

Infield Care Instructions



1. The "No-Push" Water Rule

The most common mistake is using a rake or broom to "push" standing water into the grass. This takes the best infield mix with it, creating a mud dam that ensures the field will never drain properly again.

- **Absorb, Don't Push:** Use a **Sponge** or a **Puddle Pillow** to soak up standing water and squeeze it into a bucket.
- **The "Cup" Method:** For deep puddles, use a small cup or pump to remove the water. Once the liquid is gone, you can address the wet mud.
- **Scarify (Lightly):** Once the standing water is removed, use the **teeth** of the rake to lightly scratch the surface of the wet spot. This increases surface area and helps the sun and wind dry it out faster.
- **Drying Agent:** Drying agents are emergency use only and can only be used with the water is gone.
- **Warning:** Never "rake" through a deep puddle. You will create a hole that will become a permanent pond every time it rains.

2. The Golden Rule: Stay Away from the Grass

Never rake toward the grass edge. This pushes dirt into the turf, creating a hump that traps water and trips up players.

- **Direction:** Always rake **parallel** to the grass edge or **inward** toward the center of the skin.
- **The "Buffer Zone":** Keep the rake at least 6 inches away from the grass whenever possible.

3. Address the "High-Traffic" Divots

Before you do a general sweep, fix the holes left by pitchers and batters.

- **Filling:** Pull loose dirt from the surrounding area into the holes (pitcher's landing spot, batter's box, and sliding paths).
- **Tamping:** Use the flat back of the rake or a hand tamp to pack the dirt down firmly. If you just rake over a hole without packing it, the first player to step there will immediately recreate the divot.

4. The Raking Technique

- **The Pull:** Use long, smooth strokes.
- **The Flip:** Use the **teeth** of the rake to break up chunks and level high spots. Use the **flat side** (the back) to smooth the surface and "seal" the dirt.
- **Base Paths:** Rake length-wise (from home to first, for example). Never rake across the path, as this creates a "trough" over time.

5. Base Care

- **Remove the Bases:** If possible, pull the bases and plug the anchor holes before raking. This allows you to level the area where dirt usually builds up.
- **Clear the Anchors:** Ensure no dirt falls into the female anchor, or the base won't sit flush, creating a trip hazard.

6. Dragging the Field

If you are using a tractor or a hand-pull screen drag:

- **Speed:** Go slow. High speeds cause the drag to bounce, creating "mini-waves" in the dirt.
- **Spiral Pattern:** Start in the middle and spiral outward, stopping 12 inches before the grass. Finish those last few inches by hand to avoid the dreaded "lip."