



## MOUNDS FOR PLAY EQUIPMENT

A good playground is not necessarily an expensive one, but one which is imaginative. Give a child an expensive gift and often they turn around and play with the cardboard box.

Do you remember when you were a child and how much fun you had rolling down a hill or running down a mound with your arms wide open and the breeze rushing past your face and through your outstretched fingers? These are the simple things children of today enjoy just as much as we did.

This is why a simple sand mound can be so much fun. Soil mounds provide a three dimensional aspect to an otherwise flat area where children can view the world from a different level. Mounds can be crawled over, hidden behind, lounged on and can have a wide variety of play items added.

Mounds should be constructed with a one in three gradient for mowing and to allow children access without slipping. This means for every one metre in height, the mound needs to be three metres in width.

To allow use of a tractor-mounted mower, the gradient should be one in four. An extra one metre width should also be allowed on top of the mound for a flat area to allow the addition of landings and insertion of erosion reducing material. Therefore a one metre high mound (sufficient for the smaller child) should be seven metres in diameter.

A variety of items can be inserted on to or through the mound. These can include slides which are installed onto the mound. This increases safety by reducing the fall height. This also reduces costs as the slide is less than 600 mm above ground therefore soft fall is not required. A synthetic product such as wet pour rubber, mats or synthetic grass should be installed at the top and bottom of the slide to eliminate erosion. Timber sleepers can be used at the top of the slide for this purpose.



Tyres can be inserted by constructing a series of 'steps' into the soil mound. Lay the tyres beginning at the bottom and thoroughly compact clay into each tyre. The second layer is positioned over the joint of the first layer the same way a brick wall is bonded. The third and subsequent layers are constructed the same way, ensuring each level overlaps the lower one to ensure they 'bond' together.

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For more information **(08) 6244 4880**  
Poisons Information Centre **13 11 26**

Partner:



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