

ECERS-3 Major and Minor Safety Hazards

The following examples are *likely* to be considered “major” and/or “minor” safety hazards, but will depend upon the observed *classroom circumstances* (supervision, impulsiveness of children, likelihood of serious injury, etc.).

Major hazard: “one where the risk of serious injury is very high” (p. 34)

Minor hazard: “either one where the consequences would not be as great [as a major hazard], or the accident would be less likely” (p. 34); “have a low risk of causing serious injury” (p. 24)

	Major	Minor
Electrical Outlets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncovered electrical outlet easily accessible (near water play, within interest or play area, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncovered electrical outlet which children are not likely to play with (hallway, high on wall, etc.)
Fall Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low climber is located on cement or other hard surface 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low climber with a fall zone that has almost enough cushioning (within 2 inches of the required depth) to meet the Consumer Product Safety Commission’s requirement for cushioning
Mulch Depth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 2 inches below the required depth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 2 inches below the required depth
Playground Fence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not protected by bollards from traffic on active road/parking lot near playground Fence height less than 48” where children typically play Gaps under fence where children typically play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small part of fence unprotected by bollards on a part of the playground where children do not typically play Fence height less than 48” where children do not typically play
Bleach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-strength bleach or bleach solution left within reach of children playing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-strength bleach or bleach solution stored up high, out of reach, but not locked
Entrapment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazard on a frequently used piece of equipment Fence entrapment in an area used often by children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazard located between the gate and fence, in a place where it is much less likely to cause a problem
Protrusion Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bolts (more than 2 threads exposed) on fences or equipment that children actively play near and/or show an interest in Gate latches on children’s eye level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bolts (more than two threads exposed) fences or equipment that children do not show interest in
Tripping Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposed tree roots located where children usually run, and tripping would cause a fall onto a cement surface 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exposed tree roots on a soft surface where children rarely run
Hand sanitizer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Left within reach of children playing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stored up high, out of reach
Safety Helmets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child wears helmet while on climbing equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child wears helmet when <i>not</i> riding a wheeled toy Child does not wear helmet when riding wheeled toy

Descriptions taken from:

Harms, Clifford, & Cryer (2015). Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (3rd ed.). Teachers College Press: New York.