

# Home Playground

## - Safety Tips -



Each year, more than 200,000 children go to U.S. hospital emergency rooms with injuries associated with playground equipment. Most injuries occur when a child falls from the equipment onto the ground. Many backyard playsets are placed on dirt or grass—surfaces that do not adequately protect children when they fall.

### Home Playground Safety Checklist

Use this simple checklist to help make sure your home playground is a safe place to play.

1. Install and maintain a shock-absorbing surface around the play equipment. Use at least 9 inches of wood chips, mulch, or shredded rubber for play equipment up to 7 feet high. If sand or pea gravel is used, install at least a 9-inch layer for play equipment up to 5 feet high. Or use surfacing mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like materials.
2. Install protective surfacing at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment. For swings, be sure surfacing extends, in back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar.
3. Never attach-or allow children to attach ropes, jump ropes, clotheslines, or pet leashes to play equipment; children can strangle on these.
4. Check for hardware, like open “S” hooks or protruding bolt ends, which can be hazardous.
5. Check for spaces that could trap children, such as openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs; these spaces should measure less than 3.5 inches or more than 9 inches.
6. Make sure platforms and ramps have guardrails to prevent falls.
7. Check for sharp points or edges in equipment.
8. Remove tripping hazards, like exposed concrete footings, tree stumps, and rocks.
9. Regularly check play equipment and surfacing to make sure both are in good condition.
10. Carefully supervise children on play equipment to make sure they are safe.

