



**City of Arlington**  
Community and Economic  
Development

Office Hours:  
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This Assistance Bulletin only  
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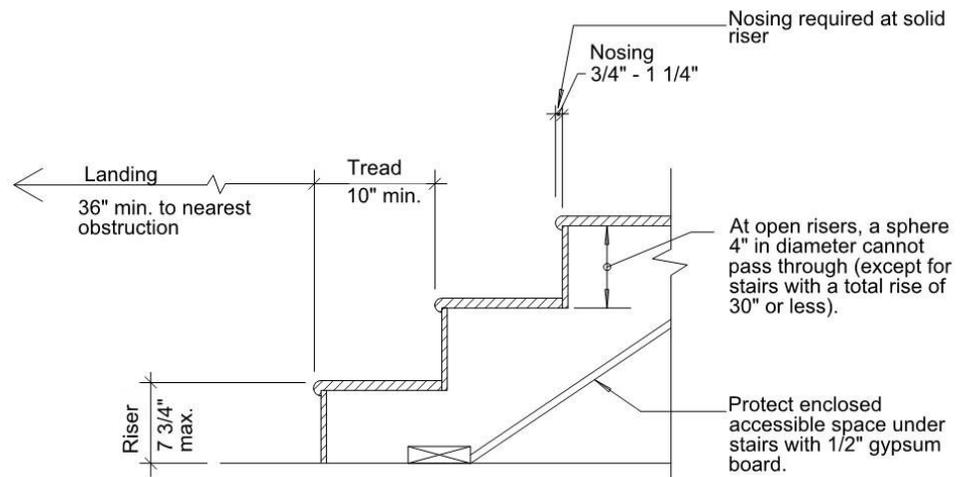
[www.arlingtonwa.gov](http://www.arlingtonwa.gov)  
[Arlington Municipal Code](#)

# RESIDENTIAL STAIR DETAILS

# #05

## Basic Stairs

This Bulletin reflects code requirements of the 2018 International Residential Code (IRC) with Washington State Amendments.



**Figure 1: Typical Stair Treads and Risers**

## Stair Treads and Risers

- The largest tread or riser within any flight of stairs is not to exceed the smallest by more than 3/8 inches. (R311.7.5)

## Illumination

- Interior stairways shall have an artificial light source to illuminate landings and treads. Where the stairway has (6) or more risers, there shall be a wall switch at each floor level to control the light source.
- Exterior stairways shall have with an artificial light source located at the top landing of the stairway and located at the bottom landing where accessing a basement. (R303.8)

## Handrails

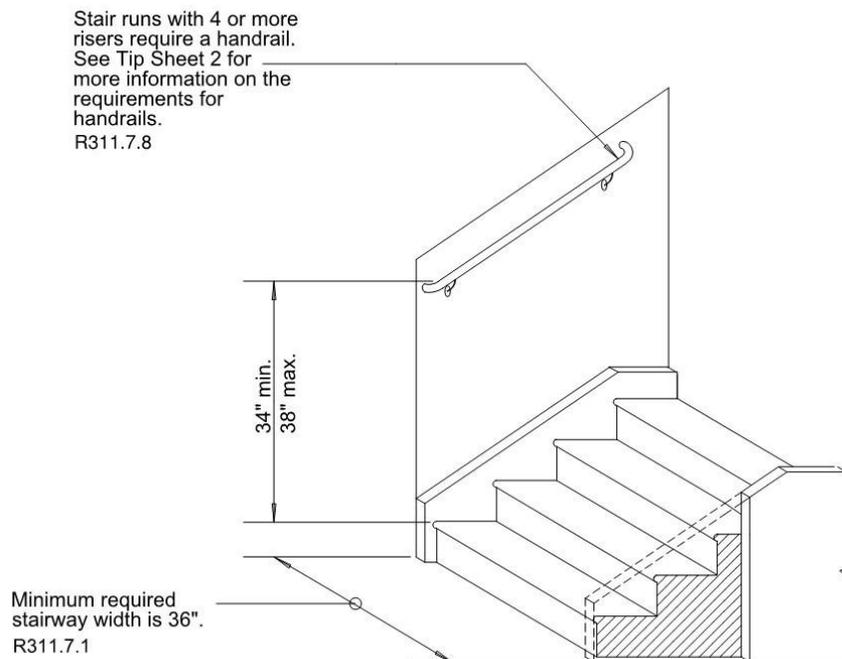
- Handrails are required on at least one side for stairways with four or more risers. See Bulletin 07 for additional information regarding handrails. (R311.7.8)

## 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. (R311.7.6)
- A landing extending the width of the stair and measuring a minimum of 36 inches in the direction of travel is required at the top and bottom of every stairway. (R311.7.6)

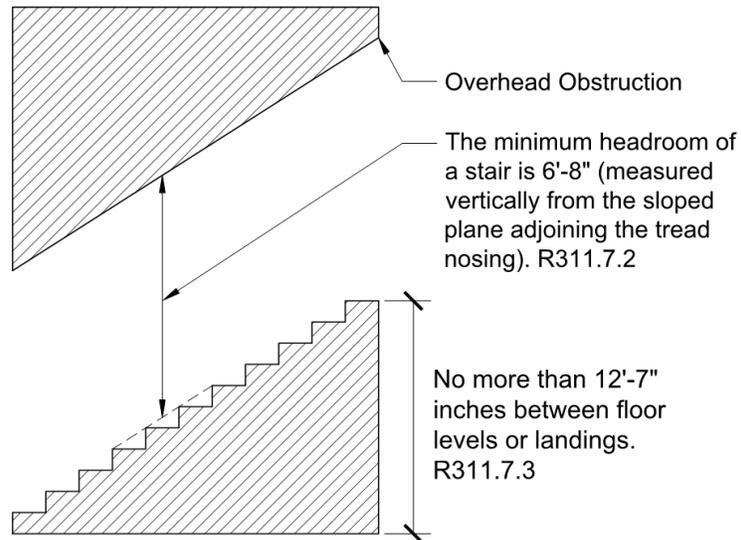
## Circular, Winding, or Spiral Stairways

- For exceptions related to the construction of circular, winding, or spiral stairways. (IRC R311.7.5.2.1 and R311.7.10)



**Figure 2: Typical Stair Elevation**

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**Figure 3: Headroom Clearance Requirements**