

# Synthetic Field Grooming Recommendations

**Grooming techniques are taught by a manufacturer representative when your new field is completed. It is highly recommend choosing one staff member to be responsible for the field maintenance and necessary equipment and for anyone who may groom to attend the training.**

Liken your new synthetic field to that of carpet in your home. Cleaning debris from the field and using your manufacturer approved grooming equipment will help to keep your fibers standing tall and give the field a plush appearance. Always use a nylon, soft bristle drag system approved or designed by your field's manufacturer.

For a multi-purpose facility, grooming typically takes 2 hours and consists of driving a utility vehicle equipped with an approved drag brush attachment back and forth across the field to stand or "brush" the fibers in your system. For best results, grooming should be done during dry weather and when the field is dry to the touch.

## **How often should you groom?**

New fields should be groomed once a week for the first two months upon installation to remove excess or loose fibers. Following the break-in period, your manufacturer may recommend grooming your field following approximately 60 hours of use or no less than once per month, whichever is first.

## **Guidelines on hours of play and calculating usage**

1 hour of recreational play = 1 hour of usage *Gym classes*

1 hour of moderate play = 2 hours of usage *Soccer or lacrosse*

1 hour of aggressive play = 3 hours usage *Football, rugby, marching band*

## **Grooming a rectangular field**

Proper grooming is dependent upon your field layout and should be done in the same direction as the seams to avoid excess wear on seam areas. For a field that is rectangular in shape, such as football, soccer, lacrosse or field hockey, groom the field from sideline to sideline, alternating the direction of travel as shown in the photo below.

**For example:** Begin grooming in the direction of the home side and return towards the visiting side on successive grooming cycles.



## Grooming a baseball field

For a baseball or softball field layout, groom base paths beginning at home plate, moving to first base, second base, third base and back to the home plate area similar to the way an athlete would run the bases. Grooming your outfield, foul areas and warning tracks as shown below.



## Infill Displacement

In areas that receive significant and repetitive play such as goal mouths, foul lines, and penalty kick areas, you may notice that the infill will become displaced. This typically occurs over a long period of time in concentrated areas of the field due to kicking or other repetitive motions on the surface. If at any time the infill becomes displaced, simply brush it back into place using a medium stiff, nylon bristle brush to ensure an even playing surface with the remainder of the field.

It is important to monitor these high use areas on a regular basis to ensure that proper infill levels are maintained across the entire surface. Not only can an area low on infill damage the turf fiber and backing in the area from excessive wear and tear, but it may also present a safety hazard.

Infill displacement can also occur when using equipment such as a snow plow on the surface. While the plow is not intended to touch the surface during plowing, often times infill will inadvertently be picked up during the process. If this happens, simply brush or re-disperse the infill evenly onto the field once the snow has melted.



## Static Electricity

Static electricity is the accumulation of electrical charges on the surface of a material. It is most likely to form when the air is dry or the humidity is low. While it is not harmful, static can be an annoyance to athletes on the field. Find a remnant of your synthetic turf approximately 3' wide and 3-6' long and soak the piece in water until it's saturated. Attach the turf to your utility vehicle so that the fiber of the remnant and that of your surface are face to face. Drag it across your field as in a typical grooming pattern. Be sure to keep the piece of turf wet at all times to neutralize the charge (re-wet the turf roughly 5-6 times for a full size field). For extreme cases, a solution of 1 cup fabric softener to 5 gallons of water can also be used.

## Grooming after Special Events such as Concerts or Graduation Ceremonies

It is a good practice to get in the habit of occasionally using a drag magnet on your field to catch debris such as bobby pins, earrings or other metallic items that may land on your field of play. These items are potential safety hazards and could cause a laceration or more serious injury if protruding from the surface.