

Definitions

Barrier

An upright panel intended to prevent a user from falling. The vertical height of barriers should be a minimum of 700mm above the platform or standing surface.

Guardrail

A horizontal rail intended to prevent a user from falling. Guardrails measure between 600-850mm above the platform or standing surface.

Handrail

A rail intended to assist the user to balance. The diameter of handrails should measure no more than 60mm to provide a comfortable grip.



Requirements

All Age Settings

- For easily accessible equipment, a barrier must be installed on platforms measuring more than 600mm above ground level.
- For not easily accessible equipment, a guardrail or barrier is required for platforms 1000-2000mm above ground level. Barriers are required for platforms more than 2000mm above ground level.
- A single handrail is required 600-900mm above the foot position. Two or more handrails may be provided as long as the upper handrail is 600-900mm above the foot position and spacing between handrails does not introduce entrapment hazards.

Supervised Early Childhood Settings

- A barrier is required for platforms more than 600mm above ground level.
- A single handrail is required 450-700mm above the foot position. Two or more handrails may be provided as long as the spacing between handrails does not introduce entrapment hazards.

Barriers

- Openings must not present a head and neck entrapment hazard. Any opening 600mm or more above surface level must be smaller than 89mm or larger than 230mm.
- Must be designed to prevent users gaining a foothold which may assist them to climb onto the top rail. Any horizontal rails should be replaced with either vertical infill panels or solid panels.
- When constructed of timber, reduce openings between pickets to less than 75mm to allow for warping and shrinkage.
- Include some transparency such as a plastic bubble to assist with supervision.



Inspections and Maintenance

AS 4685.0:2017 requires routine maintenance checks to be conducted on a regular basis.

For example:

- Check regularly for loose or missing barriers, guardrails and handrails.
- If the barrier has been damaged or has parts missing, check that head and neck entrapment hazards are not introduced with repair works (openings between 89-230mm).
- Tighten bolts on a regular basis.
- Check for rust and corrosion on metal components.
- Check for deterioration and rotting of timber components. Timber requires regular sealing.



Unintended Access

Care must be taken in the design of play equipment to ensure components do not contain horizontal or near horizontal rails or bars that may be used as steps for climbing.

The design of barriers should discourage children from standing or sitting on them and not contain openings that provide hand or foot holds that may encourage climbing.

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Need more help? Kidsafe SA provides a playground inspection service. Contact us for a quote to organise an inspector to visit your playspace and provide specific advice.