



Residential Stairway/Guards Information Sheet

When installing or replacing a set of stairs a building permit is required. Following are the code requirements for stairs. For additional information see SMA 2006 IRC code.

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 a stairway shall not exceed the smallest by more than 3/8 inch.

Risers

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

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.

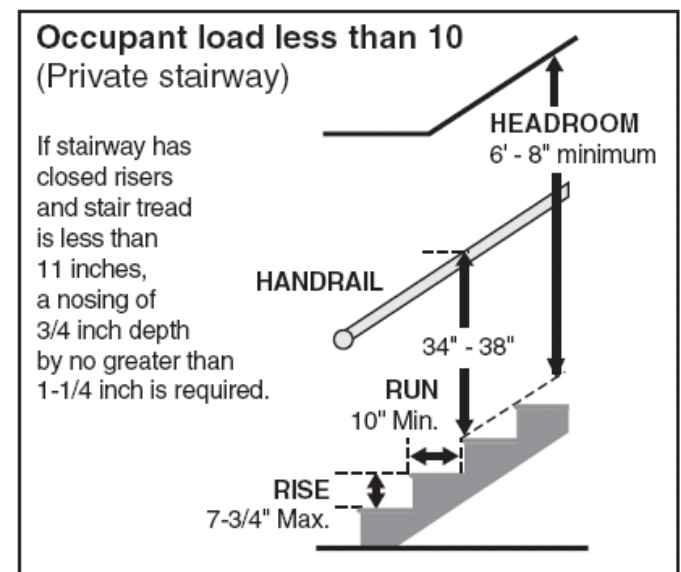
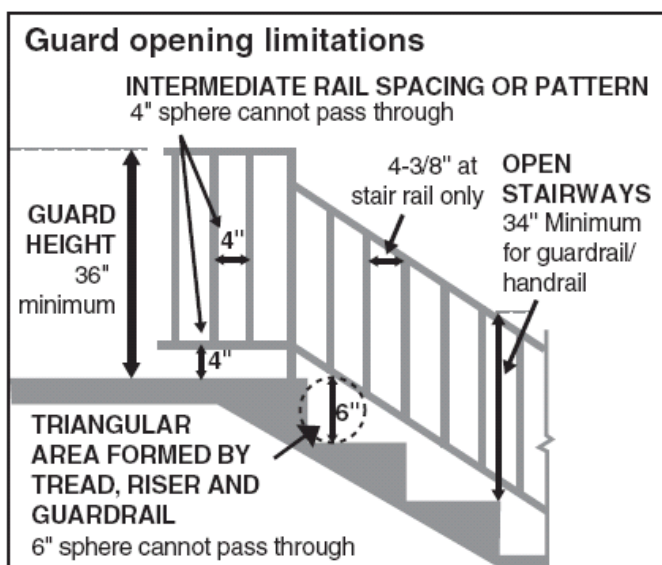
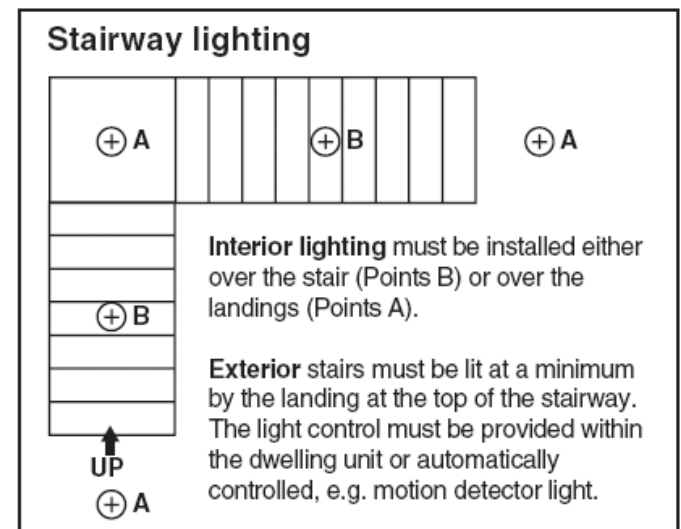
Exceptions:

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 hand rail 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 no greater than 6-1/4 inches. The maximum cross section 2-1/4 inches. *See page 2.*

Illumination

All interior and exterior stairways must be illuminated.



NOTE: REQUIRED HANDRAILS ARE NOT SHOWN

