

Fall Zones



Playground injuries most frequently occur when a child falls from play equipment onto a hard surface. Providing impact absorbing surfacing and reducing the height of equipment will help to reduce the severity of injuries.

Impact absorbing surfacing is required under and surrounding play equipment with fall heights greater than 500mm above ground level. These structures must have proof of testing in accordance with AS/NZS 4422:1996 .

Fall Zones for AS1924:1981- Superseded

Fall zones for playground equipment manufactured according to AS1924, Parts 1 and 2: 1981 remain compliant with AS/NZS4422:1996. This applies to equipment installed prior to October 2004. Fall zones should extend 1900mm in supervised early childhood settings and 2500mm in schools and public settings from the perimeter of the equipment to any border, fence, other equipment or hard surface.

Fall Zones for AS 4685: 2004

AS 4685:2004 introduced a graded system of fall zones for specific free height of fall, equipment and undersurfacing. The extent of the fall zone is measured from a point directly below the elevated part of the equipment. The required fall zone varies depending on specific equipment eg. swings; and the setting in which the equipment is used eg. supervised early childhood settings or schools and public settings.

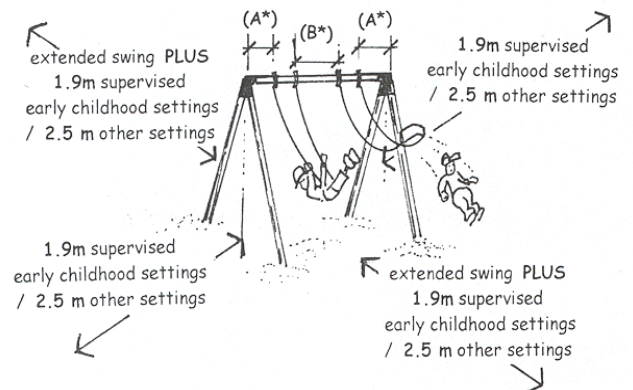
Kidsafe NSW Playground Advisory Unit

If you are purchasing new equipment the fall zone can be determined by the manufacturer in accordance with AS4685:2004. Request and retain *written* confirmation of this from the manufacturer to eliminate potential issues with future inspections.

Fall Zones for Swings

For swings older than October 2004 (as noted in AS/NZ4422:1996) the fall zone should be measured from:

1. The furthest extension of the moving components in the direction of movement (the maximum swinging arc) and;
2. The perimeter of the equipment for the non-moving components. *Kidsafe NSW* recommend that the perimeter is determined by the posts or structure/frame of the swing.



(A*) Clearance between the swing assembly and frame: 600mm schools and public settings, 400mm supervised early childhood settings
 (B*) Clearance between swinging assemblies: 900mm schools and public settings, 600mm supervised early childhood settings

AS4685:2004 allows for a reduction in the amount of certified undersurfacing required for swings that are self aligning (contact *Kidsafe NSW* for further information).

Varying fall zones apply for each other type of moving equipment such as spring rockers and carousels. *Kidsafe NSW* are available to discuss the undersurfacing requirements detailed in standards for different items.