



USING PITCHPOWER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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ABOUT PITCHPOWER

What's PitchPower?

It's a really simple tool to help you inspect and improve your grass pitches, and help us achieve our ambition to transform grass pitches right across England. You'll receive an assessment report on their quality, as well as support and recommendations on how to get them match-fit. The aim is to improve the quality of grass pitches, reducing the number of matches cancelled, so more people can keep playing football.

Why is PitchPower important?

The quality of grass football pitches plays a huge part in people's enjoyment of the game. PitchPower will allow more organisations than ever before to access the support needed to improve and maintain the quality of their grass pitches.

Can anyone create an account?

The person who is responsible for the pitch maintenance is the best person to create your PitchPower account. However, others can also create an account to help assess the same pitch.

When will I receive my PitchPower assessment report?

You'll receive your PitchPower assessment report within 21 days of submitting your inspection.

GETTING STARTED

How do I get PitchPower?

You can access PitchPower by visiting the web address footballfoundation.org.uk/pitchpower where you can sign up and log in.

How much does it cost me to download and use PitchPower?

PitchPower is free for you to download and use.

How do I reset my password?

You can access the link to reset your password <https://pitchpower.org.uk/request-password/>. If you don't receive a reset password email, check your junk and spam folders. If it's not in your junk or spam folders, please email pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk where we can look into this for you (Please note this inbox is monitored during office hours, Monday-to-Friday).

What happens if I add PitchPower to my home screen?

This will make it easier for you to access in the future. It will appear alongside your other apps so you can get straight into it next time.

I've not received the email to create my account. What shall I do?

First, check your junk and spam folders. If it's not in your junk or spam folders, please email pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk where we can look into this for you (Please note this inbox is monitored during office hours, Monday-to-Friday).

THE PITCH INSPECTION PROCESS

GENERAL

What do I get by using PitchPower?

Once you've submitted the inspection data you'll receive an assessment report. This will give you a full explanation of the quality of your pitch(es) and recommendations on next steps. These may include the opportunity to access funding, support on how to improve your pitch(es), advice on training opportunities and so on.

How do I carry out the pitch inspection?

The inspection will take about 30 minutes per pitch. You'll need a mobile phone with a camera, a spade/soil sampler, and a tape measure/ruler. The app will walk you through each step of the pitch inspection process. Once the data is collected via the app you submit it to be assessed.

Why do I need to submit pitch quality data using PitchPower?

The Football Foundation is on a mission to improve the quality of pitches across the country. To do that we need your help to identify the quality of your pitch(es). You'll give us the inspection data through PitchPower and we'll do a full assessment report. The report will offer various recommendations to support you to reach and/or maintain your pitches to a 'Good' standard (or better).

There are multiple Clubs who use our pitches - who should complete the inspection?

The club (or other organisation) that carries out the maintenance of the pitches is best placed to complete the inspection. Multiple people from within this club or organisations can log in to PitchPower at the same time to complete the inspection of multiple pitches.

How often do I need to use PitchPower?

The number of pitch inspections you need to submit via PitchPower will depend on the type of grant that you've been awarded by the Football Foundation.

Inspection data is required once per window. If you have not submitted your inspection data by the end of a window the data will not be saved within the app.

- ◆ September - 31 October
- ◆ 1 November - 31 March
- ◆ 1 April - 30 June

PLEASE SUBMIT AS EARLY IN THE WINDOW AS YOU CAN TO AVOID MISSING A WINDOW DEADLINE.

Do I need tools to carry out the pitch inspection?

Yes, you'll need:

- ◆ A spade/soil sampler - to dig a small section out
- ◆ A tape measure - to take some measurements
- ◆ A camera phone - to take some pictures

How long will it take me to do a pitch inspection using PitchPower?

Each pitch inspection will take about 30 minutes. The more you use it, the more familiar you'll be with the app and the inspection process, so this time should reduce.

My organisation isn't listed. What should I do?

If your organisation isn't on the list, please scroll to the bottom of the 'add organisation' screen and add a new organisation by following the link. This will give you the details you need to add your organisation.

How do I remove an organisation I've added by mistake?

You can remove the organisation from your profile by clicking on the 'remove organisation' link at the top of the screen.

I can't find my ground on the app. What do I do?

If your ground isn't on the list, you can get it added by talking to your County FA or adding to PitchFinder by clicking here. Please note that your ground may take a few days to register.

My pitch is in the wrong place on PitchPower. Can I change it?

You can move your pitch to the right location on the app. Just click on the pitch image and move it to the right location by using the 'Rotate' button. You can move your pitch by putting two fingers on the map and moving it around the pitch accordingly.

I maintain pitches at more than one ground. Can I use PitchPower for all of these grounds?

Yes. You can add all the grounds and pitches that you maintain.

Does it matter which end of the pitch I start at?

You can start at whichever end you like. But it would be best if you can start at the same end every time you carry out an inspection.

INSPECTING THE PITCH

How do I take a good picture of the grass height?

Take a tape measure from the base of the plant (where it meets the soil), to the tip.

We're looking for the average grass height and the white arrow on the image below shows an example of where you should measure up to.

You should use a solid object like a spade (shown below) to help hold the tape measure up against the grass.



How do I take a good picture of the goal mouth?

The image should be clear with the goalmouth visible. A landscape shot works best here. The two images below are examples of best practice.



How do I know if my goalposts are compliant?

Check out the goalposts and pitch layout section of our Football Foundation Groundskeeping Community which is available online.

How do I measure root depth?

Using a tape measure, start at where the soil meets the base of the grass and measure (in mm) down the longest visible root. Roots will be thin and wispy and either brown or white in colour.

How do I measure topsoil?

Topsoil is the soil in which grass grows healthily. It'll be approximately the same colour and consistency the whole way through. In order to give you the advice needed to keep it healthy, we need to know how deep it is. Use your ruler or tape measure to measure from

where the grass meets the soil down to where the consistent layer of soil stops. The white markings below show an example of the area you should be measuring.

How do I take a good picture of the line markings?

Here, the images should be clear and line markings on the pitch visible. The image below shows an example of best practice.



MEASURING ROOT DEPTH



MEASURING TOPSOIL



LINE MARKINGS

TIPS

Here are some good and bad examples of how to take an accurate photo of the surface profile.

Good examples

- ◆ Top down photo showing the surface.

Bad examples

- ◆ Don't include yourself in the image
- ◆ Don't include goalposts in the image

Don't worry if there's a lot of bare ground on the pitch, however this shouldn't be included in your counting (weeds and grass only).

My site has multiple pitches. How many do I need to inspect?

The answer to this question depends on how you've come to access PitchPower. If you've received:

Pitch Preparation Funding

If you've received a Pitch Preparation Fund grant, you will need to complete inspections for all of the pitches you maintain at your site.

All other funding

Small sites (1-6 pitches)

All pitches at the site should be inspected in each window submission

Medium sites (7-12 pitches)

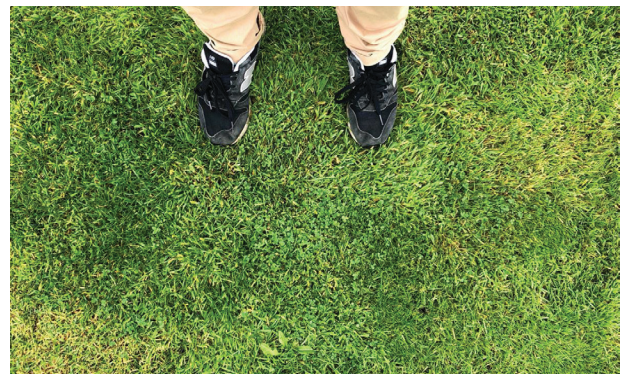
A minimum of 6 pitches should be inspected in each window submission

Large sites (13 or more pitches)

If your site has 13 pitches or more, then we require you submit an inspection for a minimum of 50% of pitches. Note: Where a site has an odd number of pitches, the number should be rounded up. So, for 17 pitches, you would be required to submit 9 pitch inspections.



✓ GOOD EXAMPLE



✗ BAD EXAMPLES

AFTER SUBMISSION

What happens after I've submitted my inspection?

Once you've submitted your inspection, the data will be reviewed by our experts at the GMA. Within 21 days, you'll receive an assessment report. The report will offer various recommendations to support you to reach and/or maintain your pitches to a 'Good' standard (or better). If any more information is needed to complete the assessment, a Regional Pitch Advisor from the GMA will get in touch either by phone or email.

What if I forget to submit my data within the current window?

The pitch inspection data must be completed and submitted within the same window. If the data isn't submitted within the window, any data completed will be lost and there will be no assessment report provided for this window.

I've already submitted my pitch inspection. Can I make changes?

Once you've submitted your pitch inspection, you can't make any changes. Don't worry, the team will be in contact if they need any information. If there's something that you're really concerned about, please contact us by email.

Who will be doing the assessment report for my pitches?

It will be one of our team of Regional Pitch Advisors who are qualified in grounds management.

Why are there three submission windows?

The number of pitch inspections you need to submit via PitchPower will depend on the type of grant that you've been awarded by the Football Foundation and therefore there are a certain number of windows to allow for this.

Also, there are many variables that can impact the quality of grass pitches (usage, weather etc). We want to be able to assess the quality of your pitch(es) throughout the year so we can provide you with the best support

Will I still have a site visit?

If the inspection data submitted through PitchPower highlights an issue that needs further investigation, you'll receive a phone call or email and if necessary, a site visit.

SUPPORT AND T&CS

GENERAL SUPPORT

Is PitchPower an application for funding?

No, it's a tool to carry out a pitch inspection. After submitting the inspection data you'll receive an assessment report containing a full explanation on your pitch quality and recommendations on next steps. If applying for funding is a recommendation, you'll be told how to start that process.

I've got a question and can't find the answer here. What should I do?

Please let us know by emailing us at pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk and we'll get back to you as quickly as possible (please note this inbox is monitored during office hours, Monday-to-Friday).

Can I speak to someone before I submit my data?

Unfortunately, due to the expected high volume of users, we can't speak to each person before submitting. Please do your best and we will contact you if needed.

I've submitted my data through PitchPower but I think I've made a mistake - what should I do?

Please contact us at pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk detailing your organisation, ground name and contact details so we can look into this for you.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

When I plot my pitches they don't all fit on my ground. What do I do?

Please don't worry if all of your pitches don't fit exactly as they do on your actual ground. Try your best to get them in the correct location. The pitch sizes are fixed and therefore might not be the exact same size as the pitches on your ground.

PitchPower won't let me upload/submit my data. What should I do?

A mobile data (3G/4G/5G) or WiFi connection is required to use the app. If there's no mobile data the app will not be able to load. If there is no mobile data at the ground please familiarise yourself with the app prior to visiting the ground. When at the ground, collect the inspection measurements with a pen and paper so the measurements can be entered into PitchPower when there is mobile data/WiFi available. 4G covers 99% of the UK population.

How do I remove an organisation I've associated myself with by mistake?

If you assign yourself to an organisation that you are not apart of, you can remove yourself by clicking on the 'remove organisation' link at the top of the screen.

THE RPA REPORT

Can I speak to a Regional Pitch Advisor?

Following your inspection, you will receive a report from an RPA with recommendations on how to improve your pitches. The RPA may be in touch via email or phone if they require further information from you.

I've already got a PIP Report that I paid for. Do I have to do it again?

Yes, you will still be required to use PitchPower. This will be the system for all future grass pitch assessments and data collection.

Can I access any funding without a PitchPower report?

No. To receive any funding you must have a PitchPower report to evidence the need for funding. However, the use of PitchPower does not mean you automatically qualify for funding as you will still be required to meet particular criteria.

What should I do if I disagree with the recommendations of the report?

Please get in touch with us at pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk.

What are the terms and conditions of the PitchPower app?

The full terms and conditions can be found online.

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

What products would you recommend I use to improve my pitch quality?

It is important to make sure you are using products that are suitable for your playing surface, you can find further information at <https://footballfoundation.hivelearning.com/groundskeeping/>

What training can I get in grounds maintenance?

The GMA offer a range of training suitable for volunteers including online training and practical sessions. Find out more here: <https://thegma.org.uk/learning>.

What is the Grounds Management Association?

GMA is the leading not-for-profit membership organisation that supports and celebrates all grounds professionals and volunteers (formerly known as the IOG).

What is the Football Foundation Groundskeeping Community?

The Football Foundation Groundskeeping Community is an online resource developed between the Football Foundation, The FA and the Grounds Management Association (GMA). Completely free to download, the platform provides grounds maintenance advice and guidance from professionals and volunteers alike.

You can sign up at;
footballfoundation.hivelearning.com/groundskeeping

GLOSSARY

Combination turf grooming tool:

This is a piece of equipment that attaches to the back of a tractor, that has up to 4 implements, the most common being brush, rake, slitter, light roller.

Decompaction:

This is an operation to alleviate soil compaction and get air (aeration) into the soil. Common terms you may hear it referred to are: Aeration, Deep spiking, Terra spike, Verti drain, Groundbreaker, Shockwave or Earthquake.

Drainage:

This is how well or quickly water moves through your pitch through the soil. Essentially, this is how quickly your pitch dries and is playable following significant rainfall.

Fertiliser:

Fertiliser is an application of nutrients to feed the grass plant and soil. It usually comes in granules but can be in liquid form. This can be applied by a tractor operated spreader or a pedestrian walk-behind spreader.

Grass cover:

This is the amount (%) of grass that you have on your pitch.

Grass coverage:

Grass coverage is the amount of grass on your pitch. The better the grass cover on your pitch, the better your surface will be able to cope with wear and tear and provide a suitable playing experience.

Grass length:

This is the length of grass on your pitch. If the grass is too long or too short it can have a significant effect on plant health and the quality of playing experience.

Ground:

The site where you play your matches or train.

Metal cup hooks:

In the past, metal cup hooks were used to attach the net to the goalpost and crossbar. Due to a number of health and safety reasons, the hooks have now been banned. Find out more at <https://footballfoundation.hivelearning.com/groups/1885893625/card/2248461#list-cards>.

National League System (Steps 1-6):

The National League System is the structure for senior men's football that operates directly below the English Football League (EFL), League Two. It stretches from the National League at Step 1 down to Step 6, and the Regional Feeder Leagues formerly known as Step 7.

Organisation:

Organisation is who you are associated with as a professional or volunteer.

Overmarked:

Some pitches have additional pitches marked within them e.g. an adult 11v11 pitch might have one or two mini soccer 7v7 pitches marked out within it.

Overseeding:

The application of grass seed to a pitch to improve the quality and quantity of grass cover. This can be carried out mechanically or by hand.

Pitch Renovation:

These are operations or practices carried at the end of season in order to allow the pitch to recover and repair before a new season starts.

PQS – Performance quality standards:

A series of tests and measurements that are used to quantify the quality of a playing surface. This is the system and methodology that is used to identify your pitch grade.

Renovation:

These are operations or practices often carried at the end of season in order to allow the pitch to recover and repair before a new season starts.

Root depth

This is the measurement of how long the grass roots are on a pitch. The greater the root depth, the stronger and healthier the plant will be, enabling the grass to be able to withstand wear and tear and extremes of weather.

Roots:

Roots provide the grass with much needed food and water and also join the grass to the soil. The greater the root depth, the healthier and stronger the grass will be, helping it cope with extremes in weather, as well as wear and tear during the playing season.

Scarification:

Scarification is a process usually carried out mechanically using metal tines to remove thatch and undesirable material from your playing surface.

Selective herbicide:

Selective herbicide is a material used to kill weeds, without killing grass at the same time. It is important that only suitably qualified personnel carry out application of selective herbicide.

Soil profile:

It's important to know what's happening underneath your pitch surface. A healthy soil profile is important to provide the grass with stability, strong roots, food & water.

Surface Debris:

Any material that may be present on your playing surface that could affect the quality of matchplay or the ability to maintain the surface adequately. This may include: grass clippings, leaves, litter, animal faeces, etc..

Surface Grooming:

This is the action of brushing, raking or slightly rolling your pitch.

Thatch:

Thatch is a build-up of organic material e.g. dead stems and roots that can affect the quality of your pitch. It's a spongy layer that sits between the base of the grass and the soil.

Top dressing:

This is the spreading of suitable topsoil or sand to your pitch, this can be applied by hand or mechanically.

Topsoil

Topsoil is the uppermost layer of soil, and is generally the healthiest layer of soil providing the grass with much needed nutrition.

Weed cover:

This is the amount (%) of weeds on your pitch.

Weeds:

In the context of a football pitch, a weed is any plant growing in your pitch that is not grass.