



Baseball and Softball “Field Spring Training” Tips

Following, are suggested “first steps” along with a checklist of maintenance items that will allow your players to perform at the highest level on day one.

- *As soon as you are able, walk the entire field and evaluate the conditions*
- *Note any winter damage, vandalism or areas requiring special attention*
- *Refer back to any lists made in the fall so you can track any outstanding tasks not previously accomplished or items that were on your “to do before next season” list*
- *Put together an action plan and get to work as early as weather permits*
- *If you need assistance with soil testing, developing a maintenance plan or selecting appropriate products, consult your local field supply distributor. You can find a distributor near you through www.turface.com.*

TOP TIPS FOR TURF

1. Perform soil analysis. Establish action items indicated by soil analysis including pH adjustment.
2. Aerate and topdress the field. Aerification relieves compaction and improves drainage. Topdressing helps modify the soil structure and levels the field. Both strengthen grass plants.
3. Implement or continue a fertility program based on the results of the soil analysis.
4. Apply pre-emergent herbicides to help prevent grassy and broadleaf weeds, if and only if spring seeding is not needed to repair winter damage. Contact your local extension agent or professional turfgrass supply company for application rates and precise timing.
5. Once weather permits turn on water to the irrigation system and quick connects. Make sure there are no leaks or damaged heads.
6. Sharpen mower blades or reels. Establish a mowing routine that keeps the grass at a manageable and playable height, while never removing more than 1/3 of the leaf blade. If 2” is the desired height, mow before the grass reaches 3”.
7. If turf blankets were used be sure to mow several times before field usage to harden off the grass plant.

INFIELDS OR INFIELD CLAY SURFACES

1. Remove weeds in skinned areas mechanically or with a turf labeled non-selective herbicide.
2. Aggressively spike drag or scarify the skinned infield to reincorporate any infield mix that may have segregated over the winter months.
3. Remove any lips in skinned/grass transition areas. Wash out, cut out, undercut and roll or whatever works best for you. Lips create ramps for batted balls and uneven footing, resulting in unsafe conditions and also act as dams to block positive drainage and creating puddles.
4. Identify low and high areas. Regrade or add additional infield mix to fill holes or low places, paying particular attention to sliding pits, lead off areas and player positions. If

adding additional mix, it is important to scarify the base material prior to adding new material. Thoroughly mix or blend the two materials together. Level infield to establish positive drainage.

5. Mat drag to smooth infield. Firm the infield by continued dragging or rolling if necessary.
6. Edge transition areas between skinned areas and turf.
7. Examine the plate and rubber to ensure they are in good condition. Replace as needed.
8. Check pitching distance from apex (rear, white point) of plate to front edge of rubber.
9. Check condition of bases and confirm the proper baseline distance. Baseline distance is measured from the apex of the plate to the back, outside edge of the bag at 1st and 3rd and to the middle of the bag at 2nd.
10. Evaluate batter's boxes, area in front of rubber and landing area on mound for holes due to wear. Repair and consider installing a specialized professional mound clay or clay blocks.
11. Make necessary repairs to bullpen pitching and catchers area. Consider installing a specialized professional mound clay or clay blocks.
12. Make necessary repairs or improvements to non-playing surface areas. i.e. fences and gates, maintenance storage building, bleachers, backstop, dugouts, foul poles, etc.