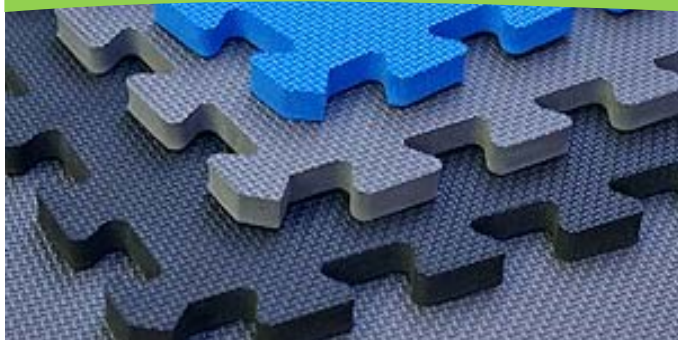


Portable Mats



Benefits

The benefits of using portable mats as impact attenuating playground surfacing are as follows:

- Allows for versatility and flexibility of equipment and where the equipment can be set up eg. indoor play areas and general outdoor areas
- Can be used as required
- Easily stored

Portable mats such as foam or vinyl covered foam mats may be used in the falling space and impact area of playground equipment. When used for equipment 600mm or more above ground level, mats must be tested to *AS 4422 Playground surfacing*. Request certificates of compliance that indicate the fall height rating and test results of the mats. File with the records for your playground safety management system.

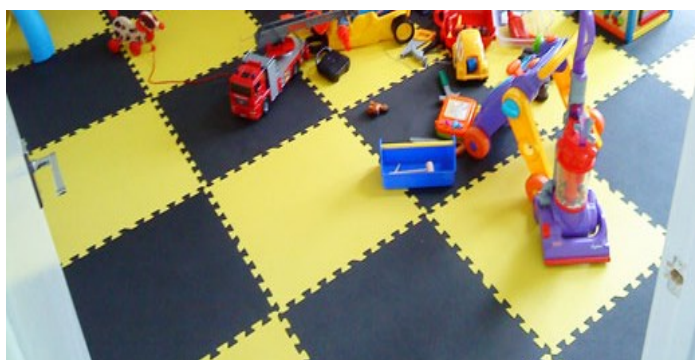
Issues

Avoid the use of portable mats on top of certified playground surfacing e.g. surrounding moveable play equipment items such as trestles and jouncing boards as slip and trip hazards may be created.



Issues with portable mats are:

- Mats can move when the children run across them, land on them or drag them. This means the impact area can be left unprotected
- Adequate impact area is difficult to achieve due to mats being small and many may be required
- If the mats have loop and hook fasteners, the loops and hooks can become clogged with debris, compromising the strength of the fastener. Should the mats become unattached from each other a child could fall on a hard surface
- Portable mats can present a trip hazard
- Vinyl covered foam mats usually wear on the seams and corners causing trip hazards.
- Zippers that are not closed properly or are broken can also present as a trip hazard
- Damaged zippers and seams or worn vinyl may allow moisture to permeate causing mould or deterioration to the foam layer



Any type of portable mat is great for smaller love to do forward rolls and tumble around, and this can be great exercise for preschool children.

For toddlers, a foam mat is safe for them to play and crawl on without getting hurt. Find a mat that is padded enough to be soft for the older children, especially if rolls and handstands are being performed.