

How to Choose the Right Turf Around Pools for Safety and Style

Why the Area Around Your Pool Matters

After years of working with homeowners and contractors on backyard projects, I have seen one common mistake over and over: people spend a fortune on the pool itself but treat the surrounding area as an afterthought. The ground that borders your pool takes a beating from chlorine, constant foot traffic, and UV exposure. It has to look good, stay safe when wet, and drain properly so you are not standing in puddles five minutes after the kids climb out.

That is where turf around pools enters the conversation. Real grass rarely survives the combination of splashing water and heavy use, and bare concrete can be too hot and too hard. Modern artificial turf, when installed correctly, offers a surface that stays green, stays cool enough to walk on, and gives you a consistent look that ties your pool deck to the rest of your landscape.



What Makes a Good Turf for Poolside Use

Not every roll of artificial grass is suited for poolside conditions. The best products use polypropylene blades that resist fading and matting. Look for a turf that includes uva protection built into the yarn, because the sun reflecting off the water can be brutal. I have seen cheap turf turn brittle and lose its color within a single season when installed right next to a pool.

The backing material matters too. A good turf has a permeable backing that allows water to pass through quickly. Paired with a proper base of drainage gravel, the surface dries fast and does not trap moisture that could lead to mildew or odors. Some homeowners skip the drainage layer to save money, and they usually regret it when their pool deck stays wet for hours after the kids finish splashing.

Key Features to Look For

- Polypropylene blades with UV stabilizers for long-lasting color
- Permeable backing that drains water rapidly
- A face weight heavy enough to handle foot traffic without flattening
- Heat-reflective properties or a cool deck coating option

Brands like AstroTurf, SYNLawn, ProTurf, and EcoTurf all offer lines designed for wet environments. Each brand has a slightly different approach to drainage and blade shape, but the principle is the same: keep water moving and keep the surface stable.



Installation Details That Make or Break the Job

Installing [turf around pools](#) is not the same as laying it in a backyard play area. The edge where turf meets the pool coping is a critical point. If the turf is not secured properly, it can lift, curl, or allow water to seep underneath. That is where turf edge restraint and Permaloc or Everlast products come into play. These are plastic or aluminum strips that hold the turf down at the perimeter, creating a clean line that stays put. I have seen installers try to get away with just pinning the edges, and within a year the edges start to peel back, exposing the weed barrier and base.

Speaking of weed barrier, do not skip it. Even with artificial turf, weeds can find their way through the base layer if you do not block them. A woven polypropylene weed barrier laid over the drainage gravel stops growth and keeps the base clean. It is a small cost compared to the headache of pulling weeds out from under your turf.

Infill and Glue

Silica sand infill is another component that people sometimes overlook. The sand is brushed into the turf blades after installation. It weighs down the turf, helps the blades stand upright, and prevents the turf from shifting. Around a pool, the sand also helps with drainage by

creating a stable base that water can move through. Without it, the turf can feel spongy and may wrinkle under furniture.

Turf glue is used at seams and edges to create a permanent bond. Not all glues are waterproof, so you need one that holds up against pool water and chlorine. A good seam done with the right glue will look invisible and last for years. A bad seam will open up and create a tripping hazard.

Safety and Heat Considerations

Heat is the number one complaint I hear from homeowners about artificial turf near pools. Dark turf can absorb a lot of sun, and on a 95-degree day the surface can get uncomfortably warm. There are a few ways to handle this. First, choose a turf color that is not too dark. Light green or a turf that has a blend of green and tan stays cooler than deep forest green. Second, look for products that include a cool deck coating or a heat-reducing additive in the yarn. Some manufacturers now offer turf that stays 10 to 15 degrees cooler than standard products.



Another safety factor is slip resistance. Wet turf can be slippery, but most quality artificial grasses have a textured blade that provides traction. I have tested several brands by walking across them with wet feet, and the ones with a slightly curled blade profile give noticeably better grip. If you have children or older adults using the pool, this is worth paying extra for.

Design Ideas That Work

One of the best uses of turf around pools is to create a soft border that contrasts with a paver patio or stone pool deck. You can run a strip of turf between the pool coping and the paver patio, which gives bare feet a cool place to step before hitting the hard surface. Another idea is to install a small turf section as a splash pad area for kids. A splash pad made of artificial turf drains instantly and eliminates the muddy mess that real grass creates.

I have also seen homeowners use turf to hide ugly concrete or to soften the look of landscape edging. A curved bed of turf around the pool breaks up the hard lines of the pool shape and makes the whole yard feel more organic. Just make sure the turf is installed with a proper edge restraint so the curve stays crisp.

Maintenance That Pays Off

Artificial turf around a pool does require some maintenance, just less than real grass. Rinse the turf with a hose every week to remove chlorine residue, sunscreen, and dirt. Brush the blades occasionally with a stiff broom to keep them from matting. Check the seams and edges twice a year, especially after winter, to make sure nothing has lifted. If you notice the turf starting to flatten in high-traffic areas, a little extra silica sand infill can help it rebound.

The payoff is a surface that looks green and inviting all year, with no mowing, no fertilizing, and no bare patches. When you factor in the water savings, especially in dry climates, the cost of quality turf pays for itself over time.



Final Thoughts

Choosing the right turf around pools comes down to understanding the conditions your yard will throw at it. Sun exposure, water chemistry, foot traffic, and your own design preferences all play a role. I have worked with dozens of homeowners who started with cheap turf and ended up replacing it within two years. The ones who invested in good materials and proper installation are still happy five or six years later.

Whatever brand you choose - AstroTurf, SYNLawn, ProTurf, or EcoTurf - make sure the installer understands poolside conditions. A turf job that looks great in a backyard might fail next to a pool if the drainage and edge details are not handled correctly. Take the time to get it right, and your pool deck will be a place you actually enjoy walking on barefoot.