

A GUIDE TO RUGBY TURF 2015



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Technology in the area of artificial playing surfaces has improved greatly over time and these advances have resulted in artificial turf being widely used for many sports, including rugby. World Rugby Regulation 22 through the Rugby Turf Performance Specification sets a minimum standard for artificial turf for use in rugby union.

The Rugby Turf Performance Specification stipulates the testing and approval procedures which manufacturers and other entities involved in the installation of rugby turf must comply with in order for their products to be approved for use in rugby union. The game may not be played on any rugby turf which does not meet the requirements of World Rugby Regulation 22, the Rugby Turf Performance Specification, and Law 1 of the Laws of the Game. The Rugby Turf Performance Specification is an evolving document and will continue to be amended over time as technology and research develops in the area of rugby turf and other artificial playing surfaces.

A structure has been implemented to regulate and standardise the development, performance and maintenance of rugby turf worldwide through the appointment of World Rugby Preferred Turf Producers and Accredited Test Institutes.

WHY USE RUGBY TURF

Playing Time

- At least 30 hours playing time per week
- Perfect for intense usage
- Great fit for multi-sport facilities

Financial

- Less but more specific maintenance
- Additional revenue generator due to longer playing hours

Environmental

- Less water required
- Recyclable

Climatic

- Better suited to extreme weather conditions
- Consistent surface throughout the playing season

WHO TO USE

World Rugby Accredited Test Institutes

Test Institutes that meet the criteria set out by World Rugby and FIFA and pass an annual testing regime are eligible to perform tests in accordance with World Rugby Regulation 22. Information relating to these companies can be found on the World Rugby Player Welfare website [here](#).

World Rugby Preferred Turf Producers

World Rugby has appointed Preferred Turf Producers to ensure that the highest performance standards are met when installing rugby turf. These manufacturers have a proven track record in both rugby and other sports installations. Information relating to the current Preferred Turf Producers can be found on the World Rugby Player Welfare website [here](#).

ONE TURF

The *One Turf* concept was launched in 2011 to redefine the use of artificial turf as a playing surface for rugby and other sports and to promote healthier lifestyles through sports participation. The One Turf technical criteria came about as a result of collaboration between the International Federations (IF) and National Federations (NF) of seven separate global sports. It has been established to create a single standard which can be used to simplify the compliance requirements for each of the sports to be played on community fields. It is not intended to replace any of the individual sports' own artificial turf requirements but to complement them by providing multi-sport options for facility owners and managers.

The *One Turf* concept is designed to ensure that the best possible performance standards and consistency are achieved while promoting the highest player welfare standards. This concept was launched following collaboration between all the sports through an extensive research, testing and review process.

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TESTING PROCEDURES

The artificial turf system comprises three main layers. Underneath the artificial turf sits a shock absorbing layer (optional) and the sub-base which is the foundation. The testing of a system will occur both within a laboratory environment and upon the completed installation and must be carried out by a World Rugby Accredited Test Institute. A system will undergo a series of tests to establish its suitability for installation. Only a system that has passed both the laboratory and field testing requirements of the Rugby Turf Performance Specification will be deemed to suitable for use in rugby union.

Laboratory Tests

The laboratory testing identifies the quality of the turf product, ensures sustainability and environmental resistance and demonstrates the required player performance characteristics necessary for rugby union.

Field Tests

The performance of the artificial turf also depends upon the preparation of the sub-base together with the quality of the installation of the artificial turf system, therefore the installed turf will also undergo field testing. Field testing should be conducted within three months after installation of the pitch where practicable. Taking into consideration that the artificial weathering test takes several weeks, and that the field tests can only be performed after the installed pitch has settled, the final approval of a newly developed system may take up to six months.

The series of tests are as follows:

Laboratory Tests

1. Identification tests – to characterise the surface being tested
2. Durability – the ability of the surface to withstand the effects of play and the environment
3. Climatic Resistance – the ability of the surface to withstand the effects of weathering
4. Player/Surface Interaction – the reaction of a player to the surface
5. Ball/Surface Interaction – the reaction of a ball to the surface

Field Tests

1. Construction tests – slope, evenness, base, permeability
2. Player/Surface Interaction – the reaction of a player to the surface
3. Ball/Surface Interaction – the reaction of a ball to the surface
4. Identification tests – to ensure the system installed matches the product tested in the laboratory

CONTINUED TESTING AND APPROVAL

Approval status is valid for a period of two years. Each rugby turf surface must be re-tested by an Accredited Test Institute biennially to ensure that, through an appropriate maintenance regime, it continues to meet the requirements of World Rugby Regulation 22, the Rugby Turf Performance Specification and Law 1 of the Laws of the Game. A World Rugby Regulation 22 compliant surface is suitable for use by association football provided that the necessary FIFA laboratory and field testing has been performed on it.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance is an integral part of the process involved in ownership of an artificial turf system. The party acquiring and/or responsible for the maintenance and/or management of the rugby turf surface must ensure that it is maintaining the rugby turf surface such that it continues to meet the requirements of World Rugby Regulation 22, the Rugby Turf Performance Specification and Law 1 of the Laws of the Game.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[World Rugby Regulation 22](#)

[Rugby Turf Performance Specification Technical Document – April 2015 Edition](#)

[World Rugby Laws of the Game Law 1 – The Ground](#)

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