



Things to Consider when buying a Particle Counter



It's essential to monitor the cleanliness of environments used for the manufacture of critical products, such as cleanrooms used for the production of sterile pharmaceuticals. Particle counters enable continuous monitoring, but they're a significant investment, so it's important to choose the machine that's right for your cleanroom and requirements.

Cherwell offers the [BioAerosol Monitoring System \(BAMS\) particle counter](#). BAMS delivers results in real-time, allowing any cleanroom incursions to be tackled much more quickly than traditional methods such as settle plates, which require an incubation period to deliver their results. BAMS is able to detect both viable particles such as bacteria or fungus and non-viable particles such as dust, and with benefits such as no consumables, continuous operation and low power consumption, it could represent the ideal solution.

Below, you'll find a checklist of things to consider when choosing a particle counter. Answering these questions will help ensure the machine you buy is appropriate, efficient and delivers the results you need.

Particle Counter Specifications

- Is the machine compliant with your cleanroom grade?
- Particle counters such as [Cherwell's BAMS](#) measure both non-viable and viable particles. Does the particle counter distinguish between microorganisms ($\approx 1 \mu\text{m}$) and other non-living particles such as dust?

Portable vs Fixed Particle Counters

- Particle counters can be fixed or portable units.
- Do you need a unit that can easily be moved from one location to another?
- If the particle counter is fixed, will changes to the room be needed for installation?
- How often do batteries have to be replaced, and how much does that cost?

Maintenance, Ease of use and Data

- Will the device withstand cleaning with vapourised hydrogen peroxide (VHP), isopropyl alcohol or disinfectants?
- Is the information the particle counter gathers easy to understand and interpret?
- How is that data presented? Can it be exported? In what formats?
- [BAMS](#) can output data as PDF and Excel files, for example: this can be useful to support data monitoring to understand trends and potential threats.
- How does the particle counter notify of irregularities? Does an alarm sound, or is there an on-screen message, for example? The effectiveness of an alert can impact response time.

Aftersales Support and Training

- Is training available to enable operators to fully understand the instrument and its results.
- Are more training sessions available in future?
- Is there troubleshooting support?
- Is any routine maintenance required? What does this involve?
- Will the particle counter need to be calibrated to maintain accuracy and functionality?
- How is this maintenance undertaken, and how often is it necessary? Downtime could be inconvenient and costly.

Software and Connectivity

- Is software or licencing of software needed for the particle counter?
- Are there any licensing renewal or software update costs?
- How easy is it to update the particle counter's software?
- What are the unit's connectivity and data security capabilities?

Choosing the Right Particle Counter

A particle counter offering fast alerts, convenient data output and with high-quality support can pay for itself in time saved, losses minimised and production efficiency. For more in-depth coverage, take a look at our [related blog post](#) of things to consider when buying a particle counter.

You can also find more information on Cherwell's continuous, real-time particle counter on our [BAMS page](#).

If you'd like more details of our extensive range of products and services, contact us on +44 (0) 1869 355 500.

7 & 8 Launton Business Centre,
Murdock Road, Bicester, OX26 4XB,
United Kingdom.

T: +44 (0)1869 355500
W: www.cherwell-labs.co.uk
E: sales@cherwell-labs.co.uk