Playground Turf Maintenance

Artificial Grass is a functional and great alternative to natural grass that looks beautiful and keeps your outdoor space, dog parks, and playgrounds looking green all year round. Synthetic turf conserves water, reducing the frequent use of harmful chemicals and eliminating the time-consuming and expensive upkeep experienced with natural grass. For the most part, artificial turf is carefree and very low maintenance. However, it's crucial to adhere to the recommended upkeep and minor maintenance routines to ensure the longevity of your turf. Please consider the following actions to maintain your green space and enjoy your artificial grass surface for many years following the installation.

1. Routine brushing and preparation of high-traffic areas.
   - Brushing your turf against the grain will help prevent long-use matting due to high traffic. A power broom or a nylon push broom is recommended for this maintenance. Frequency of brooming will depend on the regular foot traffic of the playground or gathering areas. High-use areas such as swings and slide exits should be broomed every month or as needed depending on use.
   - It is crucial to ensure that infill levels meet the specified guidelines to maintain proper ballast, maximize the benefits of routine brooming, and ensure adequate impact performance in play equipment use zones. Use a drop spreader for even application. Typically, a half to ¾"inch of turf fibers should be showing above the top of the infill.



(Fig. 1) Power Broom.



(Fig. 2) Drop Spreader

- Cleaning and sanitizing to prevent odors and stains. Odors and pollen can be an issue if proper awareness and maintenance are not adhered to after pet use, when spills may happen, or if the season requires it. To clean your turf and help control odors, it is recommended to use a solution comprised of four tablespoons of Dawn liquid soap, with equal parts vinegar and water,

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sprayed over problematic areas. The solution should be applied one hour before rinsing your turf to allow the disinfecting antimicrobial properties of vinegar to break down and sanitize your turf. For a more serious approach, or when cleaning pet waste, it's recommended to use an industrial strength enzyme-based solution and cleaner Like ProVetLogic for enzyme odor-eating power. This also should be applied an hour before rinsing.
Cleaning Gum: freeze the adhered gum with freeze spray or an ice bag and chip off the hardened gum. May require more than one application. If any residue remains, spray a small amount of WD40 to a rag to wipe off stubborn stains.

2. Weeds and nut sedge maintenance.
   - While weeds are usually not problematic with synthetic turf, they can sometimes appear in the perimeter of the turf area, the seams, and in topical infill levels where nut sedge seeds may be displaced into the infill level of your turf. Most weeds and nut sedges are topical and superficial and can be raked away using a poly plastic leaf rake to remove the topical nut sedge. For major problematic areas that are not topical issues, where the root has taken hold along the seam or around the perimeter, it is recommended to use Round-up or non-harsh plant-based natural alternatives to kill over and undergrowth. (These occurrences can be significantly reduced by utilizing a geotextile underlayment before installation. Would omit this line because it is usually not included and over brock is not recommended by manufacturer)
3. Burns and melting.
   - Your turf is UV-stablized and protected from everyday sunlight, but it can melt or even burn when exposed to concentrated effects of reflected sunlight. When considering synthetic turf for your next playground or home, it is essential to ensure shiny, reflective surfaces, Low-E windows, lacquer-coated garden tools, and shiny toys are all appropriately addressed. For treaded windows, it's recommended to use screens, window films or tints such as Turf Guard to prevent infrared sunlight that can cause burns and melting on your turf. Garden tools and shiny toys left in the yard can cause burns by reflecting the sunlight off the object. Putting away all toys and garden tools left in the turfed area is essential to prevent this damage. Fire pits Should have fire bricks or pavers placed

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underneath areas where bonfires or backyard fire pits will be utilized to prevent melting and burns caused by fire and heat.

4. Displaced infill.
    - Turf usually will not have issues with displaced infill, but natural disasters, storm runoff, and high winds on dry days can cause a slight displacement of infill. It's essential to have the contractor revisit the site after natural disasters or an every five to seven-year increments to inspect the turf. If the contractor deems it necessary, .5 pounds to 1 pound of infill can be added to the turf. Minor displacement can be addresses with the routine brushing in section 1
5. Static electricity.
    - While most turf areas will not experience mild static electricity, playgrounds can be an exception when playground equipment is installed near or within the turfed area. Friction from playground equipment use over turf can cause a static charge. While most turf and many infill products contain antistatic properties, static can still be a minor issue. To eliminate the event of static charges, the surface of the turf can be treated. The solution to treat your turf is simple: mix one part Downy with wrinkle release and four parts water in a five-gallon sprayer and spray the entire surface once every two months.
6. Tears or punctures.
    - Tears and punctures to the turf can happen when sharp objects or heavy equipment are pulled over the turf carelessly. To eliminate these from happening, it is essential to remember that it’s not safe to have sharp objects around playgrounds in the first place, but most importantly, to set up guidelines and rules to protect the patron and the integrity of the turf in the backyard or playground. If tears happen, they can be patched with matching turf. The best turf to use for the patch is a leftover from the installation. If no remnants are available, you can order turf from your supplier. Color will not be exact due to fading of your original turf. Repairs should only be conducted by professional turf installers. A great tip to ensure the patch used is in the same dye lot for situations with tears and punctures, it is recommended that a 15’x4’ section be ordered, which can be stored away in the event of a rare tear or puncture.
7. Debris and leaves.

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- Debris and leaves will be a seasonal occurrence. Leaf blowers and plastic poly rakes are recommended only to remove weather and seasonal debris.

8. Rodents, gophers, moles, and groundhogs.
   - While damage from wildlife is sporadic in a playground and near known problematic areas for rodents or pests, it is essential to consider that before the installation. Underlayments can be used before installing synthetic turf. Products like rodent wire or wire mesh are used below the turf to prevent burrowing.
9. Turf heat.
   - Like concrete or sand on the beach, turf may feel hot underfoot in the hot, sunny days of summer. It's important to consider sun sails, shades, and awnings to provide shade for the end user. Irrigation systems and sprinklers can also be used 30 minutes before playing to reduce the heat significantly. Some organic infills may offer lower temperatures too. Ask your turf installation or sales specialist.
10. Weight limits.
    - Since most installations are over a compacted stone base for drainage purposes, owners are responsible for any repairs due to heavy equipment like front-end loaders, tractors or telehandlers which may create ruts and damage turf and/or foam panels under the surface. General guidelines, any utility vehicles or heavy equipment driven over the turf that causes damage to the turf or sub-base is not covered under warranty. Any play equipment that is placed over top of turf may create damage such as holes, divots or rips and is not covered under warranty.

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