

Spring Playground Planning Checklist



SPRING 2026

Spring is prime time for playground projects. If you want kids playing by late summer or fall, now is the time to start.

Start now for a late summer or fall ribbon cutting — planning takes 4–6+ months from start to installation!

1 DEFINE YOUR VISION & GOALS

- Identify who the playground is for (ages 2–5, 5–12, or mixed)
- Determine your space size and any site constraints
- Establish must-have features (shade, inclusive elements, swings, climbers)
- Consider long-term plans (Phase 1 of a larger master plan?)
- Loop in key decision-makers early (school boards, HOAs, parks departments)

2 SET A REALISTIC BUDGET

- Playground equipment
- Safety surfacing (rubber, turf, or engineered wood fiber)
- Site work (grading, drainage, concrete, demolition)
- Freight and installation
- Shade structures or site amenities
- Contingency funds (typically 5–10%)

Site work, installation, and surfacing often equal or exceed equipment costs — plan accordingly.

3 CONTACT YOUR LOCAL REP

Bringing your Grounds For Play rep in early saves time, money, and frustration. Your rep helps you:

- Understand realistic budget ranges
- Develop a custom design for your space
- Explore surfacing options and lifecycle costs
- Get renderings for board presentations or fundraising
- Evaluate drainage, grading, utilities, and accessibility
- Navigate permitting and coordinate timelines

4 PLAN FOR FUNDRAISING (IF NEEDED)

Fundraising can take 6 months to over a year — start now while spring momentum is on your side.

- Consider capital campaigns
- Explore sponsorship opportunities
- Research grants using our Grant & Stimulus Guide
- Offer naming opportunities for benches, shade structures, or features

Spring momentum makes fundraising easier as families focus on outdoor spaces!

5 UNDERSTAND THE TIMELINE

Want a **fall ribbon cutting**? Spring planning is critical — here's what to expect:

PHASE	TIMEFRAME
Design & revisions	2–6 weeks
Budget approval / fundraising	2–8+ weeks
Ordering & manufacturing	4–10 weeks
Site prep & installation	1–3 weeks

6 EVALUATE YOUR SITE EARLY

Before a playground can be installed, evaluate your site and speak with an expert on utilities, permitting, and insurance.

- Review drainage and grading needs
- Identify underground utilities
- Confirm local permitting requirements
- Contact your insurance provider

7 LOCK IN INSTALLATION DATES EARLY

Installation schedules fill quickly — secure your slot once manufacturing is underway.

- Confirm manufacturing start with your rep
- Coordinate schedules with other contractors
- Reserve your installer's availability

8 PREPARE FOR DELIVERY & INSTALLATION

Equipment arrives by semi-truck or flatbed — not a standard delivery vehicle.

- Confirm site access for large delivery trucks
- Clear the construction zone in advance
- Have someone on-site to receive the shipment
- Communicate the schedule to staff, parents, or community