

## Budget Breakdown

While each playground project has unique aspects, most clients can expect certain costs when planning their new playground. We've created a "cheat sheet" to help answer the famous question:

**"How do I budget for this?"**

# PLANNING YOUR PLAYGROUND



20%-50%  
SURFACING



7%-15%  
FREIGHT



30%-40%  
INSTALLATION



40%-50%  
EQUIPMENT



IF APPLICABLE  
SALES/USE TAX

**luckydog**  
RECREATION  
*In pursuit of play.*

Congratulations! You've undertaken the exciting task of planning a new playground. Healthy, active lifestyles are essential at any (and every) age, and playgrounds provide an ideal place for community members to gather, converse, and play!

At this point, you're probably wondering where to begin. Planning for a playground may initially seem overwhelming, but we're here to help. Whether you're planning for a city park, daycare, neighborhood, church, or school, our handy **Playground Planning Guide** will help get you started.



## 1. DETERMINE YOUR BUDGET

Knowing your budget is very important when beginning the playground planning process. Even if you're unsure of the exact number (or it could change depending on grants, etc.), having at least a rough idea of your available budget will be extremely helpful.

This will allow our playground experts to select appropriate equipment for your project. We can also propose structures in different price ranges to give you options and flexibility.

### Typical playground budget breakdown:

- 20-50%: Product
- 20-90%: Surfacing
- 22-40%: Installation
- 7-15%: Freight

### Other items to consider:

- Old structure and surfacing removal (if necessary)
- Site preparation (excavation, subbase, sprinkler and landscape repairs)
- Borders & ADA Ramps (concrete or plastic options available)
- Supply and install shade shelters or other amenities (if needed)

Keep in mind that the percentages vary widely on some of these items (particularly safety surfacing) because a wide range of options are available. Don't let this alarm you, though; we'll help you choose the most appropriate options for your project and budget.

## 2. FIND THE RIGHT LOCATION

In addition to determining your budget, you'll also want to decide on the perfect location for your new playground. Is this a new play area, or will the new play equipment replace existing structures? If so, you'll want to factor the cost of removing old structures into the final project.

Knowing the size of your play area will also help determine which structures are best suited for your project. If space is tight, we may recommend one of our "space saver" layouts, which pack a ton of play value into a smaller footprint. This is important because each piece of equipment has a designated "use zone," which ensures structures are placed at an appropriate distance from one another (and other things like trees) so that they can be used safely.

Don't have a perfect square-shaped area to work with? Do not worry; many people have the same concern! We're experienced in designing creative solutions for various traditional and non-traditional spaces. If your chosen area is long and skinny, has a slope to it, or has other irregularities, we will work to design a playground that works perfectly with your space.

### 3. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

In addition to knowing your budget and available space, it's important to consider who will be using the play equipment. This is a huge factor in determining which play equipment is right for your project. Choosing playground equipment designed for your target age group ensures children are appropriately challenged while reducing the risk of injury.

Will the play equipment be for a daycare center and strictly used by children under 5? Is it the new playground for a primary school? Or will this playground be the centerpiece of the community park and, therefore, need to accommodate all ages, from toddlers to adults? Knowing who will use the equipment will help us select the perfect structures for your project. We even offer adult outdoor fitness equipment, which has become increasingly popular among parks and community walking trails.

Many play structures are also wheelchair accessible and ADA compliant, making creating an inclusive play experience for everyone easier than ever. Accessibility will also play a role in which type of surfacing you choose, as some are more conducive to wheelchairs and strollers than others.

### 4. DREAM UP YOUR PERFECT PLAYGROUND!

Now that you know your budget, location, and who will be using the playground, it's time for real fun to begin!

Are you looking for a traditional play structure with various slides and climbers? Or does your project call for something more modern, like an obstacle course with various ropes-style challenges? A themed playground like a pirate ship or castle may suit your selected location.

You'll also want to consider other items to complete your play area, like freestanding play equipment, benches, and picnic tables. If you can dream it, we can build it.

## 5. LAY OUT YOUR TIMELINE

The first question to ask when establishing a timeline is, "When does the playground need to be completed?" Having this date in mind will help set the expectations of everyone involved in the project. Working backward from the target day, you'll want to make sure there's enough time to:

- Communicate your vision to our playground specialists
- Allow our designers time to create some awesome layout/equipment proposals
- Share those options with your community/client/team
- If necessary, return to the design process
- Confirm the design and proposed equipment
- Complete and place the order
- Allow for transit time (can be anywhere from 2-8 weeks, depending on the equipment)
- Remove old/existing equipment and surfacing, if needed
- Install the new equipment (a few days to a few weeks, again, depending on equipment - and weather!)
- Certify the site
- Open the playground to be enjoyed by the community!

## 6. GET IN TOUCH

Suppose you've already completed the first five steps—well done! Perhaps you have a fairly solid vision of what the new play area should look like. Or maybe you really have no idea where to go from here. That's okay, too! Wherever you are in the process, we are here to help.

If you can provide us with answers to steps 1-4, we'll create a custom project proposal to fit your needs. Of course, at any time during the planning process, you're welcome to reach out to us at (800) 388-2196, and we'll be happy to address your questions.

Our team of experts will work with you from initial planning through installation and beyond. Our goal is to ensure the process goes as smoothly as possible so your community can enjoy the new playground for many years to come. After all, we build fun!