

Fencing Requirements for Pools and Spas

According to the International Residential Code (IRC), a pool fence must be at least 48 inches (4 feet) high, with no more than 2 inches of space between the bottom of the fence and the ground and should have openings between vertical members no larger than 4 inches wide – essentially requiring a solid barrier around the pool to prevent unauthorized access by children.

Key Points about IRC Pool Fence Requirements:

Height:

- Minimum of 48 inches (4 feet) from the ground level on the side facing away from the pool

Gaps:

- Maximum of 2 inches between the bottom of the fence and the ground level

Vertical Member Spacing

- If the fence has horizontal and vertical members, the space between vertical members should not exceed 4 inches

Gates

- Gates must be self-latching and self-closing, with latches and locks out of a child's reach

Important Considerations:

Local Regulations – Always check your local building codes and subdivision covenants as they may have stricter pool fence requirements than the IRC.

Pool Covers – While a pool cover can be a safety feature, it is not a substitute for a proper fence unless it meets specific safety standards.

Current code enforcement is under 2018 International Swimming Pool and Spa Code