



NATURAL VS. ARTIFICIAL

Making a decision between a natural surface and artificial turf for your ballfield is complicated with long-term ramifications that deserve a deeper dive.

Many assume going artificial means less maintenance and more field availability. But hold on... there's much more to consider. Each organization must carefully consider the impact of their playing field decision and how it will affect athletes, the organization's short- and long-term financial responsibilities, as well as the environmental impact to the region.

HERE ARE A FEW IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER ...

ARTIFICIAL TURF	NATURAL SURFACES
Higher installation costs at \$275K to \$1.5M+	Lower installation costs at \$100K to \$1M
8-10 year lifespan	15-20 years (with minor renovations)
Can handle heavy, year-round use	Occasional downtime needed for recovery
Less frequent maintenance required	More regular maintenance needed
Faster ground balls and higher, unpredictable hops	Consistent, more predictable ball bounce
Higher risk for non-contact injuries	More forgiving surface for safer play
Potential for extreme surface temperatures (can exceed 160°F)	Naturally regulated lower surface temperature (rarely exceeds 90°F)
Often contains "forever chemicals" and metals	May require pesticide application
Non-recyclable materials, not accepted at landfills	Positive environmental benefits

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE COMPARISON INFORMATION

ARTIFICIAL TURF

NATURAL SURFACES

USAGE & DURABILITY

CAN WITHSTAND HEAVY, YEAR-ROUND USE

Designed for high-traffic environments, handling multiple, back-to-back games per day. It is resistant to rain, helping avoid cancellations. Can be available for use year-round, regardless of weather.

CLIMATE AND MAINTENANCE DEPENDENT

Requires occasional downtime to recover from heavy use. Proper construction, surface grade and maintenance will minimize rainfall recovery time. Not available during winter months in northern climates.

MAINTENANCE NEEDS

LESS FREQUENT, BUT NOT MAINTENANCE-FREE

Periodic brushing, replenishment, and sanitization of rubber infill. Frequent maintenance in high-wear areas to correct rubber migration and turf seam separation.

FREQUENT MAINTENANCE REQUIRED

Turfgrass requires aerifying and overseeding, mowing, watering, fertilizing and possibly pesticide applications.



Many parks and athletic fields are built in flood-prone areas. While neither artificial turf nor natural grass fields are immune to damage from heavy rain or flooding, natural fields are typically less expensive and easier to revive. Artificial turf fields have higher risk of partial or full destruction as a result of an extreme rain event or flooding.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

INSTALLATION COST \$275K to \$1.5 million +

LIFESPAN Must be fully replaced every 8-10 years in most cases. In addition, replacement of high-wear areas may be necessary within this time span.

INSTALLATION COST \$100K to \$1 million

LIFESPAN Lasts 15-20 years before major renovation is typically needed. Expect minor renovations (lip removal and infield regrading) 3-5 times in that span.

PLAYER SAFETY & EXPERIENCE

FEEL Player's cleats may "stick" in synthetic fibers, potentially leading to increase in non-contact injuries.

FEEL Provides a more forgiving and predictable playing surface for safer play.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

NEGATIVE IMPACTS TO LOCAL ECOSYSTEM

Largely non-recyclable and often banned in landfills. Sheds microplastics, rubber infill into local watershed.

POSITIVE IMPACTS TO LOCAL ECOSYSTEM

Natural grass sequesters carbon, filters rainwater, and provides habitat for pollinators.

We can help you make the best choice. Get started today at DuraEdge.com/contact-us.