



Artificial Turf warm up Areas

Requirements

The warm-up area must be large enough to accommodate three substitutes and a fitness coach per team, all at the same time, considering that a corridor of up to 1m wide must be reserved for the first assistant referee immediately behind the touchline (where the area is adjacent to the field of play). **Generally, it is preferable to have a warm area that measures a minimum of 4m wide by 20m long** however there may be limitations at certain venues based on the distance between the playing field and the tribune.



Ideally, the surface of the substitutes warm-up area should be the same as that of the field of play. In all other cases the home club must ensure that the substitutes warm-up area consists of a high-quality artificial turf, securely affixed to the ground. For venues with a running track or where space allows, a separate warm-up area should be installed (allowing in addition space for steady-cam operations).



Product selection

FIFA has introduced a Quality programme for artificial turf which certifies the quality and safety of artificial turf products that should be used at the elite and grass roots level considering player and ball interaction with the surface.

In the link below, you can find a database of approximately 4,000 FIFA certified products, what materials are used, how many fields around the world have been installed with this product and who is the producer:

<https://football-technology.fifa.com/en/resource-hub/certified-product-database/football-turf/turf-products/>

When selecting a product to use for a warm up area several factors should be considered including the type of surface that the turf will be laid on as this will impact on the method of affixing to the ground.

For example, it may be that the turf will be laid on top of a running track and will need to be installed and removed on a match by match basis and that the system cannot be fixed to the floor with adhesive.

Depending on the type of product selected it may be necessary to install a shock pad underneath the carpet to ensure that the surface is safe for players, this decision will depend on the type of product selected and the amount of infill in the system.

When selecting a product for use as a warm up area attention should be paid to the type of infill required.

Sand is often used to weight down the surface, also known as **stabilising infill** and rubber crumb is often used to recreate the playing characteristics of grass also known as **performance infill**.

Careful consideration should be given the product selection based on the venue specific needs as mentioned above, the surface, the amount of use and the space available, there is no one size fits all product that can be applied.

Any product selected should have a specification that includes the performance characteristics and the exact infill rates that should be applied.

Installation

The quality of the installation of the artificial turf is as important as the product selection. If the product is not put in place by an experienced specialist installer there is the risk that the surface will not be fit for purpose and will present an injury risk to any players using it to warm-up.

Based on the size requirement of the area mentioned above (4m x 20m) *the preferred option would be to use one single roll of turf* as this avoids the needs for any joints/seams which can become a trip hazard if not sealed correctly and often slowly come apart over time.

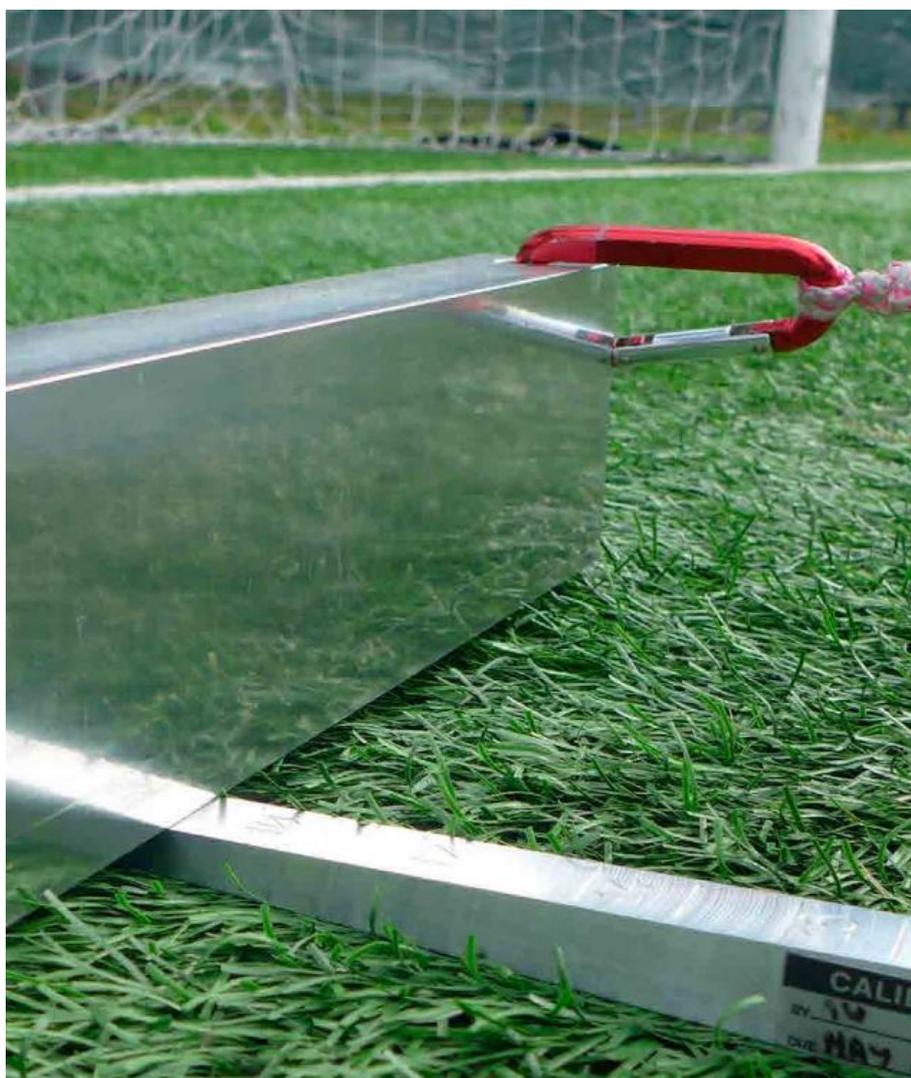
Older rolls of artificial turf that have been stored in a roll for a significant period of time often have creases and flat pile, this should be thoroughly brushed before the infill is applied to ensure the carpet lays flat with no creases or undulations.

Infill should be distributed evenly across the surface to ensure consistent feel for the players exercising across the whole surface, it is recommended that the surface is tested prior to use to ensure the surface is performing as expected in the product specification.

Maintenance

Depending upon the amount of use, the area should be maintained pre and post-match to ensure that any displacement of the infill or damage is repaired.

The artificial turf should be inspected to check for low spots where infill has been lost from the area in players boots etc. There may be loose fibres or if the area is made up of multiple pieces of turf then the joints should be checked to ensure they are still securely fixed.





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