

CONSTRUCTION TIP SHEET: BASIC STAIRS

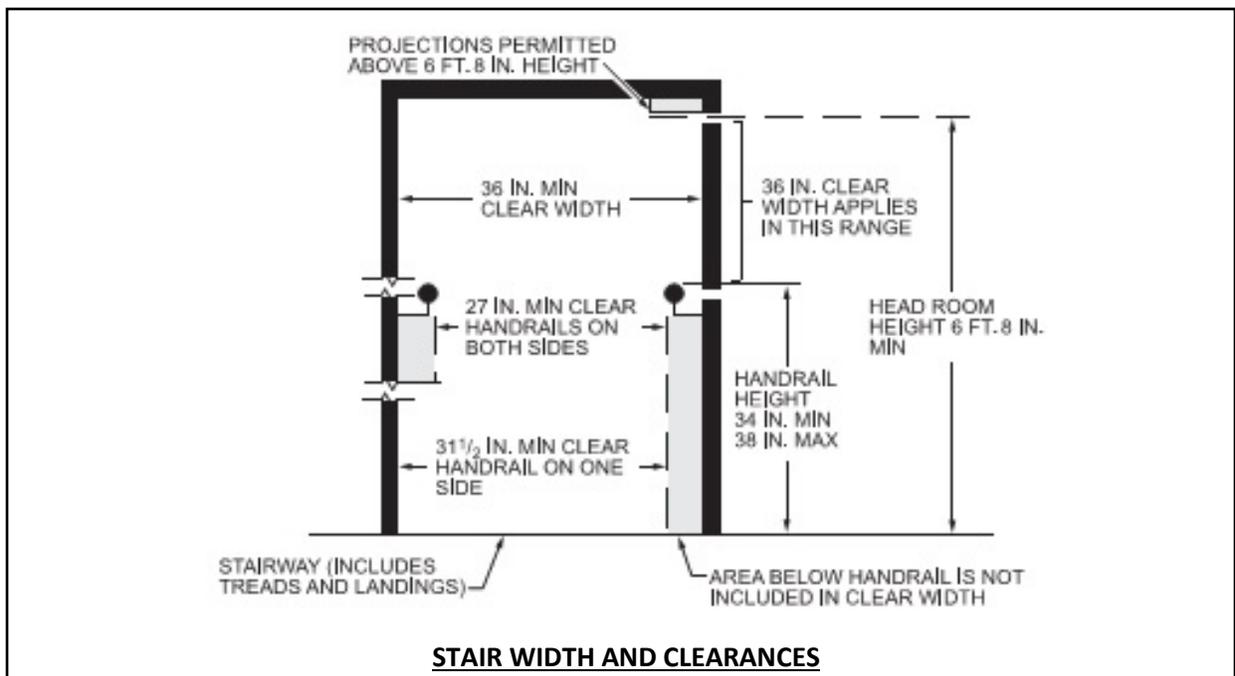
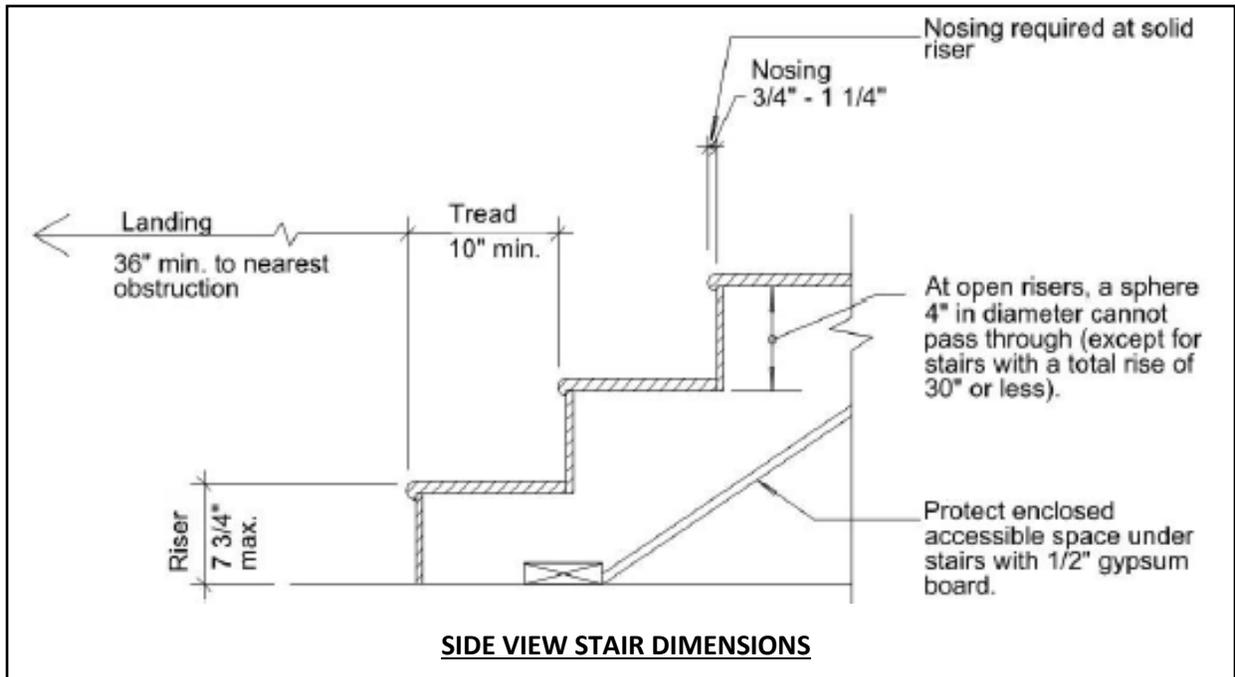
This Tip Sheet reflects code requirements of the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code (MUBEC)
Note- The intent of this Tip Sheet is to provide a general understanding of the code requirements and does not address the subject in great detail.

DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS: (Note- Visual diagrams begin on the next page.)

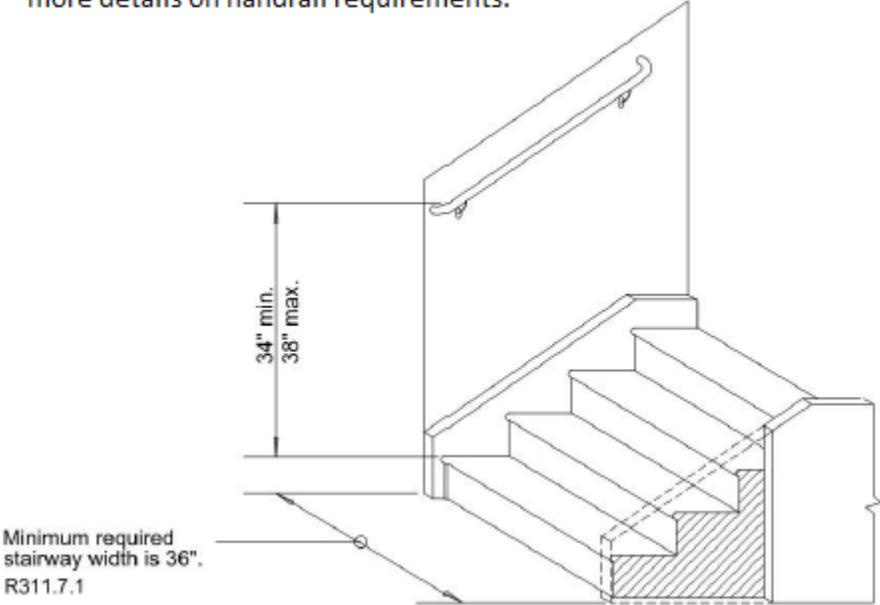
1. **Stair treads and risers:** The largest tread or riser within any flight of stairs must not exceed the smallest tread or riser by more than three eighths (3/8) of an inch. (Code Section R311.7.5)
2. **Illumination:**
 - a. Interior stairways shall be provided with an artificial light source to illuminate landings and treads. There shall be a wall switch at each floor level to control the light source where the stairway has six (6) or more risers. (Code Section R303.7)
 - b. Exterior stairways shall be provided with an artificial light source located at the top landing of the stairway, and located at the bottom landing where accessing a basement. (Code Section R303.8)
3. **Handrails:** Handrails are required on at least one side for stairways with four (4) or more risers. See Residential Handrails Tip Sheet for additional information regarding handrails. (Code Section R311.7.8)
4. **Landings:** Landings are required at the top and the bottom of stairways. A floor landing is not required at the top of an interior flight of stairs, provided a door does not swing over the stairs. (Code Section R311.7.6)
5. **Landing dimensions:** A landing extending the width of the stair and measuring a minimum of thirty-six (36) inches in the direction of travel is required at the top and bottom of every stairway. (Code Section R311.7.6)
6. **Headroom:** The headroom in stairways shall be a minimum of six (6) feet eight (8) inches measured vertically from the sloped line adjoining the tread nosing or from the floor surface of the landing or platform on that portion of the stairway. (Code Section R311.7.2)
7. **Width:** Stairways shall be a minimum of thirty-six (36) inches in clear width at all points above the permitted handrail height and below the required headroom height. Handrails shall not project more than four and one half (4.5) inches on either side of the stairway and the clear width of the

stairway at and below the handrail height, including treads and landings, shall be not less than thirty-one and one half (31.5) inches where a handrail is installed on one side and twenty-seven (27) inches where handrails are provided on both sides.

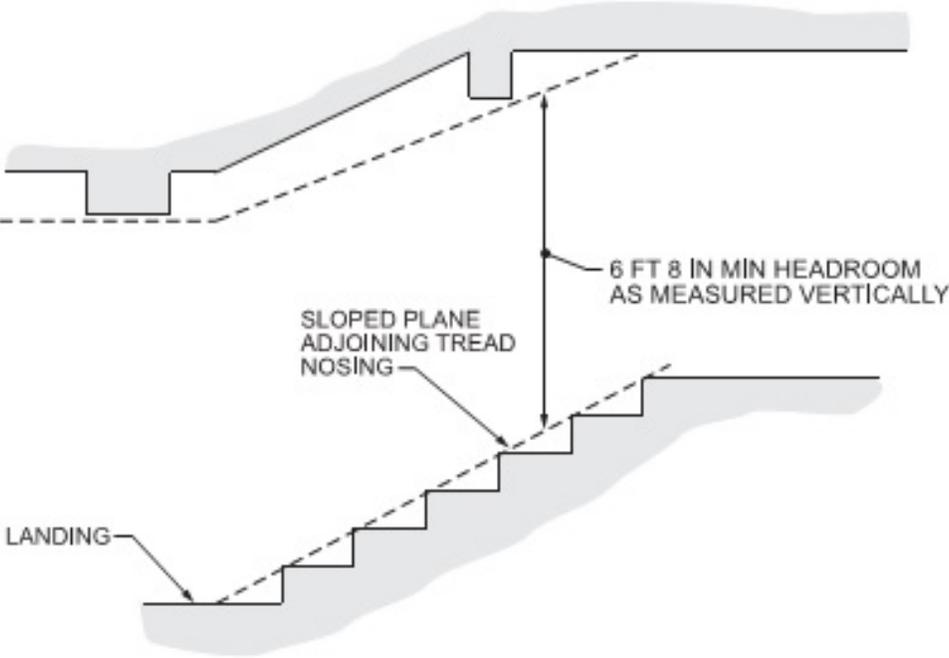
8. **Circular, winding or spiral stairways:** There are alternative guidelines for the construction of circular, winding, or spiral stairways. See the Building Official with any questions relating to these types of designs. (Code Section R311.7.5.2.1 & R311.7.10)



**See Residential Handrails Tip Sheet for more details on handrail requirements.



HANDRAIL REQUIREMENT



HEADROOM REQUIREMENT