

Outdoor Home Playground Safety Checklist

Use this to help make your home playground a safe place to play!

Supervision	Be sure to always supervise children on play equipment.
Surfacing	<p>Install a protective surface under and around play equipment to reduce the likelihood of serious head injuries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For most play equipment, install protective surfacing 6 feet in all directions beyond the equipment.• For swings, extend protective surfacing in front and back of the swing to a distance that is twice the height of the bar from which the swing is suspended.• For tire swings, install protective surfacing outward from the swing equal to the suspension chain plus 6 feet.
Types of Surfacing	<p>Carpeting and thin mats are not adequate as protective surfacing. Maintain at least 9 inches of loose-fill material (see page 6) or use an ASTM F1292 rated material at the depth required for the equipment height.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use wood mulch/chips, shredded rubber mulch, or engineered wood fiber for equipment up to 8 feet high;• Use sand, pea gravel, or mulch products listed above for play equipment up to 5 feet high; or• Use surface mats tested to provide impact protection equal to or greater than the height of the play equipment.
Equipment Maintenance	Periodically check nuts, bolts, caps, swing seats, suspension ropes, chains, and cables and replace as necessary. Maintain loose-fill surfacing and surface mats.
Opening	Eliminate openings that can trap a child's head or neck, such as openings in guardrails or ladders. Openings should be smaller than 3½ inches to prevent entry of a small child's body, or larger than 9 inches to allow a child's head and body to slide completely through.
Ropes	Never attach jump ropes, clotheslines, pet leashes, or cords of any kind to play equipment. Anchor any climbing ropes at both ends. Remove drawstrings from children's clothes. Children can strangle on these.
Anchors	Bury or cover anchors with adequate surfacing material to prevent tripping. Play equipment should not tip over.
Guardrails or Barriers	Make sure that platforms and ramps over 30 inches high have guardrails or barriers to prevent falls.
Repair	Repair sharp points or edges on equipment that can cause injuries.
Upkeep of Hardware	Replace missing hardware, eliminate protruding bolts, and close "S" hooks that can cause injuries.