



# Skateboards

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According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 104,000 persons were treated in hospital emergency rooms in the year 2001, with skateboard related injuries. Sprains, fractures, contusions and abrasions were the most common types of injuries. Deaths due to collisions with cars and from falls also are reported.

Several factors, including risky stunts and irregular riding surfaces like steps, ramps and railings, are often involved in these incidents. Skateboard riding requires good balance and body control, yet many young skateboarders have not developed the necessary balance and do not react quickly enough to prevent injury.

## WHO GETS INJURED

Most of the emergency room reported injuries were to adolescents and young adults.

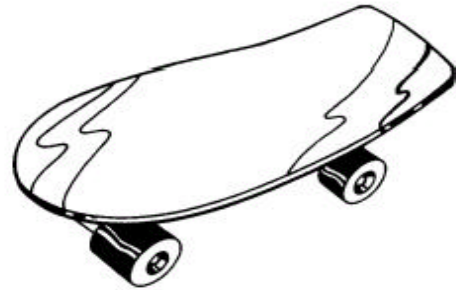
## ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Before riding, skateboarders should screen the area where they will be riding by checking for holes, bumps, rocks and any debris. Areas set aside especially for skateboarding generally have smoother riding surfaces.

Skateboarding in the street can result in collisions with cars causing serious injury and even death.

## THE SKATEBOARD

There are boards with varying characteristics for different types of riding ( i.e. slalom, freestyle, or speed). Some boards are rated to the weight of the intended user.



Before using their boards, riders should check them for hazards, such as loose, broken, or cracked parts; sharp edges on metal boards; slippery top surface; and wheels with nicks and cracks.

Serious defects should be corrected by a qualified repair technician.

## PROTECTIVE GEAR

Protective gear, such as helmets, wristguards, and elbow and knee pads, is recommended because it can reduce the number and severity of injuries.

Careful selection of protective gear is important. Consumers should look for comfort, design and function. In a helmet, for example, look for proper fit and a chin strap; make sure the helmet does not block the rider's vision and hearing.



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## TIPS FOR USING A SKATEBOARD

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission offers the following suggestions for safe skateboarding:

- \* Never ride in the street.
- \* Don't take chances:
  - Complicated tricks require careful practice and a specially designed area
  - Only one person per skateboard
  - Never grab onto a car, bus, truck or bicycle.
- \* Learning how to fall helps reduce your chances of being seriously injured.
  - If you are losing your balance, crouch down on the skateboard so that you will not have so far to fall.
  - In a fall, try to land on the fleshy parts of your body.
  - If you fall, try to roll rather than absorb the force with your arms.
  - Even though it may be difficult, during a fall try to relax your body, rather than stiffen.



The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission protects the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death from 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury, call CPSC's hotline at (800) 638-2772 or CPSC's teletypewriter at (800) 638-8270. Consumers can obtain this release and recall information at CPSC's web site at <http://www.cpsc.gov>. Consumers can report product hazards to [info@cpsc.gov](mailto:info@cpsc.gov).