

PICNIC TABLES

Where to put picnic tables:

- locate tables in convenient and visible locations to ensure use. Place them next to areas of activity, such as playgrounds, to allow access for all users
- locate tables in a variety of locations that offer both sun and shade
- locate picnic tables in areas where users are offered maximum comfort, bearing in mind wind and seasonal variations locate picnic tables to meet habits and needs of existing and intended park users. Consider the social setting and traditions.
- provide tables close to barbeques and seating
- co-locate (cluster) furniture to avoid clutter

Ensure access and usability by:

- locate tables on a concrete pad to mitigate wearing of the surface beneath. Ensure any concrete pad is flush with the ground so that the pad does not protrude from the surrounding ground surface on any side. Extend the pad to enable prams and wheelchairs to park alongside table
- Providing tables that accommodate a wide range of abilities, ages and physical needs where practicable. Allow for wheelchair and mobility scooter use
- using centralised legs or plinths which enable wheelchairs to push in beneath the table top
- connecting tables to accessible paths
- ensure that water drains away from tables and that they are free from ponded surface water
- allowing a 1000mm clearance at one or both ends of the table between the edge of the table and the concrete pad, for wheelchair usability. A 900mm clearance between benches and a 600mm clearance between the edge of the table and the post should also be allowed
- allowing a minimum clearance of 200mm at the ends and 400mm at the sides of tables where wheelchair use is unlikely

Ensure safety and visibility by:

- locate tables to achieve optimum visibility so that people can see and be seen through clear sightlines
- positioning tables to minimise hazard and error, e.g. out of the line of travel to assist the blind and partially sighted

Ensure good aesthetics and the right materials by:

- incorporating graffiti protection, skate deterrents (for benches next to paving) and standardised components to reduce maintenance costs
- using natural materials with low-toxicity, sourced from companies with ethical manufacturing processes where possible. Try to source tables or materials from local suppliers to avoid excessive transportation.
- ensuring the materials used are durable and appropriate for the location of the table, e.g. marine grade stainless steel components in coastal environments
- using enclosed and reinforced fittings to mitigate theft where necessary
- avoiding tables which function as sitting surfaces, as sitting on eating surfaces is culturally offensive to Maori
- considering the resourceful manufacture of table elements, including ease of supply and life expectancy

- designing tables so parts can be easily replaced, to avoid the need to dispose of the whole element
- exploring the use of recycled materials or the reuse of existing elements to form these structures
- ensuring any proposed timber comes from a sustainably managed forest and is approved by one of the following:
 - Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) - an international, non-governmental organisation supporting a scheme for forest products, which provides a credible guarantee that the product comes from a well-managed forest
 - New Zealand forestry industry, through its National Standard for Environmental Certification of well-managed Plantation Forests in New Zealand
 - Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) - an independent, non-governmental organisation, which promotes sustainably managed forests through independent third party certification. These certifications can be requested from timber suppliers
- exploring alternatives to treated timber or hardwoods, such as recycled plastic or composite decking timber
- applying graffiti guard protection
- assessing alternative sites, colours and materials that may be more appropriate
- considering what will happen to picnic tables once they have passed their park life. Aim to select materials that can be disposed sustainably

Ensure easy maintenance by:

- ensuring all components, materials and finishes can be serviced and maintained by New Zealand based contractors
- selecting picnic tables with a minimum lifespan of 20 years

Good practice examples

<p><i>Onepoto Domain, Northcote</i></p> <p><i>The use of durable materials ensures the picnic table furniture will last longer.</i></p>	
<p><i>Olympic Park, New Lynn</i></p> <p><i>Concrete bases underneath picnic tables mitigate the wear of the ground surface beneath.</i></p>	

Browns Bay Beachfront, Browns Bay

This picnic table is located in a popular position for public recreation and optimising views beyond.



The Promenade, Takapuna

Picnic tables should have at least one open end to ensure lesser abled people can slide their feet in.

