



BSI Standards Publication

Playground equipment and surfacing

Part 1: General safety requirements and test methods

This is a preview of BS EN 1176-1:2017+A1:2023. [Click here to purchase the full version from the ANSI store.](#)

National foreword

This British Standard is the UK implementation of EN 1176-1:2017+A1:2023. It supersedes BS EN 1176-1:2017, which is withdrawn.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee SW/65, Children's playground equipment.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

The start and finish of text introduced or altered by amendment is indicated in the text by tags. Tags indicating changes to CEN text carry the number of the CEN amendment. For example, text altered by CEN amendment A1 is indicated by A1 A1.

Significant changes in the requirements for testing the impact attenuation (absorbing) of playground surfacing have been introduced into this edition of the standard to reflect the national variations in surfacing provision across Europe (see clause 5.2). The UK committee therefore provides a National Annex to comply with clause 5.2. National Annex NA contains the UK requirements to be used instead of Annex H of EN 1176-1:2017; these reflect current UK practice that has proven over the lifetime of the current standard to be reasonable and proportionate.

Operators and providers are advised that playground equipment requires regular maintenance; guidance on this and appropriate inspection, maintenance and operational schedules are contained within BS EN 1176-7:2017. Clause 6.1.4 of this standard provides for inspection and maintenance information and guidance from the manufacturer of the equipment; this is to assist operators in determining their safety management system.

It is appreciated that playgrounds are likely to contain a range of equipment from different manufacturers and installed over a number of years; operators should implement any guidance provided by the manufacturer. Item specific detail is not readily available to Annual Playground inspectors whose report contributes to the operators overall Annual Main Inspection as detailed in this standard.

Playground equipment not complying with EN 1176-1:2017 should not automatically be considered as being unsafe or to require replacement. A risk assessment by competent persons should be used to determine what action, if any, is necessary. Manufacturers and inspectors of the Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) are amongst those that will be able to assist in this.

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Date	Text affected
31 May 2019	Correction to Figure 17 Key
31 May 2019	Missing NA added
30 November 2023	Implementation of CEN amendment A1:2023

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Playground equipment and surfacing - Part 1: General safety requirements and test methods

Équipements et sols d'aires de jeux - Partie 1 :
Exigences de sécurité et méthodes d'essai générales

Spielplatzgeräte und Spielplatzböden - Teil 1:
Allgemeine sicherheitstechnische Anforderungen und
Prüfverfahren

This European Standard was approved by CEN on 8 June 2017 and includes Amendment approved by CEN on 1 June 2023.

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European foreword

This document (EN 1176-1:2017+A1:2023) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 136 “Sports, playground and other recreational facilities and equipment”, the secretariat of which is held by DIN.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by April 2024, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by April 2024.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. CEN shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

A1 This document supersedes EN 1176-1:2017 **A1**.

This document includes Amendment 1, approved by CEN on 2023-06-01.

The start and finish of text introduced or altered by amendment is indicated in the text by tags **A1** **A1**

EN 1176 “Playground equipment and surfacing” consists of the following parts:

- Part 1: *General safety requirements and test methods*
- Part 2: *Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for swings*
- Part 3: *Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for slides*
- Part 4: *Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for cableways*
- Part 5: *Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for carousels*
- Part 6: *Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for rocking equipment*
- Part 7: *Guidance on installation, inspection, maintenance and operation*
- Part 10: *Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for fully enclosed play equipment*
- Part 11: *Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for spatial network*

This part of EN 1176 should be read in conjunction with:

- EN 1177, *Impact attenuating playground surfacing — Determination of critical fall height*;
- CEN/TR 16467:2013, *Playground equipment accessible for all children*;
- CEN/TR 16598:2014, *Collection of rationales for EN 1176*;
- CEN/TR 16396:2012, *Playground equipment for children, replies to requests for interpretation of EN 1176:2008 and its parts*;
- CEN/TR 16879:2016, *Siting of playground and other recreational facilities — Advice on methods for positioning and separation*.

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For inflatable play equipment, see EN 14960, *Inflatable play equipment — Safety requirements and test methods*.

The main changes from the previous edition of this standard are as follows:

- a) Reference to CEN/TR 16467:2013, CEN/TR 16598:2014, CEN/TR 16396:2012, CEN/TR 16879:2016 added;
- b) Scope amended to include reference to 'permanently installed' also reference to electricity, water and UV added;
- c) Clause 3.25 definition of easily accessible improved;
- d) New definitions added for impact attenuating surfacing, adequate level of impact attenuation, forced movement, bouncing facilities, suspension bed, one post equipment, post installation inspection, fireman's pole and tunnel;
- e) Clause 4.2.4.1 amended to agree with Figure 8;
- f) Clause 4.2.4.3 and 4.2.4.4 detail of measurement of 500 mm opening added;
- g) Clause 4.2.7.1 new sentence adding reference to Clause 4.2.7.2;
- h) Figure 13 amended to show direction of travel;
- i) Clause 4.2.8.1 cross reference to Table 2 added;
- j) Table 2 amended to clarify distinctions for climbing and hanging fall heights;
- k) Figure 14 amended to include two types of net structure in fall height examples;
- l) Clause 4.2.8.2.5 clarification of overlapping falling spaces added;
- m) Clause 4.2.8.5.2 and Table 4 revised to align with changes to EN 1177;
- n) Clause 4.2.9.5 major rewrite to clarify requirements for easily accessible equipment;
- o) Clause 4.2.12.2 inclusion of reference to use of probe E;
- p) New Clause 4.2.16 giving requirements for bouncing facilities;
- q) Clauses 5.2 and Annex H relating to Impact Attenuating Surfacing added;
- r) Clauses 6.2 amended to give more information on Impact Attenuating Surfacing;
- s) A.2.2, notes 1 and 2 now included as part of requirements;
- t) D.4.2, last paragraph now includes additional test requirement for holes behind holes;
- u) New test (D.5) and Figure (D.13) for testing chain openings added;
- v) New Figure (D.12) showing application of finger probes in test situations;
- w) New test (D.6) for bouncing facilities;

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- x) New Annex F showing illustrations of free height of fall;
- y) New Annex G showing illustration of sieve test results and sieve curve;
- z) New Annex H "Procedure for confirming the adequate level of impact attenuation after installation of impact attenuating surfacing" added;
- aa) Annex I "A-Deviations" updated.

According to the CEN-CENELEC Internal Regulations, the national standards organisations of the following countries are bound to implement this European Standard: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye and the United Kingdom.

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Introduction

For the quality of reading and understanding this standard, the following wording is used:

- shall = requirement;
- should = recommendation;
- may = permission;
- can = possibility.

It is not the purpose of the requirements of this standard to lessen the contribution that playground equipment makes to the child's development and/or play, which is meaningful from an educational point of view.

This standard acknowledges the difficulties of addressing safety issues by age criteria alone because the ability to handle risk is based on the individual users' level of skills and not age. Also, users other than the intended age range will almost certainly make use of the playground equipment.

Risk-taking is an essential feature of play provision and of all environments in which children legitimately spend time playing. Play provision aims to offer children the chance to encounter acceptable risks as part of a stimulating, challenging and controlled learning environment. Play provision should aim at managing the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children safe from serious harm.

The principles of safety management are applicable both to workplaces in general as well as to play provision. However, the balance between safety and benefits is likely to be different in the two environments. In play provision, exposure to some degree of risk might be of benefit because it satisfies a basic human need and gives children the chance to learn about risk and consequences in a controlled environment.

Respecting the characteristics of children's play and the way children benefit from playing on the playground with regard to development, children need to learn to cope with risk and this can lead to bumps and bruises and even occasionally a broken limb. The aim of this standard is first and foremost to prevent accidents with a disabling or fatal consequence, and secondly to lessen serious consequences caused by the occasional mishap that inevitably will occur in children's pursuit of expanding their level of competence, be it socially, intellectually or physically.

Refusal of admittance and access as a safety precaution is problematic due to, for example, breach in supervision or help by peers. Requirements of significant importance, such as head and neck entrapment and protection against inadvertent falls, have been written with this in mind. It is also recognized that there is an increasing need for play provision to be accessible to users with disabilities. This of course requires play areas to provide a balance between safety and the offer of the required level of challenge and stimulation to all possible groups of users. However, for the purposes of protection against head and neck entrapment, this standard does not take into account children with an increased head size e.g. hydrocephalus or Down's syndrome or wearing helmets.

For further information about making play provision suitable for less able users a CEN Technical Report is available which discusses the challenges in provision and possible solutions that designers can consider. See the European foreword for details of this document.

In addition to the short-term risks that are associated with a playground, there is a risk that the playing child is overexposed to the ultraviolet radiation of the sun. Too much ultraviolet radiation and sunburns in childhood increase the risk of developing skin cancer later in life. Therefore, the playgrounds should be organized in a way that takes into account of the availability of shade options, and that a part of the playground equipment and recreational areas are placed entirely or partly in shade.

1 Scope

This part of EN 1176 specifies general safety requirements for permanently installed public playground equipment and surfacing. Additional safety requirements for specific pieces of playground equipment are specified in subsequent parts of this standard.

This part of EN 1176 covers playground equipment for all children. It has been prepared with full recognition of the need for supervision of young children and of less able or less competent children.

The purpose of this part of EN 1176 is to ensure a proper level of safety when playing in, on or around playground equipment, and at the same time to promote activities and features known to benefit children because they provide valuable experiences that will enable them to cope with situations outside the playground.

This part of EN 1176 is applicable to playground equipment intended for individual and collective use by children. It is also applicable to equipment and units installed as children's playground equipment although they are not manufactured as such, but exclude those items defined as toys in EN 71 and the Toys Safety Directive.

It is not applicable to adventure playgrounds with the exception of those items which have been commercially sourced.

NOTE Adventure playgrounds are fenced, secured playgrounds, run and staffed in accordance with the widely accepted principles that encourage children's development and often use self-built equipment.

This part of EN 1176 specifies the requirements that will protect the child from hazards that they might be unable to foresee when using the equipment as intended, or in a manner that can be reasonably anticipated.

The use of electricity in play equipment, either as a play activity or as a motive force, is outside the scope of this standard. The attention of users is drawn to European and local national standards and regulations which are to be complied with when using electricity.

Play equipment placed in water and where water can be seen as impact attenuating surfacing is not fully covered by this standard and additional risks are associated with wet environments.

The risk of exposure to excessive levels of UV radiation is not covered in this standard.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

EN 335, *Durability of wood and wood-based — - Use classes: definitions, application to solid wood and wood-based products*

EN 350:2016, *Durability of wood and wood-based products — Testing and classification of the durability to biological agents of wood and wood-based materials*

EN 351-1:2007, *Durability of wood and wood-based products — Preservative-treated solid wood — Part 1: Classification of preservative penetration and retention*

EN 636, *Plywood — Specifications*

EN 818-2:1996+A1:2008, *Short link chain for lifting purposes — - Safety — Part 2: Medium tolerance chain for chain slings — Grade 8*