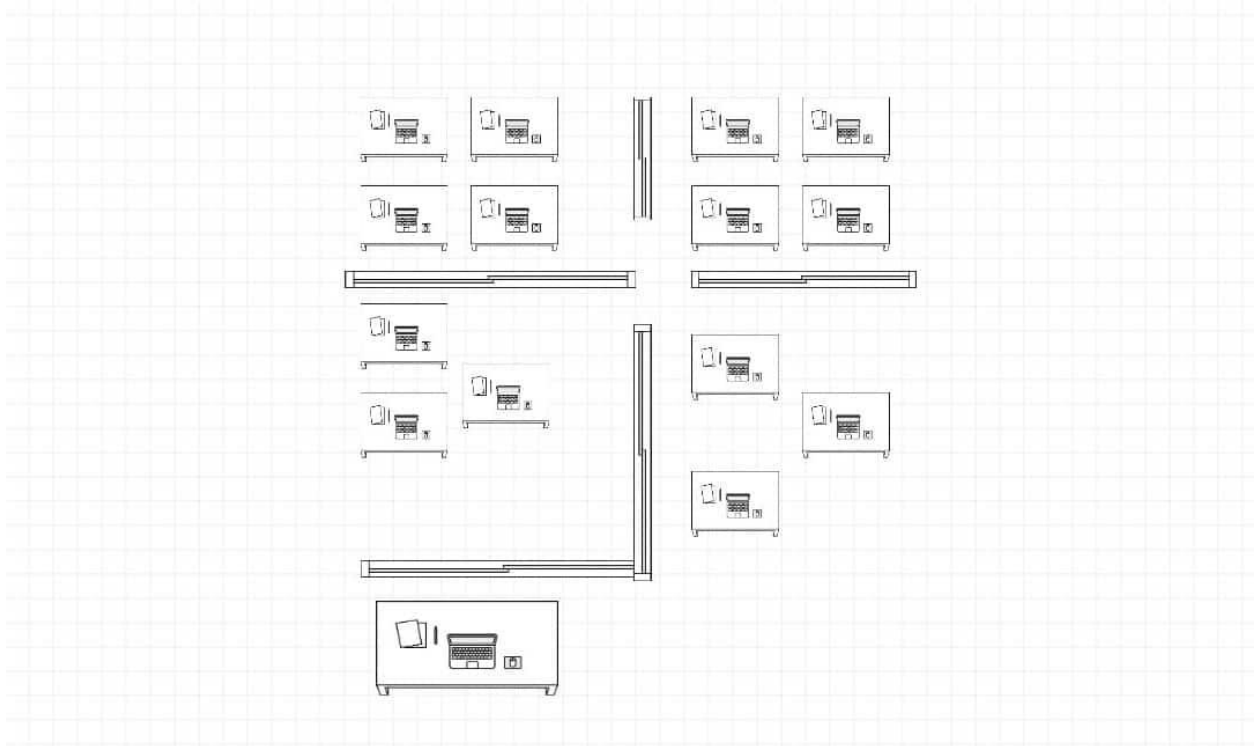
## Social Distancing Models for Classroom Seating

### Teaching in the Round/ Harkness Method:



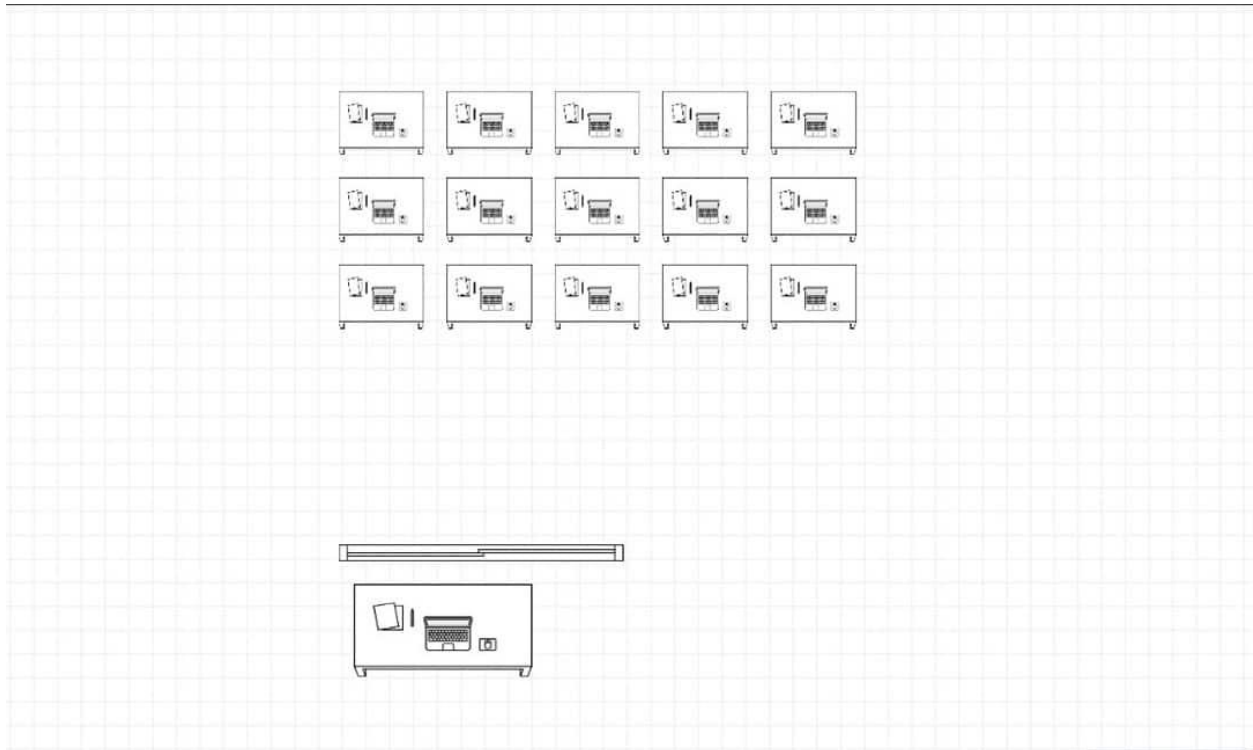
The first classroom arrangement to consider is teaching in the round. If your school has traditionally used the [Harkness](#) method, this is a good alternative to consider for the 2021-2022 school year. In this arrangement, desks (or tables) are set up around the outside of the room. This allows for the class to have open discussions, which are a key feature of the Harkness method. This arrangement works for up to 12 students, which is typical of a [Harkness](#) classroom.

## Pods Arrangement:



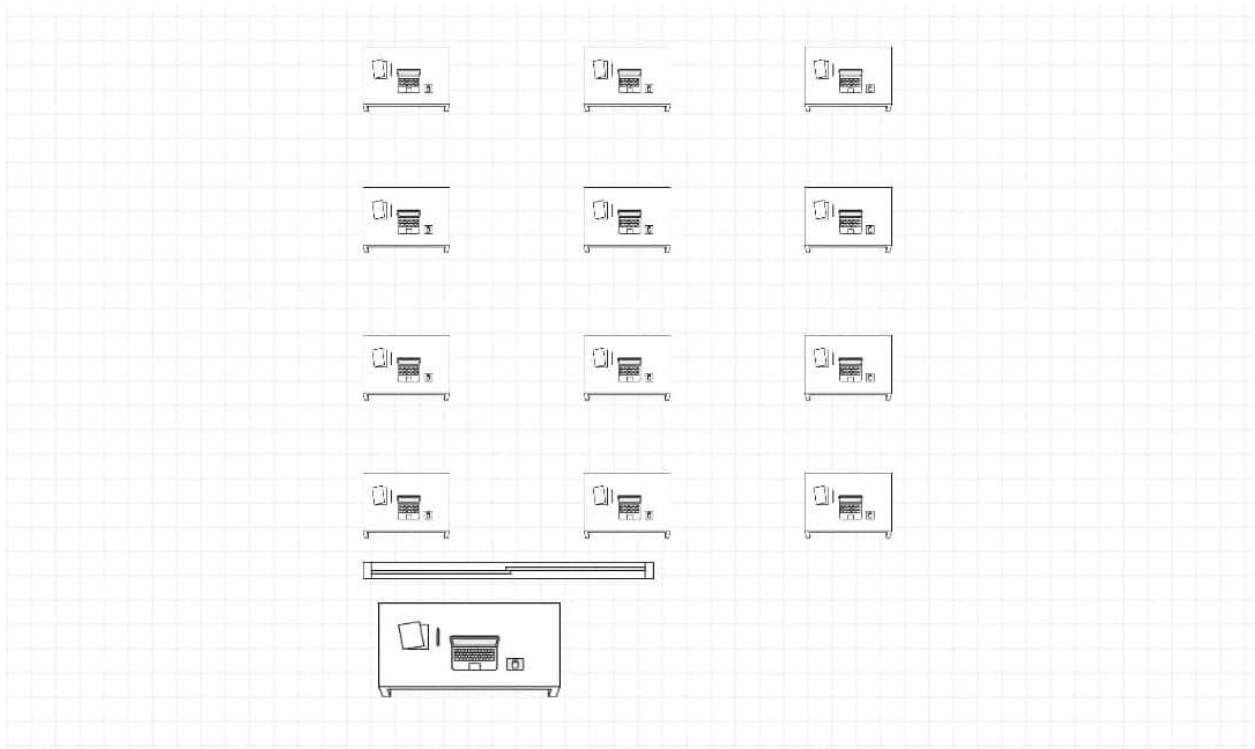
In a pods arrangement, we divide children into pods for the entire school day. Plexiglass dividers are set up between each of the pods and the teachers. This allows the students to work closely with two or three other children, while still maintaining three feet of distance between each other. The children will be able to see and hear their teacher through the Plexiglass. This arrangement works for up to 15 students, depending on classroom size.

## Traditional (Socially Distant) Arrangement:



This is a more traditional classroom arrangement. In this plan, the teacher will teach behind Plexiglass for the school day. The teacher remains at the front of the class. This plan allows for 3 feet of separation between student desks. Students may want to wear masks. If they do not wear masks, you may want to encourage students to stay facing forward the entire day. This arrangement works for 15 students or more, depending on classroom size.

## Traditional Arrangement with Extra Space:



In this arrangement, the teacher remains at the front of the class. The teacher teaches behind a sheet of Plexiglass. The 12 students are evenly spaced 6 feet apart throughout the classroom. Students should be encouraged to stay forward-facing the entire class.

## Stay Up To Date

We encourage you to stay up to date on [CDC guidelines](#) on school reopening and that of your local district. One thing is for

sure, this school year will be different in many ways. Hopefully, we can all work together to make it the best it can be.

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