

Gross Motor Equipment Information Sheet

Safety Area	Requirements																												
Resilient Surfacing	The surface under and around playground equipment should be soft enough to cushion a fall. This minimal requirement of surfacing increases with the height of equipment. There are three categories of gross motor equipment to consider when determining the amount and type of resilient surfacing required:																												
Category 1	Equipment that has an elevation of 12 inches or less can be on grass or another type of cushioning material. Consider safety factors if on hard surface such as concrete or asphalt.																												
Category 2	Equipment that has an elevation over 12 inches, but is not intended for climbing, can be on cushioning material that may not necessarily meet the depth of 6 inches. It is a safety factor if on grass or hard surface.																												
Category 3	Equipment that is intended for climbing must be on an appropriate and adequate resilient surface.																												
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Use Zone for Stationary Equipment	A use zone is the area under and around the playground equipment where a child might fall. A use zone should be covered with the required depth of protective surfacing that extends a minimum of 6 feet in all directions.																												
Use Zone for Swings	A use zone for swings should be covered with 6 inches of surfacing and extend the required length as detailed below.																												
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*Preschool children should not use swings over 8' high																													
Protrusion and Entanglement Hazards	A protrusion hazard is a component or piece of hardware that might be capable of impaling or cutting a child if a child should fall against the projection. Some protrusions are capable of catching strings or clothing worn around a child's neck. This type of entanglement could result in strangulation. No protruding bolt ends, narrow gaps in metal, open s hooks on swings, exposed hardware, etc.																												
Entrapment Hazards	Children often enter openings feet first and attempt to slide through the openings. If the opening is not large enough it may allow the body to pass through the opening and entrap the head. Generally, there should be no openings that measure between 3 ½ -9 inches .																												
Equipment Spacing	Proper equipment spacing allows room for children to circulate and prevents the possibility of a child falling off one structure and striking another structure. Spacing requirements for equipment over 30 inches: 9 feet Spacing requirements for equipment 30 inches and under: 6 feet (use zone)																												
Trip Hazards	Trip hazards are created by play structure components or items on the playground.																												

Standards and information for the Tennessee Playground Information Sheet are derived from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSA Document 325) and the Dirty Dozen Checklist published by the National Recreation and Park Association and the National Playground Safety Institute. The sheet is not intended to be a complete list of all hazard types. For a more detailed safety assessment, providers may contact a NPSI certified playground consultant or the local Child Care Resource Center Technical Assistance Unit.

