

Maintenance Equipment Information Sheet



Introduction

The condition and longevity of a tennis court is directly related to the amount of care and maintenance it receives. All tennis court facilities and equipment require some degree of maintenance over their life especially the tennis court. Just as you would not buy a new car and expect it to last forever without maintenance, tennis courts require a degree of servicing and maintenance. The degree, frequency, amount and cost of maintenance vary depending on the type of surface installed.

Maintenance regime

It is essential that a maintenance regime for the courts is adopted covering what is to be done, by whom and how frequently. This maintenance regime should follow the instructions / guidelines of the tennis court manufacturer, installer or maintainer.

Court maintenance

This paper specifically looks at the various items of maintenance equipment that can be used by clubs/owners for a tennis court surface. Most importantly be guided by the maintenance guidelines of the court surface installer. In the absence of having maintenance guidelines consult a local club that has the same type of surface and one that you consider well looked after and a pleasure to play on. They must be doing something right. Alternately consider engaging a maintenance contractor. If court owners/users neglect their court's maintenance, the playing surface will deteriorate earlier, unnecessary expense will be incurred and ultimately the pleasure of playing tennis on the courts will also deteriorate.

Acrylic and hard court

There are quite a number of types of surfaces that are grouped under this heading. Some proprietary surfaces may require their own specialised maintenance tools.

Generally, the types of maintenance items used are:

- hose for cleaning
- squeegee for removing surface water
- blowers for loose leaves and debris
- broom and mop
- detergent and brushes (supplier recommended only)
- algicide and/or moss killer (supplier recommended only)
- line paint (supplier recommended only)
- vacuum cleaner (indoor courts).

Natural Turf

For day to day court use by the players:

- watering hose.

Materials:

- top dressing soil
- grass seed
- fertiliser.

An in-ground sprinkler system with an automatic timer is highly desirable.

Other items:

- grass mower (rotary drum type)
- fertiliser spreader
- heavy hand roller – at least 250 Kg
- spraying equipment
- drag brush / spreader
- line marker
- sieve
- aerator
- leaf sweeper.

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Clay

For day to day court use by the players:

- watering hose
- line broom (fixed or rotary)
- bagging / drag mat.

An in-ground sprinkler system with an automatic timer is highly desirable. Watch for surface damage caused by an incorrectly aligned sprinkler head and adjust its alignment.

Other items:

- absorbent roller for excess surface water
- scraper
- heavy hand roller – at least 250 Kg
- leaf sweeper
- drag brush/spreader
- weed sprayer
- sieve.

For Clay surfaces:

- mechanical roller
- surface top up material
- packing hammer
- scarifier.

Sand filled artificial grass

The sand filled artificial grass surface requires few on-site maintenance items. Whilst a lot of onsite maintenance items are not required, appropriate attention must still be paid to the care of the court surface, otherwise contractor costs could be expensive.

The types of maintenance items used by court owners are:

- drag brushes
- sand spreaders
- leaf sweeper
- algicide and/or moss killer.

Other maintenance

There are a number of other items than can easily be overlooked that also require some degree of maintenance to ensure their continued functionality. Some form of lubrication is needed for net post winders, gate hinges and latches. Pay attention to your maintenance equipment, as they will also require some form of repair, maintenance and lubrication over time. If you have black or coloured net posts, have some touch up paint to repair nicks and scratches to tidy up its appearance and more importantly reduce the chance of rust. Touch up paint may also be appropriate for a coloured fence and gates.

Other considerations

Do not forget that some storage facility will be required for the maintenance equipment to protect them from weather deterioration and to keep them secure. The size of the storage facility will also be dependent on the type of court surface you have and the number of courts.

Maintenance Contractors

An option for court owners is to engage a maintenance organization to undertake their ongoing and preventative maintenance regime. Even with an arrangement such as this, the court owner/user is not absolved from day to day care and maintenance responsibility of their courts.

Lifecycle costs

Court owners need to be aware that maintenance equipment, as with any item, does not last forever. The life of the equipment is dependent, in part, on its frequency of use and on how well it is maintained. It is essential that court owners understand the ongoing costs of maintenance, including consumables (annual, periodic, replacement), and make provision for future expenses, including the ultimate replacement of the maintenance items. Lifecycle costs can be minimised by having a judicious maintenance regime.

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