



TIPS FOR MAINTAINING SYNTHETIC TURF

The demand for synthetic turf fields is increasing each year with more schools and universities switching from natural grass. Benefits include less maintenance, little or no watering, and no mowing or fertilizing. Artificial turf fields are level and reliable, with no worries of potholes or mud. They can host more activities, more often, even after inclement weather. If maintained properly a good quality synthetic turf field can last 10 or more years before needing replacement. Here is some helpful advice from a turf professional to help you maximize your investment, while maintaining the performance and playability of your synthetic turf field.

"The most effective way to maximize the performance and playability of a synthetic field is to regularly cross-brush your field," said Hellas Construction Vice President of Turf Operations Mauricio Espinosa. Cross-brushing consists of brushing against the grain, nap, or sweep of the turf fibers. "By brushing against the grain, the fibers will be fluffed up and not bent and tangle up, which keeps the field looking new and traction or ball roll at its best," said Espinosa.

Cross-brushing a standard size football or soccer field can take about two hours. Espinosa recommends bi-weekly cross-brushing during heavy use or during the first six weeks after initial field installation. "Cross-brushing twice monthly on a regular basis will help to prolong the life of the turf fibers, ensuring your field looks and plays its best for years to come," said Espinosa.

"It is also important to avoid letting heavy trucks or equipment drive on the field," said Espinosa. "This can damage the turf fibers, stone base or pad system, and compact the infill, making the field harder and shortening the lifespan of the field."

"Make sure to regularly inspect the turf," Espinosa said. "Inspecting synthetic turf fields in the Spring and after each event, year-round, will give you time to quickly make repairs, if any damage was found, and avoid further damage or injuries to players."

Another important tip to extend the life of a synthetic turf field is, "Hire a professional that has the specialized equipment and experienced personnel to deep clean and groom your field at least once a year." Espinosa said, "Over the course of a year, a football field can accumulate broken fibers, discarded trash, jewelry, helmet hardware, spikes, and other metal debris that can create an unsafe playing surface for players or damage the turf."

Hellas offers a Clean Sweep® Service to deep clean and de-compact turf. "It uses a specially-designed machine that brushes across the top layer of the turf and sweeps up loose rubber and debris. It redistributes the infill back into the playing surface, while a magnet picks up ferrous material that is deep in the infill. The result is a softer surface and a much cleaner field," said Espinosa.

"Synthetic turf fields have many benefits and add needed flexibility to any athletic program," Espinosa said. "It's a smart investment that benefits not just the football team, but everyone the community."