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## RESIDENTIAL STAIRWAY AND GUARDRAIL INFORMATIONAL HANDOUT

### Width

Stairways shall not be less than 36 inches wide. The handrail may enter a maximum of 4-1/2 inches into this dimension. If placing two handrails on a stairway, maintain a minimum of 27 inches.

### Dimensional tolerances

The largest tread depth or riser height within any stairway shall not exceed the smallest by more than 3/8 inch.

### Risers

Open risers are permitted, provided that the opening between treads does not exceed 4 inches. This does not apply if less than 30 inches above floor or grade.

### Headroom

Every stairway shall have a headroom clearance of not less than 6 feet 8 inches. The minimum headroom in all parts of the stairway may not be less than 6 feet 8 inches. This is measured vertically from the sloped plane adjoining the tread nosings or from the floor surface of the landings.

### Handrails

**Required at four or more risers.**

The top shall be placed not less than 34 inches, nor more than 38 inches, above the nosing of the treads. Ends shall be returned or terminated in newel posts or safety terminals.

All required handrails shall be continuous for the full length of the stairs from a point directly above the top riser of the flight to a point directly above the lowest riser of the flight.

### Exceptions:

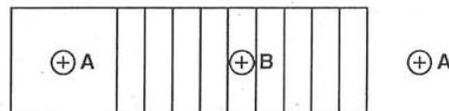
1. Handrails may be interrupted by a newel post at a turn
2. A volute, turnout or newel post is allowed over the lowest tread.

The outside diameter of a circular handrail may be no less than 1-1/4 inches and no greater than 2 inches. A non circular must have a perimeter dimension of at least 4 inches and no greater than 6-1/4 inches. The maximum cross section is 2-1/4 inches. See page 2.

### Illumination

All interior and exterior stairways must be illuminated.

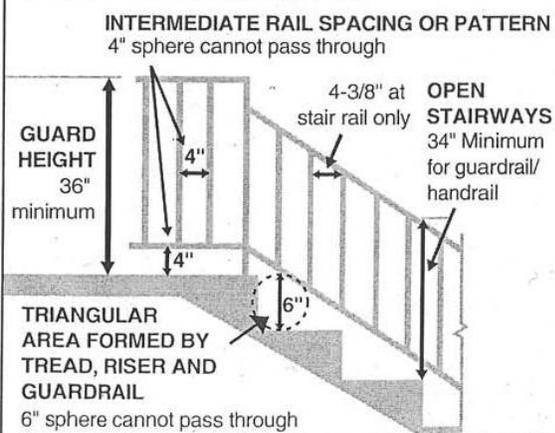
### Stairway lighting



Interior lighting must be installed either over the stair (Points B) or over the landings (Points A).

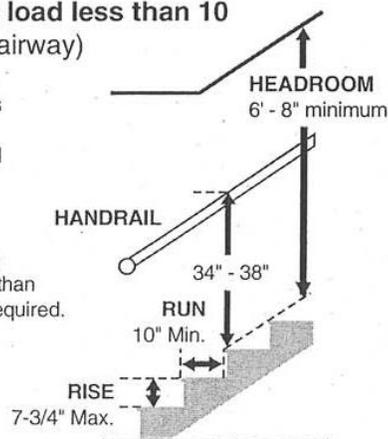
Exterior stairs must be lit at a minimum by the landing at the top of the stairway. The light control must be provided within the dwelling unit or automatically controlled, e.g. motion detector light.

### Guard opening limitations



### Occupant load less than 10 (Private stairway)

If stairway has closed risers and stair tread is less than 11 inches, a nosing of 3/4 inch depth by no greater than 1-1/4 inch is required.



**NOTE: REQUIRED HANDRAILS ARE NOT SHOWN**

