



## Standard Practice for Safe Walking Surfaces<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F 1637; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

### 1. Scope

1.1 This practice covers design and construction guidelines and minimum maintenance criteria for new and existing buildings and structures. This practice is intended to provide reasonably safe walking surfaces for pedestrians wearing ordinary footwear. These guidelines may not be adequate for those with certain mobility impairments.

1.2 Conformance with this practice will not alleviate all hazards; however, conformance will reduce certain pedestrian risks.

~~1.3 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as the standard. The SI units given in parentheses are for information only.~~

1.3 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.4 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

### 2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*<sup>2</sup>

F 1646 [Terminology Relating to Safety and Traction for Footwear](#)

2.2 *ANSI Standard:*

ANSI-Z535.1 Safety Color Coding

### 3. Terminology

3.1 See Terminology F 1646 for the following terms used in this practice:

3.1.1 Bollard,

3.1.2 Carpet,

3.1.3 Cross slope,

3.1.4 Element,

3.1.5 Fair,

3.1.6 Foreseeable pedestrian path,

3.1.7 Footwear,

3.1.8 Planar,

3.1.9 Ramp,

3.1.10 Sidewalk,

3.1.11 Slip resistance,

3.1.12 Slip resistant,

3.1.13 Walkway surface hardware, and

3.1.14 Walkway.

### 4. Significance and Use

4.1 This practice addresses elements along and in walkways including floors and walkway surfaces, sidewalks, short flight stairs, gratings, wheel stops, and speed bumps. Swimming pools, bath tubs, showers, natural walks, and unimproved paths are beyond the scope of this practice.

<sup>1</sup> This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F13 on Pedestrian/Walkway Safety and Footwear and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F13.50 on Walkway Surfaces.

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<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

## 5. Walkway Surfaces

### 5.1 General:

5.1.1 Walkways shall be stable, planar, flush, and even to the extent possible. Where walkways cannot be made flush and even, they shall conform to the requirements of 5.2 and 5.3.

5.1.2 Walkway surfaces for pedestrians shall be capable of safely sustaining intended loads.

5.1.3 Walkway surfaces shall be slip resistant under expected environmental conditions and use. Painted walkways shall contain an abrasive additive, cross cut grooving, texturing or other appropriate means to render the surface slip resistant where wet conditions may be reasonably foreseeable.

5.1.4 Interior walkways that are not slip resistant when wet shall be maintained dry during periods of pedestrian use.

### 5.2 Walkway Changes in Level:

5.2.1 Adjoining walkway surfaces shall be made flush and fair, whenever possible and for new construction and existing facilities to the extent practicable.

5.2.2 Changes in levels of less than ¼ in. (6 mm) in height may be without edge treatment. (See Fig. 1.)

5.2.3 Changes in levels between ¼ and ½ in. (6 and 12 mm) shall be beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2 (rise:run).

5.2.4 Changes in levels greater than ½ in. (12 mm) shall be transitioned by means of a ramp or stairway that complies with applicable building codes, regulations, standards, or ordinances, or all of these.

### 5.3 Carpet:

5.3.1 Carpet shall be maintained so as not to create pedestrian hazard. Carpet shall be firmly secured and seams tightly maintained. Carpet shall not have loose or frayed edges, unsecured seams, worn areas, holes, wrinkles or other hazards that may cause trip occurrence.

5.3.2 Carpet on floor surfaces shall be routinely inspected. Periodic restretching may become necessary. Periodic inspection is particularly important at step nosing edges.

5.3.3 Carpet and carpet trim (as measured when compressed) shall meet the transition requirements of 5.2.

5.3.4 Shag-type carpet shall not be used on stair treads. Carpeting should be firmly secured onto the tread and around the nosing.

### 5.4 Mats and Runners:

5.4.1 Mats, runners, or other means of ensuring that building entrances and interior walkways are kept dry shall be provided, as needed, during inclement weather. Replacement of mats or runners may be necessary when they become saturated.

5.4.2 Building entrances shall be provided with mats or runners, or other means to help remove foreign particles and other contaminants from the bottom of pedestrian footwear. Mats should be provided to minimize foreign particles, that may become dangerous to pedestrians particularly on hard smooth floors, from being tracked on floors.

5.4.3 Mats or runners should be provided at other wet or contaminated locations, particularly at known transitions from dry locations. Mats at building entrances also may be used to control the spread of precipitation onto floor surfaces, reducing the likelihood of the floors becoming slippery.

5.4.4 Mats shall be of sufficient design, area, and placement to control tracking of contaminants into buildings. Safe practice requires that mats be installed and maintained to avoid tracking water off the last mat onto floor surfaces.

5.4.5 Mats, runners, and area rugs shall be provided with safe transition from adjacent surfaces and shall be fixed in place or provided with slip resistant backing.

### 5.5 Illumination:

5.5.1 Minimum walkway illumination shall be governed by the requirements of local codes and ordinances or, in their absence, by the recommendations set forth by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IES) (Application and Reference Volumes).

5.5.2 Illumination shall be designed to be glare free.

5.5.3 Illumination shall be designed to avoid casting of obscuring shadows on walkways, including shadows on stairs that may be cast by users.

5.5.4 Interior and exterior pedestrian use areas, including parking lots, shall be properly illuminated during periods when pedestrians may be present.

5.6 **Headroom**—A minimum headroom clearance of 6 ft 8 in. (2.03 m), measured from the walkway surface, shall be provided above all parts of the walkway. Where such clearance is not provided in existing structures, the low clearance portions of the walkway shall be safely padded, marked with safety contrast color coding (for example, see ANSI-Z535.1) and posted with appropriate warning signs.

### 5.7 Exterior Walkways:

5.7.1 Exterior walkways shall be maintained so as to provide safe walking conditions.

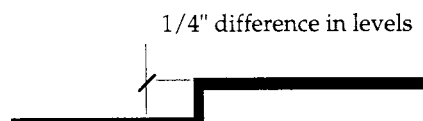


FIG. 1 Changes in Levels of Less Than ¼ in. (6 mm)