

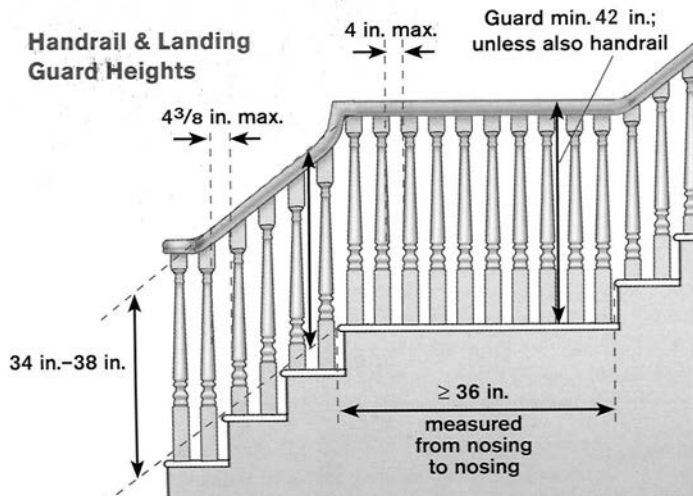
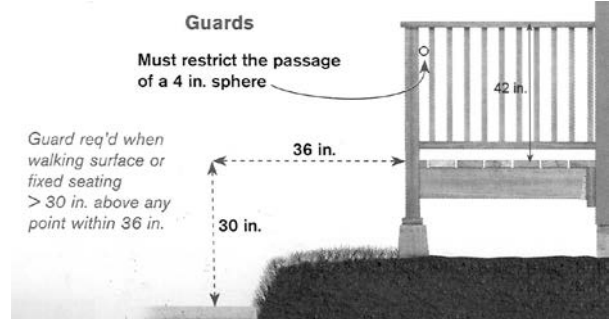
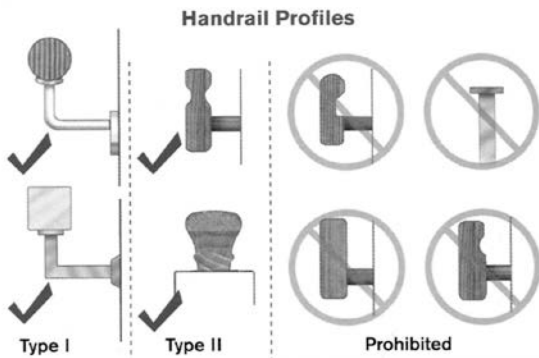
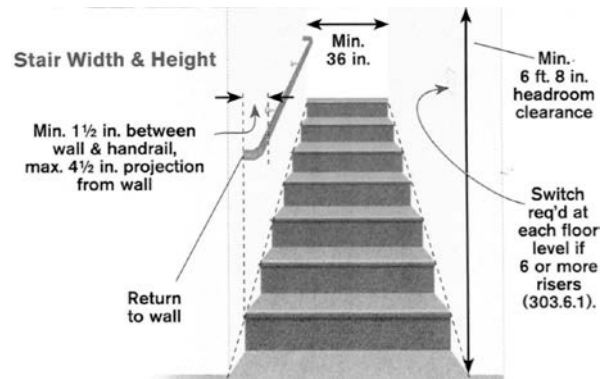
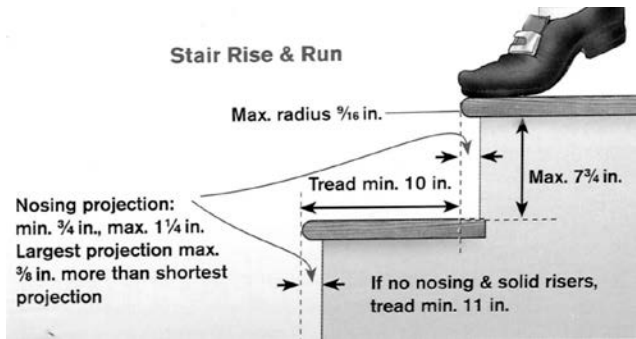
Stairways, Handrails, and Guardrails

General New Construction Requirements

For maximum safety, staircases with four or more steps (or risers) should have handrails that are between one and a quarter and two inches wide and shaped so the handrail can be readily grasped. Handrails should be 34 to 38 inches above the leading edge of the stairway tread and should return to the railing, post, or floor without open ends, which could catch clothing.

Modern standards call for openings fewer than four inches in diameter as it has been found that any young children can easily slip through larger openings. Guardrails should be at least 42 inches high at every deck, stair, or landing more than 30 inches above an adjacent surface.

Individual steps in staircases should have a consistent height and depth for safe use. The difference between one step and any other step in the same staircase should not be more than three-eighths inch. Uneven steps are a potential trip hazard and should be corrected.



Provided for informational use only. Home inspectors are not code officials.

Consult your local building department for current requirements.

Illustrations courtesy of CodeCheck©. See more at www.codecheck.com