

Consumer Product Safety Commission

Public Playground Safety Checklist

CPSC Document #327

Is your public playground a safe place to play?

Each year, more than 200,000 children go to U.S. hospital emergency rooms with injuries associated with playground equipment. Most injuries occur when a child falls from the equipment onto the ground.

Use this simple checklist to help make sure your local community or school playground is a safe place to play.

Public Playground Safety Checklist

- 1. Make sure surfaces around playground equipment have at least 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand, or pea gravel, or are mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like materials.**
- 2. Check that protective surfacing extends at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment. For swings, be sure surfacing extends, in back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar.**
- 3. Make sure play structures more than 30 inches high are spaced at least 9 feet apart.**
- 4. Check for dangerous hardware, like open "S" hooks or protruding bolt ends.**
- 5. Make sure spaces that could trap children, such as openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs, measure less than 3.5 inches or more than 9 inches.**
- 6. Check for sharp points or edges in equipment.**
- 7. Look out for tripping hazards, like exposed concrete footings, tree stumps, and rocks.**
- 8. Make sure elevated surfaces, like platforms and ramps, have guardrails to prevent falls.**
- 9. Check playgrounds regularly to see that equipment and surfacing are in good condition.**
- 10. Carefully supervise children on playgrounds to make sure they're safe.**