

# HOW DO I SET UP MY CLASSROOM?

## A quick guide for teachers

Teachers are encouraged to work with administrators and other school staff (e.g., custodians or janitors) to modify the layout of their classroom in a way that promotes healthy behaviors, environments, and operations that reduce the risk of COVID-19. As outlined in [CDC's Considerations for Schools](#), these modifications could include:

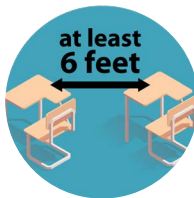
- spacing seating/desks at least 6 feet apart when feasible;
- turning desks to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other), or having students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart; and
- modifying learning stations and activities as applicable so there are fewer students per group, placed at least 6 feet apart if possible.



This guide provides you with an overview of **15 things you can do to modify your classroom** and **5 sample layouts for your classroom**. As you consider how to modify the layout of your classroom, be sure to work with your school administrators and custodial staff. For example, you might ask them if it is possible to add, remove, or change classroom furniture, if there is a budget for purchasing physical barriers, or if there are any restrictions to modifying your classroom (e.g., adding tape to the floors).

## 15 things you can do to modify your classroom

1. **Space students at least 6 feet apart**, when possible. Have students sit in the same assigned seat every day. Consider working with administrators and teachers to standardize seating charts across classes.



2. **Turn desks to face the same direction (rather than facing each other), or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart.** Students can be instructed to avoid spinning or turning around in their chairs.
3. **Modify learning stations and activities** so that there are fewer students per group and students can be at least 6 feet apart, if possible. When it is difficult to space students at least 6 feet apart, use physical barriers, such as a sneeze guard or partition.
4. **Mark "X's" on tables** to keep at least 6 feet of distance between students, when possible, using colorful tape. Explain to students that they should not sit in "X" zones.

5. **Mark walking paths** or provide physical guides, such as colorful tape on floors and signs on walls, to ensure that students remain at least 6 feet apart, where possible. Consider making these paths one way for students when entering and exiting the classroom making sure walking paths still comply with emergency exit procedures. If students need to move around the classroom (e.g., to sharpen their pencil or dispose of trash), remind students to stay at least 6 feet apart—or two airplane arms or the length of a bike apart. Encourage students to only walk on the taped lines, and ensure that paths are accessible for students and staff with disabilities.



6. **If you do not already have a handwashing station in your classroom, set up at least one or two hand sanitizing stations**, such as one near the door and one by your desk. Use posters near each station to remind students to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or, if soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, and wash with soap and water as soon as you can. If using hand sanitizer, rub hands together for at least 20 seconds. Remember, young children should be supervised when using hand sanitizer.



**7. Teach and model healthy hygiene behaviors by creating hand hygiene routines and procedures.**

Collaborate with your school and district leaders to obtain adequate supplies, including soap and water, when possible, and/or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, masks (as feasible) and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans.



**8. Identify where you will store your cleaning and disinfecting supplies.**

Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing products securely away from children.



**9. Mark a “teacher zone”** by providing physical guides, such as colorful tape on floors and signs on walls, to ensure that you can remain at least 6 feet apart from students while at your desk and in your teaching space. Explain to students that they should not enter the “teacher zone”.



**10. If unable to maintain social distancing, check with school administrators and staff about installing a physical barrier on your desk,** such as a sneeze guard or partition.



**11. Open a door or windows** to increase ventilation, when weather conditions allow and with approval by school administrators, to increase fresh outdoor air. Opening interior doors can also improve ventilation and reduce touching of the doorknob. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma attacks).



**12. Use fans** to increase the effectiveness of open windows. Position fans securely and carefully in or near windows so as not to push potentially contaminated air directly from one person over or to another.



**13. Reduce the use of shared space and objects in the classroom.** Keep each student’s belongings separated from others’ and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas. Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (e.g., assigning each student their own art supplies, equipment, optimizing educational technology to limit shared paper materials) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and [clean and disinfect](#) between use.



**14. Post signs** in your classroom that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs, such as by properly wearing a mask, properly washing hands, and covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue. CDC has several [child-friendly print posters](#) you can use.



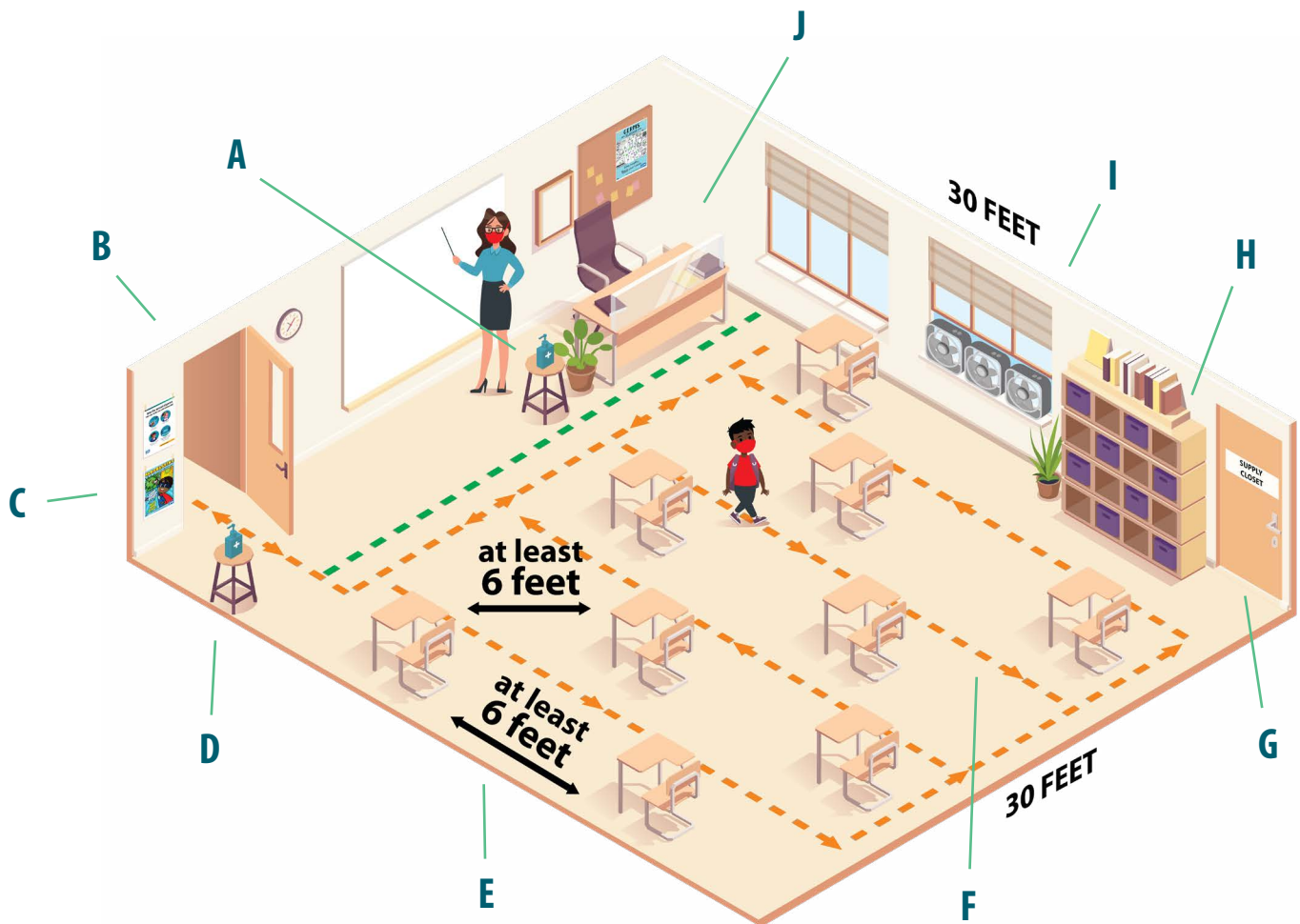
**15. Add videos and activities about reducing the spread of COVID-19 into your curriculum.** Use materials that are accessible for all your students, including those with disabilities. CDC has some [short informational videos](#) you can use. For younger students, consider art materials and other creative outlets to help them understand why mitigation strategies are important. For older age groups, consider lesson plans about COVID-19 symptoms and ways to decrease spread of the virus. Consider ways to encourage students to participate in classroom mitigation measures to protect themselves and their classmates (e.g., positive reinforcement, incentives).

## 5 sample layouts for your classroom

Five sample layouts are provided to show how to use “15 things you can do to modify your classroom” to modify the layout of your classroom to promote healthy behaviors, environments, and operations that reduce risk of COVID-19. These layouts are based on a 900 square foot classroom (30' x 30') and are meant to help you think about some of the possibilities for your classroom. Your classroom might be larger or smaller than is depicted in these layouts, or you might need to accommodate more students. We encourage you to work with your school administrator to create an arrangement tailored for your classroom that keeps these suggested features in mind.

### Map A

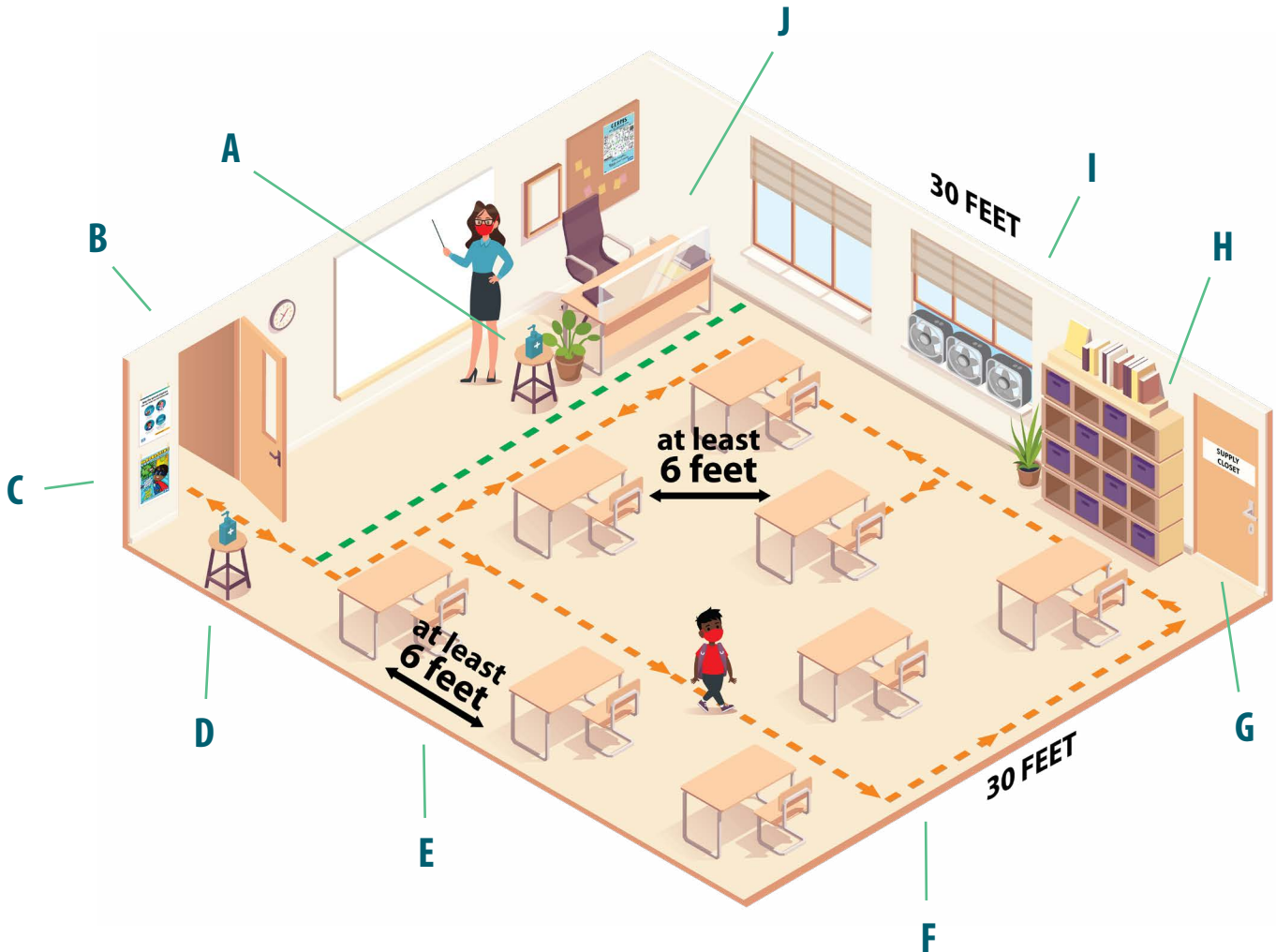
This map illustrates how to set up a classroom with student desks with attached chairs. This classroom seats nine students and allows for student desks to be spaced out at least 6 feet apart and turned to face the same direction. Other modifications are added to minimize the risk of spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.



- A. A hand sanitizing station is set up near the teacher's desk.
- B. The door is open to increase ventilation and to avoid touching the doorknob.
- C. Signs are posted in the classroom that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs.
- D. A hand sanitizing station is set up near the door.
- E. All desks are spaced out at least 6 feet apart and turned to face the same direction.
- F. Walking paths are marked with tape on the floor.
- G. A locked supply cabinet is used to store cleaning and disinfecting supplies.
- H. Each student's belongings are separated from others' in individual cubbies.
- I. The windows are open to increase ventilation, as feasible.
- J. A "teacher zone" is marked around the teacher's desk and in the front of the room. Green tape is used as a physical guide to mark this space. A physical barrier is installed on the teacher desk.

## Map B

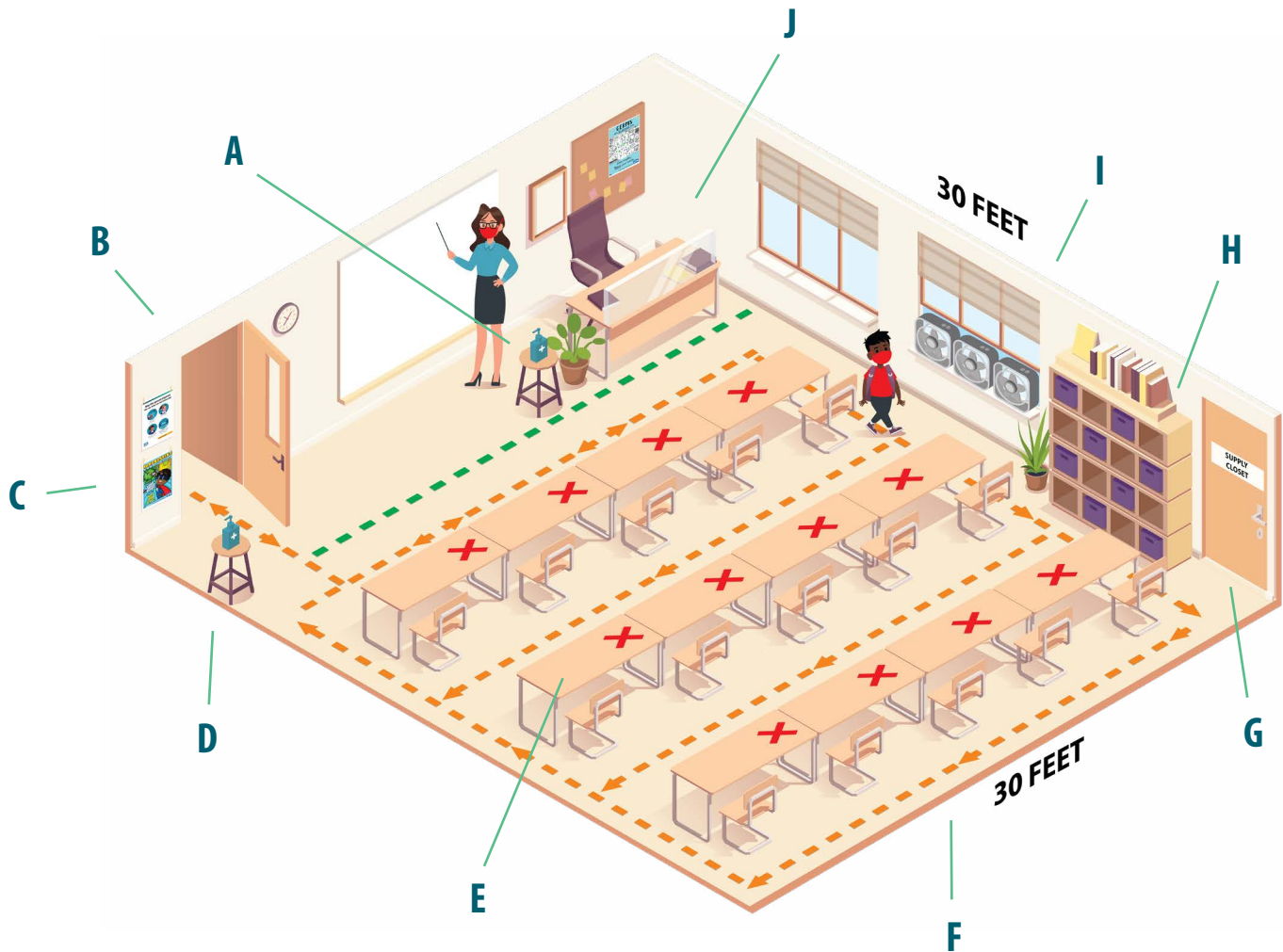
This map illustrates how to set up a classroom with 4' tables (24" x 60"). This 900-square foot interior classroom seats eight students. This layout allows for student desks to be spaced out at least 6 feet apart and with chairs turned to face the same direction. Other modifications are added to minimize the risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19.



- A. A hand sanitizing station is set up near the teacher's desk.
- B. The door is open to increase ventilation and to avoid touching the doorknob.
- C. Signs are posted in the classroom that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs.
- D. A hand sanitizing station is set up near the door.
- E. All desks are spaced out at least 6 feet apart and turned to face the same direction.
- F. Walking paths are marked with tape on the floor.
- G. A locked supply cabinet is used to store cleaning and disinfecting supplies.
- H. Each student's belongings are separated from others' in individual cubbies.
- I. The windows are open to increase ventilation, as feasible.
- J. A "teacher zone" is marked around the teacher's desk and in the front of the room. Green tape is used as a physical guide to mark this space. A physical barrier is installed on the teacher desk.

## Map C

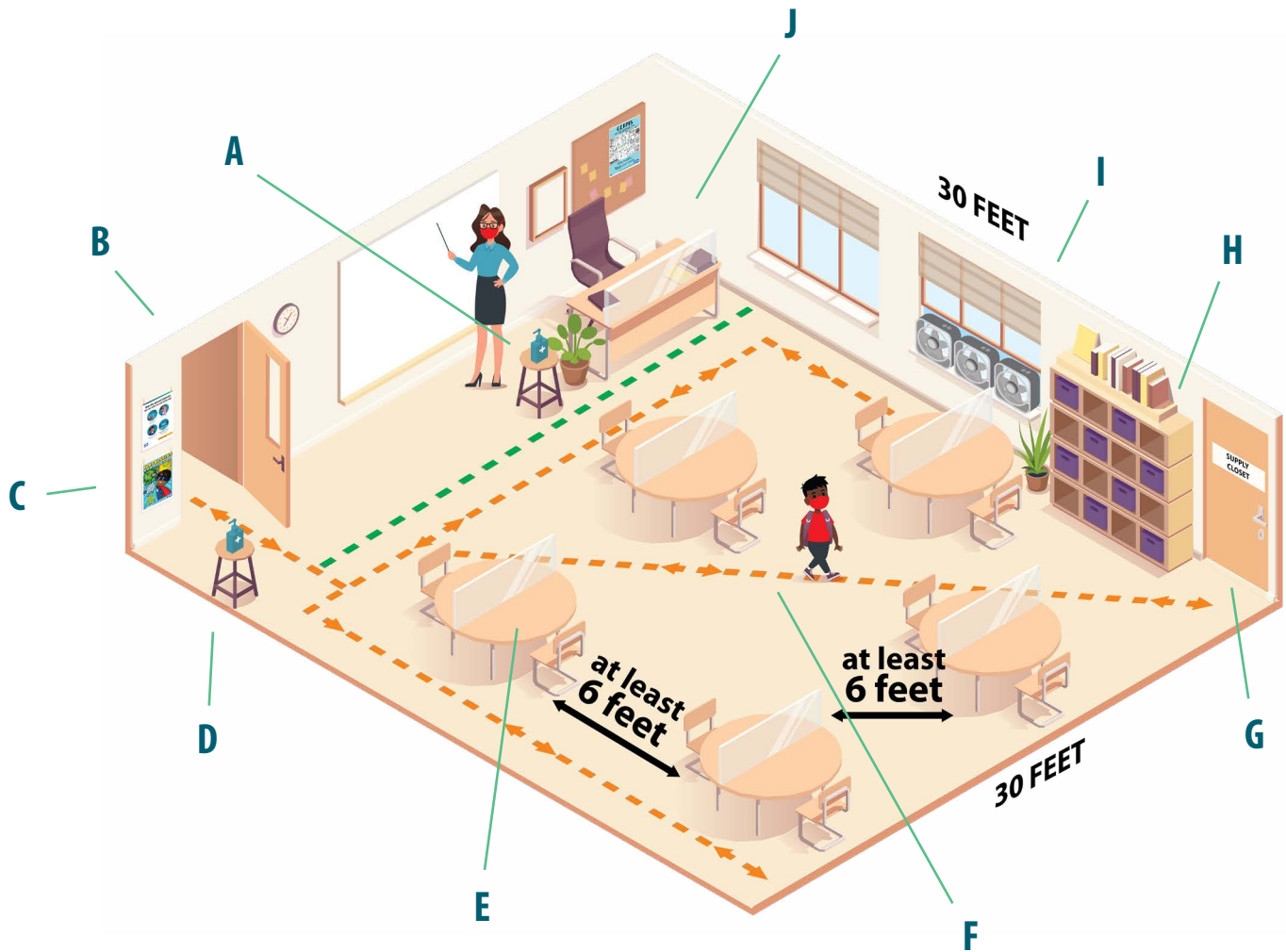
This map illustrates how to set up a classroom with 6' tables (24" x 72"). This 900-square foot classroom seats 15 students. Although chairs are turned to face the same direction, this layout **does not allow** for student seating to be spaced out at least 6 feet apart. When it is not possible to space seating out at least 6 feet apart, additional mitigation strategies can be used to minimize the risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19. Mitigations could include mandatory correct and consistent use of masks and installing physical barriers, such as a sneeze guard or partition. Another option is to mark "X's" on tables to keep at least 6 feet of distance between students using colorful tape. A physical barrier is installed on the teacher desk.



- A. A hand sanitizing station is set up near the teacher's desk.
- B. The door is open to increase ventilation and to avoid touching the doorknob.
- C. Signs are posted in the classroom that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs.
- D. A hand sanitizing station is set up near the door.
- E. A modified layout can be used with long tables. Mark "X's" on tables to keep at least 6 feet of distance between students using colorful tape. Explain to students that they should not sit in "X" zones.
- F. Walking paths are marked with tape on the floor.
- G. A locked supply cabinet is used to store cleaning and disinfecting supplies.
- H. Each student's belongings are separated from others' in individual cubbies.
- I. The windows are open to increase ventilation, as feasible.
- J. A "teacher zone" is marked around the teacher's desk and in the front of the room. Green tape is used as a physical guide to mark this space. A physical barrier is installed on the teacher desk.

## Map D

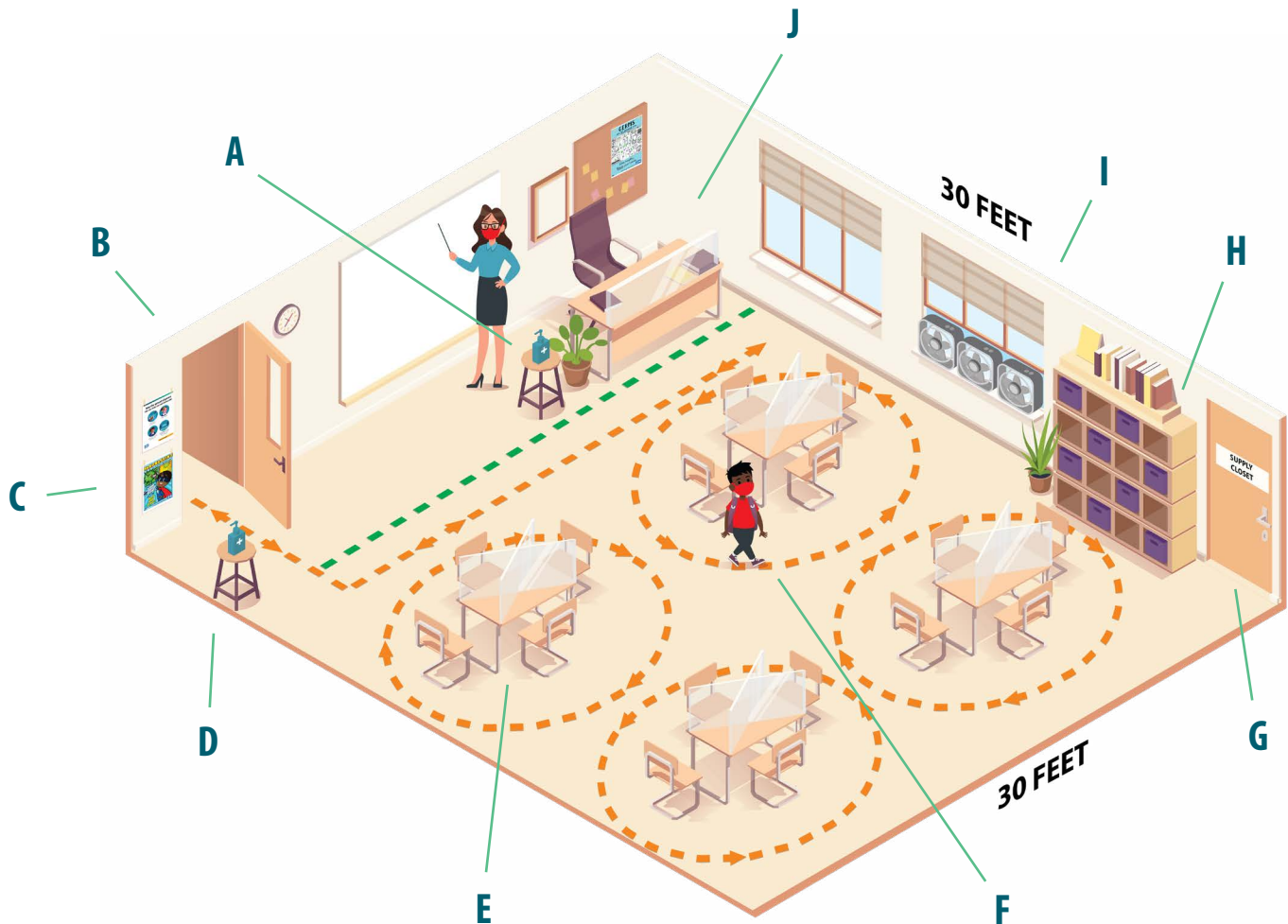
This map illustrates how to set up a classroom with 6' round tables. This 900-square foot exterior classroom seats 10 students and one teacher. This layout **does not allow** for student seating/desks to be spaced out at least 6 feet apart or for chairs to be turned to face the same direction. When round tables are used, a modified layout can be used to minimize the risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19. Modifications could include reducing the number of students per group, mandatory correct and consistent use of masks and installing physical barriers, such as a sneeze guard or partition.



- A. A hand sanitizing station is set up near the teacher's desk.
- B. The door is open to increase ventilation and to avoid touching the doorknob.
- C. Signs are posted in the classroom that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs.
- D. A hand sanitizing station is set up near the door.
- E. A modified layout can be used with round tables. Reduce the number of students per group, placed six feet apart, if possible. When it is difficult to space students six feet apart or if chairs face each other, install physical barriers, such as sneeze guard or partition.
- F. Walking paths are marked with tape on the floor.
- G. A locked supply cabinet is used to store cleaning and disinfecting supplies.
- H. Each student's belongings are separated from others' in individual cubbies.
- I. The windows are open to increase ventilation, as feasible.
- J. A "teacher zone" is marked around the teacher's desk and in the front of the room. Green tape is used as a physical guide to mark this space. A physical barrier is installed on the teacher desk.

## Map E

This map illustrates how to set up a classroom with 4' rectangular tables (24" x 60"). This layout **does not allow** for student seating/desks to be spaced out at least 6 feet apart or for chairs to be turned to face the same direction. Because this classroom is limited to four rectangular tables to seat all students, a modified layout can be used to minimize the risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19 if there are no other available learning spaces within the school or community. Modifications could include reducing the number of students per group, mandatory correct and consistent use of masks and installing physical barriers, such as a sneeze guard or partition. If four students are seated at the same table, consider having students sit on all sides of the table instead of two on each side. Although students are facing each other, it creates a physical separation.



- A. A hand sanitizing station is set up near the teacher's desk.
- B. The door is open to increase ventilation and to avoid touching the doorknob.
- C. Signs are posted in the classroom that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs.
- D. A hand sanitizing station is set up near the door.
- E. A modified layout can be used with tables. Reduce the number of students per group, placed six feet apart, if possible. When it is difficult to space students six feet apart or if chairs face each other, install physical barriers, such as sneeze guard or partition.
- F. One-directional walking paths are marked with tape on the floor.
- G. A locked supply cabinet is used to store cleaning and disinfecting supplies.
- H. Each student's belongings are separated from others' in individual cubbies.
- I. The windows are open to increase ventilation, as feasible.
- J. A "teacher zone" is marked around the teacher's desk and in the front of the room. Green tape is used as a physical guide to mark this space. A physical barrier is installed on the teacher desk.