

8 Tips When Planning Interlocking Door Systems



Compact, economical PLC Interlocks such as our Dortronics 48500 series are perfect solutions for smaller door interlock and mantrap systems of up to 5 doors. Larger interlock systems are also available, over 100 doors if needed, and can be equipped with all manner of entrance credentials, from access cards and keypads to sophisticated touchless biometric identity devices. These systems provide installers and integrators complete control of all operating and configuration options, and they support popular options including traffic lights, forced door alarms, and integration with third-party identity management and access control systems.

If you are thinking about implementing an interlocked door system, here are some tips to help you during the planning phase. Proper pre-planning will help ensure that when the project is complete, your installation will be effective, safe, and will meet your needs. And if you need assistance, just reach out to us, and we will be happy to help!

- 1. Clarify and confirm the challenge to be solved with an interlocked door system.** Is it for people or vehicles? Is it a facility perimeter entrance, or an internal control for a particularly sensitive area? Will it be staffed, monitored with video, or unstaffed? And how high is the security level to be achieved? Having a clear goal in mind will make the rest of the decisions easier.
- 2. Think about your entire facility security plan, not just one potential interlocked location.** Strengthening one entrance, for example, but leaving others relatively unprotected could just move problems to another place. By considering the entire security situation, you are more likely to make overall improvements.

3. Evaluate entry and egress points to locate those that require higher levels of security. For example, unstaffed employee entrances and IT rooms are often good candidates for increased security systems in business facilities. Areas of public access, such as retail stores and banks, can usually benefit by strengthening security in particularly sensitive areas. Typical examples include access to safe deposit boxes, high-ticket merchandise such as gemstones and jewelry, and similar situations. Add in casinos, armored car facilities, pharmaceutical and manufacturing clean rooms.



4. Be sure to include consideration for vehicles as well as pedestrian doors. Sallyport interlocks are available for vehicles including cars, trucks, and even buses. If you have a need for secured deliveries or transportation, consider designing in size limitations that can route appropriate vehicles in support of secure passage, while including physical barrier protections to stop unauthorized vehicle entry.



5. Determine required average throughput for all controlled entry/egress points, as well as the peak traffic levels that can occur at specific times of day. Shift changes in factories, standard office work hours, and school session timing, are all examples of situations that create traffic peaks.

6. In a separate exercise from determining the average and peak traffic levels, evaluate all applicable life safety requirements for secure access areas to ensure compliance for emergency egress.

7. In some circumstances, access interlocks can be designed to accommodate groups of people entering a facility or secured area. For example, this may apply as a tool for controlling group access to museums or theatres, or for tours of secure facilities.

8. Armed with your goals and preliminary evaluations, you are ready to work with the right integrating contractor. Choose an integrator that has abundant experience sizing, planning, installing, and maintaining interlock systems, and make sure they use equipment from reputable, experienced manufacturers. Your security depends on these selections!



Dortronics is an industry leader in standard and custom access control products and locking hardware devices. Contact us, we can help you find the right Dortronics interlock controller to meet your needs!