

Slides



Benefits

Slides are very popular and are enjoyable for users of all ages. They provide children with an opportunity to play, promote balance, coordination and physical activity. Slides help to strengthen the torso, arms and shoulders and are great for children's brain development.

Types of slides

Slides come in a variety of types such as straight, wavy, or spiral (either open slide chute or a tube). Slides can be: free-standing; part of a composite structure; or built on a natural or constructed slope (embankment or mound slide).

Siting

Site slide so that the sliding section is positioned away from the direct midday sun in a south-southeast facing orientation.

Materials

Avoid using exposed metals on the platforms, chutes, and steps. When exposed to direct sunlight the metal may reach temperatures high enough to cause serious contact burn injuries in a matter of seconds. Provide shade for slides.

Access

Access to a free-standing slide usually by a ladder or a stairway providing easy access. Slides may also be part of a composite play structure. A platform should be provided to assist the transition from standing to sitting at the entrance to slides. Mound or embankment slides use the ground for access however the installation of a platform or solid surface at the entrance to the slide is recommended to assist with wear and erosion control.

Australian Standard

AS 4685.3 Playground equipment – Particular safety requirements and test methods for slides specifies safety requirements designed to minimise the risk of injury to children when using slides. It is recommended that when purchasing a slide, the slide and components conform to this Standard.

Requirements of AS 4685.3:

- Slides should not have any spaces or gaps that could trap cords, clothing, hair and fingers between the platform and the slide chute or in any joints in the slide chute or surface.
- The provision of a crossbar above the entrance of slides if slide is more than 1000mm above playing surface. Position crossbar 600mm – 900mm above the starting section of the slide.
- A free space of 1000mm to either side of the centre of the slide.
- Use of different coloured layers of gel coat in the sliding surface of fibreglass slides identifies excessive wear before users are exposed to glass fibres.



Impact Area

Impact areas are required for slides more than 600mm above the playing surface.

An impact area filled with certified surfacing (1m rating) is required to each side of the run-out section and beyond the end of all slides.

Extent of Impact Area by Slide Type

- *Type 1 Slide* (short run-out section with long impact area) - the impact area is at least 2000mm beyond the end of the slide.
- *Type 2 Slide* (long run-out section with short impact area) - the impact area is at least 1000mm beyond the end of the slide.
- All slides - the impact area to each side of the run-out is 1000mm.

Roller slides

Roller slides offer an enhanced sensory experience. Roller slides should comply with AS 4685.3. The space between rollers; and rollers and stationary parts of the structure should not present a finger

pinch/crush hazard. It is recommended that rollers be restricted to roll in only one direction. Frequent inspections ensure there are no missing rollers or broken bearings; that the rollers roll evenly; and there are no entrapment hazards for cords, toggles, clothing/hair.

Embankment/Mound slides

Embankment/mound slides can be built into natural or constructed slopes, following the line of the embankment. The slide must maintain a free height of fall of less than 600mm so that fall hazards are minimised and negate requirements for impact attenuating surfacing to the sides of the slide. An impact area is still required to the sides of the run-out sections and beyond the end. Embankment slides are a popular play element of a playspace. Refer to the information sheet *Mounds for Play*.

Slide Safety

Younger children require active adult supervision and older children should be guided through some basic safety rules. Teaching children to use slides in a safe manner introduces them to taking responsibility for themselves and their playmates. Adults should check the condition of the slide and surrounding area prior to children accessing the slide. Check for heat by holding your hand 30mm above the slide surface.

Child safe practices

- Take one step at a time and hold onto the handrail when climbing the ladder or stairs to the top of the slide. Climbing up the slide bed to get to the top is not safe.
- Always slide down feet first in a seated position, not head first (on either your back or stomach).
- Slide down one at a time and limit number of children on the platform waiting for a turn.
- Always check that the bottom of the slide is clear before sliding down. When children reach the bottom they should get off and move away from the end of the slide so it's clear for others to slide down.



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