



# CITY OF OCEANSIDE

Building Division  
300 N Coast Highway  
Oceanside, CA 92054  
760-435-3950  
[www.ci.oceanside.ca.us](http://www.ci.oceanside.ca.us)

I.B. 106

2022 California  
Residential Code

1/1/2023-12/31/2025  
*Effective Date*

## Single Family Dwelling Stairways/Guards

### Informational Bulletin

#### Width

Stairways shall not be less than 36 inches wide. The handrail may enter a maximum of 4 1/2 inches into this dimension. (2022 CRC R311.7.1 Width)

#### Dimensional Tolerances

The greatest rise height within any flight of stairs shall not exceed the smallest by more than 3/8 inch. (2022 CRC =R311.7.5.1 Risers)

#### Risers & Treads

- If you are building a new standard residential stairway (not a spiral), each step (or riser) can't be more than 7 3/4 inches high or less than 4"
- Treads are the flat surfaces that you step onto. For new stairs, the treads have to be a minimum of 10 inches deep from front to back (not counting the part underneath the nosing of the tread above). The exposed edge of the tread is called nosing, and the nosing must stick out at least 3/4 inch, but not more than 1 1/4 inches
- The greatest tread depth within any flight of stairs should not exceed the smallest by more than 3/8" (2022 CRC R311.7.5.2 Treads)

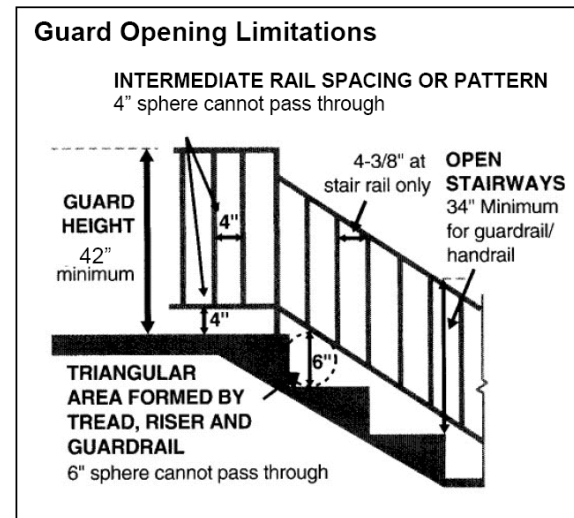
#### Handrails

##### *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



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. (2022 CRC R311.7.8.3)

- Stairways must have a handrail if the stairway has four or more risers.



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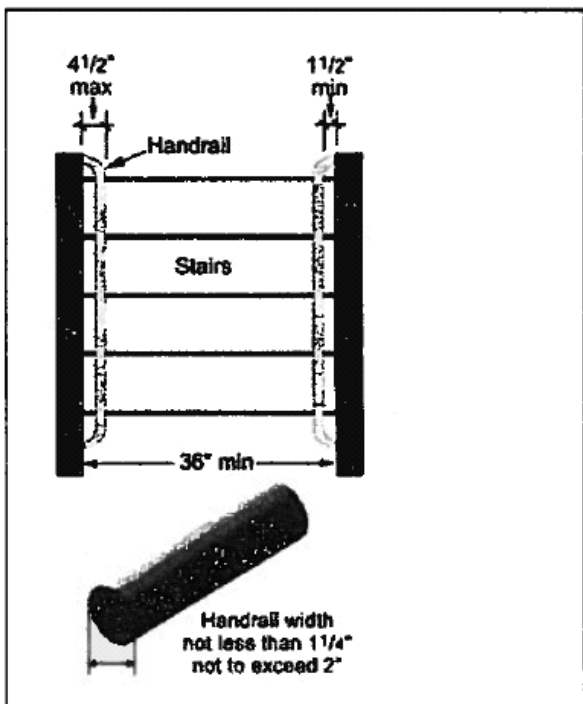
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- Handrails may project over stairs by 4 ½ inches maximum on each side of the stairway.
- Handrails must be continuous for the full length of the stairs. They must run back into the wall or butt into a post so that purse straps and clothing won't get caught behind them and cause a fall.
- Handrails attached to the wall must have a space between the wall and the rail of at least 1 ½ inches between the wall and the rail of at least 1 ½ inches to provide a graspable surface.
- Handrails on the open side of a stairway must meet guardrail requirements (2022 CRC R312.1 Guards)

For occupancies in group R-3 guards whose top rail also serves as a handrail shall have height not less than 34 inches and not more than 38 inches measured vertically from the leading edge of the stair tread nosing.

The height of the handrails is measured straight up from the nosing of the tread to the top of the handrail. A handrail along a wall must be between 34 inches and 38 inches high.

A round handrail must have a diameter no smaller than 1 ¼ inches and no larger than 2 inches, so that it can be easily and securely gripped. Other handrail shapes are allowed, if the perimeter dimension is at least 4 inches and not more than 6 ¼ inches, with a cross section dimension not more than 2 ¼ inches.



## Illumination

All interior and exterior stairways must be illuminated.

(Illumination 2022 CRC R311.7.9)

## 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.

(2022 CRC R311.7.2 Headroom)



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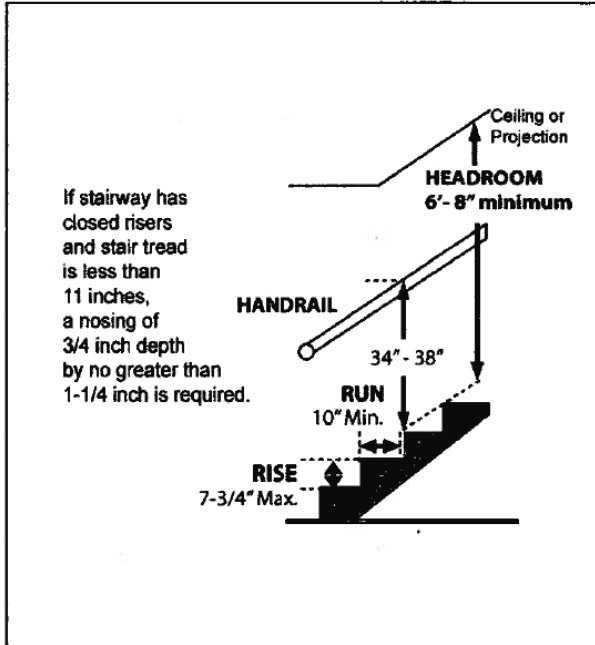
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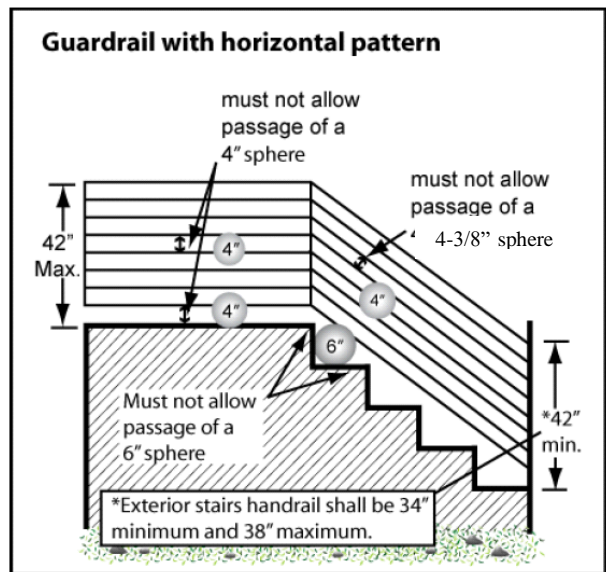
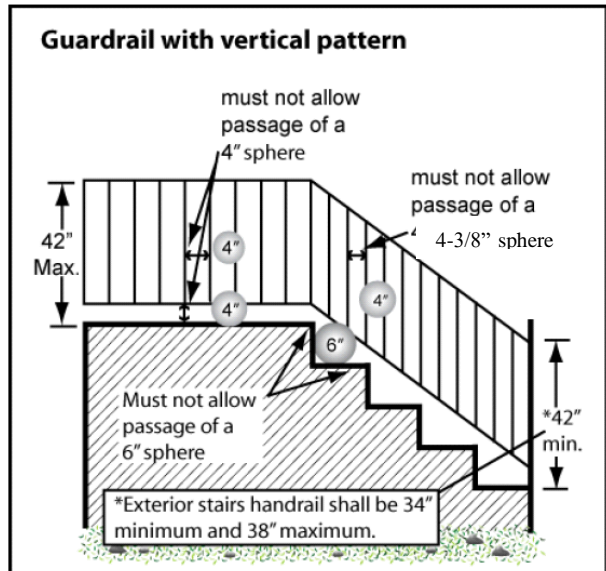
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- At the bottom edge of a guardrail along a series of steps, the space between the tread, riser and the guardrail must be small enough to prevent a 6 inch sphere from getting through.



## Guardrails

- A guardrail is required to prevent someone from falling from a balcony, deck, landing, etc. that is more than 30 inches above the floor or ground below. Guardrails must be at least 42 inches high, except that they may be 34 inches minimum and 38 inches maximum when located within dwelling units in R-3 occupancies whose top rail also serves as a handrail.
- Guardrail on interior stairs must have some kind of a pattern, so that a 4 3/8 inch sphere can't pass through. However, all exterior guardrails along raised floors, landing, porches, decks, and balconies must have intermediate rails or ornamental closures that do not allow passage of a 4 inch sphere.



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## Winder Stairs

### R311.7.5.2.1 Winder Treads.

Winder treads shall have a tread depth of not less than 10 inches (254 mm) measured between the vertical planes of the foremost projection of adjacent treads at the intersections with the walkline. Winder treads shall have a tread depth of not less than 6 inches (152 mm) at any point within the clear width of the stair. Within any flight of stairs, the largest winder tread depth at the walkline shall not exceed the smallest winder tread by more than 3/8 inch (9.5 mm). Consistently shaped winders at the walkline shall be allowed within the same flight of stairs as rectangular treads and do not have to be within 3/8 inch (9.5mm) of the rectangular tread depth.

Exception: the tread depth at spiral stairways shall be in accordance with Section R311.7.10.1

## Spiral Stairs

### R311.7.10.1 Spiral Stairways.

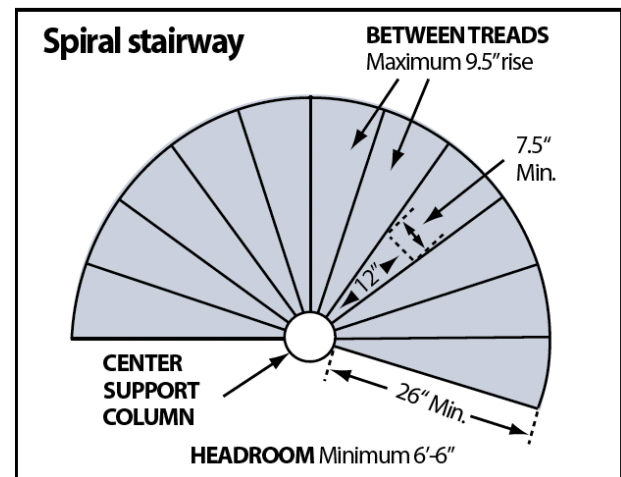
Spiral stairways are permitted, provided that the clear width at and below the handrail is not less than 26 inches (660 mm) and the walkline radius is not greater than 24 1/2 inches (622 mm). Each tread shall have a depth of not less than 6 3/4 inches (171 mm) at the walkline. All treads shall be identical, and the rise shall be not more than 9 1/2 inches (241 mm). Headroom shall not be less than 6 feet 6 inches (1982 mm).

## Landings

### R311.7.6 Landings for stairways.

There shall be a floor or landing at the top and bottom of each stairway. The width perpendicular to the direction of travel shall not be less than the width of the flight served. Landing of shapes other than square or rectangular shall be permitted provided that the depth at the walk line and the total area is not less than that of a quarter circle with a radius equal to the required landing width. Where the stairway has a straight run, the depth in the direction of travel shall not be less than 36 inches (914mm).

Exception: A floor or landing is not required at the top of an interior flight of stairs, including stairs in an enclosed garage, provided that a door does not swing over the stairs.



Tread depth 6 3/4 at the walkline



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