Stair *rise*, *going* and headroom in England

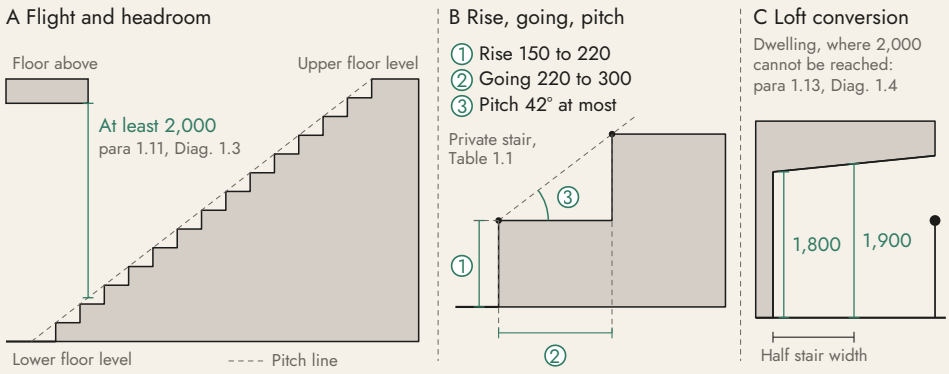
Rise, going, pitch and headroom for private, utility and general access stairs, from Table 1.1 of Approved Document K (2013 edition, England), with a section drawing and a worked set-out.

Compliance guidance. Figures on this page come from *Approved Document K: Protection from falling, collision and impact*, 2013 edition, for use in England, which we read on gov.uk on 5 November 2026: Table 1.1 is reproduced as printed. Check the current edition and your building control body before you rely on any figure: the Building Safety Regulator opened a call for evidence on Part K on 19 October 2026 and says the current requirements and guidance remain in place while it is under review. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have their own rules. This is compliance guidance, not legal or engineering advice.

AT A GLANCE

Stair category	Rise (mm)	Going (mm)	Notes in Table 1.1
Private stair (one dwelling only)	150 to 220	220 to 300	Maximum pitch 42 degrees (note 1). For external tapered steps and stairs of dwellings that are part of the building, going at least 280 mm (note 2).
Utility stair	150 to 190	250 to 400	Escape, access for maintenance, or other than the usual day-to-day route.
General access stair	150 to 170	250 to 400	Usual day-to-day route for all users. School buildings: preferred going 280 mm and rise 150 mm (note 3).

Table 1.1 of Approved Document K, 2013 edition (England), minimum to maximum, in millimetres. Use any rise in the range with any going in the range that complies with the notes (para 1.3). The normal relationship is twice the rise plus the going (2R + G) between 550 and 700 mm.



Section of a stair flight (A), a step detail (B) and the loft-conversion headroom (C), in millimetres. Key to B: 1 rise, 2 going, 3 pitch. From Approved Document K, 2013 edition (England), Table 1.1, paras 1.2, 1.3, 1.11, 1.13 and Diagrams 1.1, 1.3, 1.4. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio; schematic, not for production.

HEADROOM

All buildings	At least 2,000 mm (para 1.11, Diagram 1.3).
Loft conversion, dwelling	Where 2,000 mm cannot be reached: 1,900 mm at half the stair width, 1,800 mm at the edge (para 1.13, Diagram 1.4).
Escape routes, other than dwellings	2,000 mm clear on all means of escape routes, except in doorways (para 1.12).

WIDTH, FLIGHTS, LANDINGS AND STEPS

· Width, other than dwellings: 1,200 mm between walls, strings or upstands; 1,000 mm between handrails (para 1.15).

- Flights and landings: more than 36 consecutive risers need a change of direction of 30 degrees or more (para 1.17); landings as wide and as long as the narrowest flight width (para 1.20).
- Other than dwellings: utility stairs 16 risers per flight at most; general access 12, exceptionally 16 in small premises; no single steps (para 1.18); risers not open (para 1.6); nosings 55 mm or more, protruding 25 mm at most (para 1.7). Dwellings may have open risers with a 16 mm tread overlap and no 100 mm sphere gap (para 1.9).

WORKED SET-OUT (OUR ARITHMETIC): PRIVATE STAIR, 2,700 MM FLOOR TO FLOOR

Risers	Rise (mm)	Going (mm)	2R + G (mm)	Pitch	Within private-stair limits?
12	225.0	250	700	42.0°	No: rise over 220 mm
14	192.9	250	636	37.6°	Yes
16	168.8	250	588	34.0°	Yes

Going 250 mm throughout; 13 and 15 risers also pass (see the web page). N risers give N minus 1 goings when the top step is the floor above.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

PRIVATE STAIR

Stair to [location], serving one dwelling only: [ ] risers of [ ] mm rise (150 to 220 mm) and [ ] mm going (220 to 300 mm), nosing to nosing; 2R + G [ ] mm (550 to 700 mm); pitch [ ] degrees (maximum 42). Approved Document K (2013 edition, England) Table 1.1; rise and going constant through the flight (para 1.5). Headroom not less than 2,000 mm (para 1.11) [loft conversion only: para 1.13, Diagram 1.4]. Total rise confirmed on site before fabrication.

STAIR IN A BUILDING OTHER THAN A DWELLING

Stair to [location] as a [utility / general access] stair: [ ] risers of [ ] mm rise ([150 to 190 / 150 to 170] mm) and [ ] mm going (250 to 400 mm), nosing to nosing; not more than [16 / 12] risers between landings (para 1.18); risers not open (para 1.6); nosings contrasting, 55 mm or more wide, protruding 25 mm at most (para 1.7); landings 1,200 mm clear or more (para 1.23); 1,000 mm or more between handrails (para 1.15).

SET-OUT INFORMATION FOR THE SHOP DRAWING

Stair set-out: finished floor to finished floor [ ] mm; [ ] risers at [ ] mm; [ ] goings at [ ] mm; pitch [ ] degrees; tightest headroom [ ] mm at [location]. Dimensions verified on site before fabrication.

TERMS USED

Going

The depth of a tread from nosing to nosing, less any overlap with the tread above. The rise is the height between treads (Approved Document K, Appendix A).

Pitch

The angle between the horizontal and the line joining the nosings; 42 degrees at most for a private stair (Table 1.1 note 1).

Private, utility and general access stair

Private: used for only one dwelling. Utility: for escape, maintenance access or other than the usual day-to-day route. General access: the normal day-to-day route for all users (Appendix A).

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- Approved Document K: Protection from falling, collision and impact, 2013 edition, England: read in full on 5 November 2026.
- gov.uk: Building Safety Regulator call for evidence on Part K (19 Oct 2026): a review; current guidance stays in place.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/stair-rise-going-and-headroom. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.