General Requirement
The 2015 International Residential Code (with Washington State Amendments) requires handrails on at least one side of each continuous run of treads or flight with four or more risers. This handout is intended to provide a general understanding of the code requirements and does not address the subject in great detail. For more information, see IRC section R311.

Typical Handrail Elevation

Type I Handrails
**Type II Handrails**
Handrails with a perimeter greater than 6-1/4"

1-1/4" minimum - 2-3/4" maximum

Sand smooth, no sharp corners

1-3/4" minimum

3/4" maximum

5/16" minimum

1-1/2" minimum

**Unacceptable Handrails**
The following examples do not meet minimum code requirements:

No finger grooves

Nominal 2x4 is too wide for use as handrail