



Learn about the education and preparation needed to become a sports turf manager. Get a quick view of the requirements as well as details about training, job duties and certification to find out if this is the career for you. A sports turf manager is responsible for maintaining the turf of athletic fields, golf courses, or city parks, taking into account the specific maintenance requirements for each field and grass type. An undergraduate degree in a program like turfgrass management may be helpful when seeking employment or advancement in this field.

### Essential Information

Sports turf managers are responsible for the care and maintenance of athletic fields or golf courses. Individuals interested in this profession might consider completing an undergraduate program - such as turfgrass management - that combines coursework in business and horticulture. Certificate, associate's degree and bachelor's degree program are available in this field.

<b>Education Required</b>	Certificate, associate's degree or bachelor's degree
<b>Other Requirements</b>	Licensure or certification
<b>Job Growth (2014-2024)</b>	6%* (for all grounds maintenance workers)

Source: \*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Career Options for Sports Turf Managers

Sports turf managers may work in a variety of environments, including college and university athletic fields, golf courses, city parks and professional sports stadiums. Additional job titles in sports turf management include golf course superintendent, assistant turf operations manager, irrigation specialist, athletic turf management technician and sports field manager.

Sport turf managers may care for one or more types of sports turf, including fields for baseball, soccer, football, lacrosse and field hockey, as well as golf courses. Each field type has different considerations, including grass type, design, layout, playability, size and field markings.

## Sports Turf Manager Job Requirements

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), ground maintenance managers may be required to have some formal education ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)). Many schools offer certificate, associate's or bachelor's programs in turf management or turfgrass science. These programs may also offer a specific concentration in sports turf management. Internships or cooperative learning experiences may be part of the curriculum. Typical coursework in these programs often includes topics in horticulture, weed science, irrigation, pest control, soils, turfgrass equipment, plant physiology and land contracting.

Prospective sports turf managers should also have good oral and written communications skills, be organized and able to work both independently and with a team. Experience using computers and software is also helpful. Business skills, such as financial management, marketing, accounting and employee relations, may also be beneficial to someone working as a sports turf manager.

## Licensure and Certification for Sports Turf Managers

The BLS states that ground maintenance workers who use pesticides are required to be licensed or certified in most states. Each state has different requirements, but most require passing an exam that covers fungicides, insecticides and herbicides.

Voluntary professional certification specifically for sports turf managers is available through the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) and the Golf Course Superintendent Association of America (GCSAA). Candidates for the STMA certification generally must have a combination of education and experience in order to be eligible for the written exam ([www.stma.org](http://www.stma.org)). GCSAA also typically requires a combination of education and experience, in addition to a portfolio, to qualify candidates for their exam ([www.gcsaa.org](http://www.gcsaa.org)).

The BLS predicts that grounds maintenance workers can expect a 6% increase in job opportunities from 2014-2024.

Aspiring sports turf managers who choose to complete an undergraduate degree will learn about subjects such as horticulture, soils, turfgrass equipment, and irrigation. Other skills that could be important in this career, and which can be gained through postsecondary education, are employee relations, financial management, and accounting.

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