



RubbaFlex® sg

Aftercare and Cleaning Guide (Operations and Maintenance Manual)

Your Product

Congratulations on your recently installed RubbaFlex® sg surface! A porous/permeable decorative, soft seamless flooring system consisting of coloured EPDM (synthetic rubber) granules, 1mm-4mm in size and an aromatic binder. To keep it looking great, we suggest the following immediate aftercare.

Curing time: Do not walk or place equipment on your RubbaFlex® sg surface for 24-48 hours after installation (times are temperature dependent, as curing takes longer in colder conditions). Footprints, marks or indentations cannot be removed, so we strongly recommend placing suitable barriers around the perimeter immediately on completion of the installation.

- Prevent any leaks or drips hitting the curing surface, as excess moisture will significantly weaken and potentially discolour the RubbaFlex® sg surface during the initial curing phase. Continuous drips or leaks can cause erosion over the long term and will degrade the surface.

Non slip properties of RubbaFlex® sg surface: This surface manufactured to meet slip resistance standards in dry and wet conditions. However, outdoor environments are subject to environmental build-up (mud, moss, algae, leaves), which can **reduce slip resistance** if not regularly removed. There is no such thing as a maintenance free surface, all safety surface installations will require some degree of routine maintenance throughout its life. We suggest a regular planned maintenance and cleaning schedule for all installations. This will prolong the life of the safety surface and maintain its aesthetic appearance, whilst also reducing the risk of slips, trips and falls.

- it is recommended that **overhanging trees and plants** are regularly cut back. This will allow more sunlight to penetrate and will avoid much of the plant debris falling on the surface. This results in a much drier and cleaner surface that will be less prone to attacks by environmental contaminants.
- **Debris such as soil, bark, or sand** tracked onto the surface can increase slip potential and should be regularly swept away.
- **Moss and algae growth** as well as **mould and lichen (including black spot)** must be dealt with as soon as possible. Further details are shown in the cleaning guide section to follow.

Please note; the products and services mentioned are for guidance only. They don't represent recommendations. It is the responsibility of the company undertaking the cleaning to ensure they are satisfied that the surface is in an acceptable condition for the intended cleaning method and that the method chosen, including any chemicals, is suitable.

Always follow the manufacturer's written instructions when using any cleaning chemical.

General Cleaning Guide -

To maintain a safe surface and keep the aesthetic appearance, it is essential that your RubbaFlex® sg surface is cleaned at regular intervals. The following represent best practice guidelines to maintaining a clean and safe environment. It is important that you find the right regime that works for you. We recommend you observe the following guidelines:

General Maintenance:

- **Sweep regularly** (weekly or as required) with a soft bristle brush or leaf blower to remove leaves, soil, litter, and other debris. Accelerated wear may occur if this is not carried out.
- **Rinse with clean water** using a hose or low-pressure washer to keep the surface fresh. Avoid high-pressure jets directly at close range as they may damage the binder.
- **Remove chewing gum** promptly with a freezing spray and scrape carefully to avoid damaging the surface.
- **Treat moss or algae** early with a water-based biocide suitable for porous rubber surfaces.

Quarterly deep cleaning (or as required): Periodic deep cleaning should be conducted to thoroughly clean the surfacing and to ensure any pore structure remains clear allowing free drainage. Free drainage will ensure the surface dries quickly, maintaining safety and slowing the build-up of algae and other environmental contaminants.

- Deep cleaning should be conducted using a pressure washer. The pressure washer should have a jet/rotary head and the pressure must not exceed 2000 psi. When cleaning, the head must be no closer than 25mm from the surface and kept at an angle not more than 45°. Before pressure washing we recommend that the surface integrity is assessed to ensure it is free from cracks, soft spots and any damage. If any repairs are required, it is recommended that these are carried out prior to pressure washing.

Important Notes

- Avoid using harsh solvents, oils, or undiluted bleach on the surface.
- Avoid dragging heavy, sharp objects across the surface as this may cause cuts or gouges.
- Ensure adjacent landscaping (trees, soil, bark pits) is maintained to reduce organic debris accumulation.

Annual and periodic deep cleaning: Consider professional cleaning at least once per year, especially for high-use playgrounds. For stubborn stains, a professional service may be required. Please see our recommended partners below for relevant details.

Recommended Partners:

- Blast Away:** First class specialists in playground cleaning: www.blast-away.co.uk/commercial-services/playground-cleaning
- Sliptech:** For chemical supply, internal deep cleaning regime and annual/periodic cleaning
www.sliptech.co.uk
info@sliptech.co.uk
01206 826788

Specific Issues: Cleaning Guide –

- **Moss and algae growth** in shaded or damp areas can make the surface slippery. Routine cleaning and, where necessary, treatment with a good proprietary (non-oil based) moss killer and algaecide at least once a year will help prevent this. Where moss becomes established, it should be treated immediately. The application is repeated after the dead spores are removed, until eradication is complete. The dead moss may be removed by pressure washing. It should be emphasised that moss is only a serious problem if it is allowed to become established.
- **Mould and lichen including black spot**, general occur on poorly maintained surfaces. If normal pressure washing is not successful, a more intensive approach using a specialist cleaning chemical will be required.
 - Following extensive trials, it has been identified that using products based on sodium hypochlorite often provide good results, especially when used in conjunction with hot water pressure washing. One product that is widely used in the industry is Powerclean from Servochem (www.servochem.co.uk). Please note; it is essential that a full COSHH assessment is completed prior to using any cleaning chemical, especially if it is designed for industrial use. If you are undertaking the clean, you will also need to provide a risk assessment and method statement to the customer.
 - It should be noted that the more established the issue, the harder it will be to remove. It may be necessary to undertake intensive cleaning multiple times over a 2-3 week period to obtain the best results.
 - Please also be aware that any environmental contaminant may re-occur over time. This could be the result of a new issue or because the root structure of the original contaminant was not fully destroyed when first treated.
- **Weeds** No matter how much care is taken, weeds may occasionally appear on the surface, usually as a result of windblown seeds. Small numbers of weeds can be removed by hand without damaging the surface. If the weeds are removed by hand, it is important to ensure that the full root of the weed is extracted, not broken off.
 - Some weeds are more prolific if they are simply cut off at the surface level. If the weeds are deep rooted, it is advisable to kill them using an appropriate weed killer.
 - Localised areas of weed infestation can be treated with domestic weed killers without causing damage to the top wearing layer.
 - Oil based weed killers should not be used.
- **Wintercare** To remove heavy falls of snow or significant ice, we suggest using Ice Melt, as it is non-abrasive and the least harmful option, both to the surface and the environment.
 - Metal shovels or scrapers may damage the surface and should not be used. Rock salt should not be used as it can cause unsightly stains.
 - In spring we suggest sweeping the surface with a stiff bristled brush to remove any built-up residue then pressure washing the surface to restore its water permeability and slip resistance. Please note: whilst snow, ice and frost are not harmful, if the play area is used during the winter without being cleared, then injury may occur. Not only will the surface be harder and lose some of its shock absorbing performance, a user could slip or injure themselves in other ways.