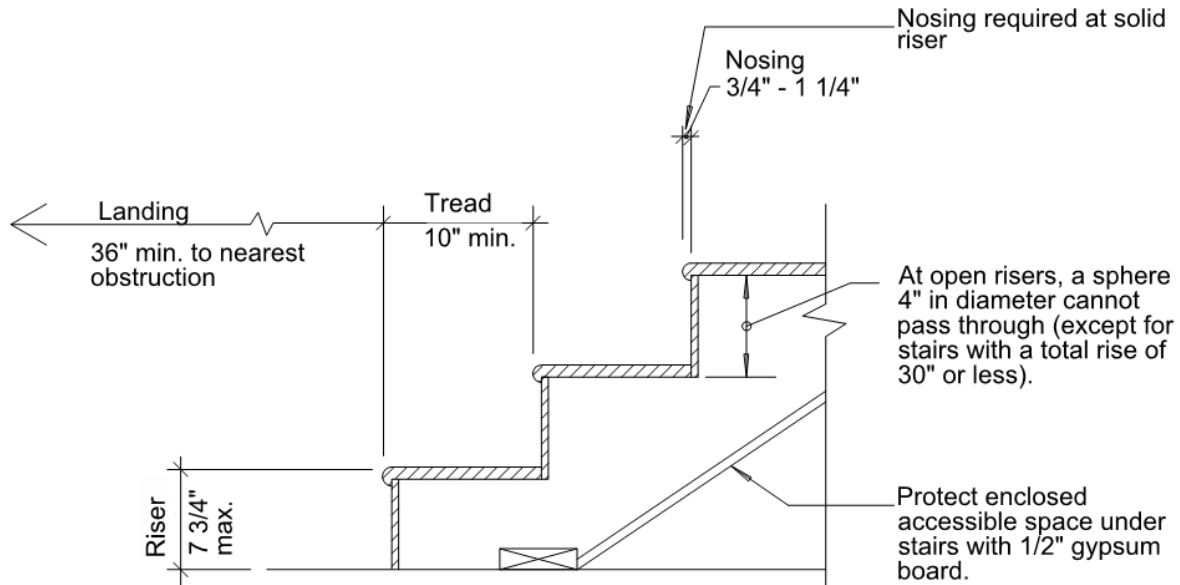


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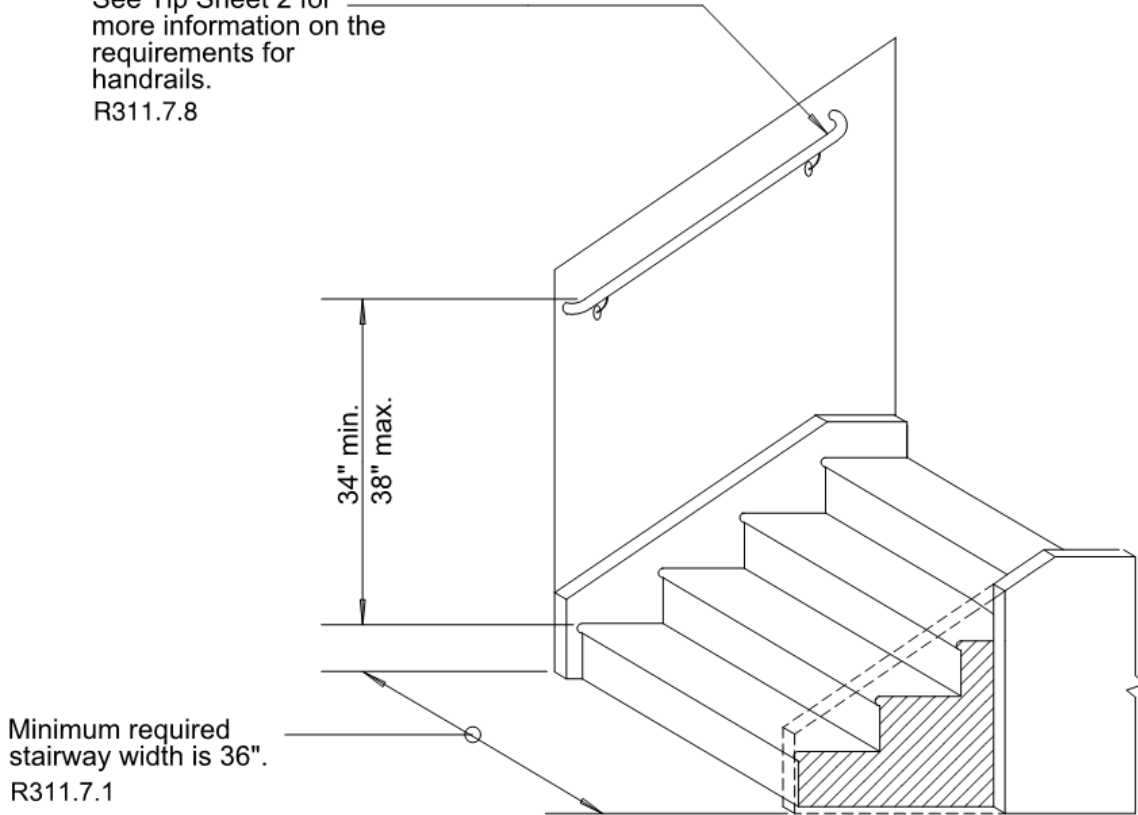
Basic Stairs

This Tip Sheet reflects code requirements of the 2015 International Residential Code (IRC) with Washington State Amendments.

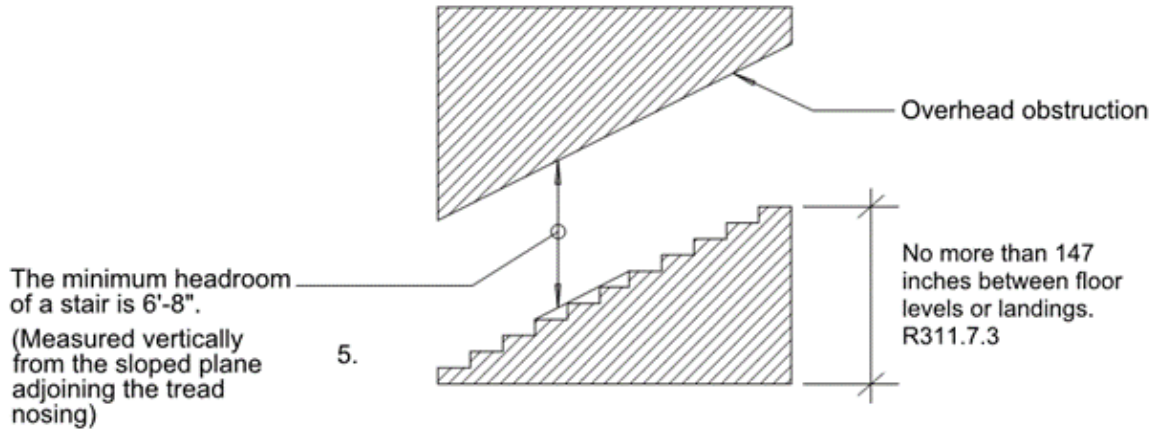


- **Stair treads and risers:** The largest tread or riser within any flight of stairs is not to exceed the smallest by more than 3/8". (R311.7.5)
- **Illumination:**
 - Interior stairways shall be provided with an artificial light source to illuminate landings and treads. There shall be a wall switch at each floor level to control the light source where the stairway has 6 or more risers. (R303.7)
 - 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. (R303.8)
- **Handrails:** Handrails are required on at least one side for stairways with four or more risers. See Tip Sheet 2 for additional information regarding handrails. (R311.7.8)
- **Landings required:** 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)
- **Landing dimensions:** A landing extending the width of the stair and measuring a minimum of 36" 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. (R311.7.5.2.1 & R311.7.10)

Stair runs with 4 or more risers require a handrail.
See Tip Sheet 2 for more information on the requirements for handrails.
R311.7.8



Typical Stair Elevation



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. Should you have any questions please call the Building Department at (253) 851-6170.