

IRC Code Handout

IRC Code Section R311.7.7: Handrails

PDS	Department Application
	#436

Handrails

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Handrails shall be provided on at least one side of each continuous run of treads or flight with four or more risers.

Height

Handrails height, measured vertically from the sloped plane adjoining the tread nosing, or finish surface of ramp slope, shall be not less than 34 inches (864 mm) and not more than 38 inches (965 mm).

Continuity

Handrails for stairways shall be continuous for the full length of the flight, from a point directly above the top riser of the flight to a point directly above the lowest riser of the flight. Handrail ends shall be returned or shall terminate in newel posts or safety terminals. Handrails adjacent to a wall shall have a space of not less than 1½ inch (38 mm) between the wall and the handrails.

Exceptions:

1. Handrails shall be permitted to be interrupted by a newel post at the turn.
2. The use of a volute, turnout, starting easing or starting newel shall be allowed over the lowest tread.

Handrail Grip Size

Type I. Handrails with a circular cross section shall have an outside diameter of an least 1¼ inches (32 mm) and not greater than 2 inches (51 mm). If the handrail is not circular it shall have a perimeter dimension of at least 4 inches (102 mm) and not greater than 6 ¼ inches (160 mm) with a maximum cross section of dimension of 2¼ inches (57 mm). Edges shall have a radius of .01 inch.

More Information

For further information on stairways and handrails, visit the Stairway Manufacturer's Association (SMA) website at www.stairways.org.

