

SKATEBOARD PARKS: WHO NEEDS THEM?

Skateboarders say that if your town doesn't *have* a skate park, then your town *is* a skate park. In other words, they will skate anywhere in town. This is annoying to townspeople, but it's also dangerous for skaters.

In many places, there are laws against skateboarding. But lots of skaters do it anyway. And that's just what bugs the townspeople. They see skateboarding on the sidewalks, on the roads, and in schoolyards. It's loud, it's dangerous and it's breaking the law.

What's the answer to this problem? Two words: Skateboarding parks! Skateparks have been proven to be good for skaters and townspeople alike. Here are some reasons:

- **Skateparks are safer for skateboarders.** Most serious accidents happen on public streets where skaters have to compete with traffic. Every skateboard fatality in the last five years in the USA involved a motor vehicle. Actually, in a safe environment with proper equipment are [less likely to be injured when skating](#) than when playing basketball!
- **Skateparks promote good health and fitness.** Skateboarding is good for the heart, muscles and balance. According to the [University of Southern California](#), skating relieves stress and improves fitness. Skateboarding challenges both the brain and the body. It requires the individual to make complex moves while exerting lots of energy. When skateboarding is safer, more people are willing to choose this fitness activity.
- **Skateparks are good for public safety.** When young people have an outlet like skateboarding, they are less likely to take part in risky behavior like drinking or drugs. For example, a skatepark was built in a high-crime neighbourhood of Wilmington, California. It is a popular hangout spot for local teens and has [helped reduce violent crime in the area by 90%](#).

There are over 80 million skateboarders around the world. Our communities need skateboard parks to make sure these boarders are safe - and so are the people around them.

BEFORE READING

This passage is about Skateboard Parks or Skateparks. What do you know about skateboarding? You might want to watch this 7-minute video on [10 Skatepark Tricks for Beginners](#). Can you tell by the title what the author's opinion of Skateparks is? Read to see what this author would like you to believe.

WHILE YOU ARE READING

As you read, be aware of techniques this writer is using to convince you of her opinion. Think carefully about what parts you agree and disagree with. Be aware of words that generate emotions, like *safety* or *fatalities* (deaths).

Sentences underlined in blue are hyperlinks. Click on the hyperlinks if you want to get more information from the internet.

AFTER READING

Some things to think about:

1. Why do you think the author used a title that suggests there is no need for Skate Parks?
2. Why do you think some towns don't want skateparks?
3. What does this sentence mean: "*make complex moves while exerting lots of energy*"?
4. What information is missing from this argument?