

# SAND FOR TOPDRESSING

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The particle size of sands to be used in topdressing greens or in mixtures for rebuilding greens is an item of interest to many golf course superintendents. Accordingly, sand samples which have been used in the past or have been proposed for use were obtained and the particle size determined using a series of sieves. I thought it would be of interest to many of you to compare the sands in order to choose sands which meet your requirements.

Table 1 lists the source of the sands tested and Table 2 shows the results of the particle-size analyses. Some companies may call the fine sands listed mortar or masonry sand.

A brief look at literature from universities across the nation indicate disagreement on the specifics of a good sand to use, but almost everyone agrees that a high percentage of medium sand is desirable. Too much very coarse sand and gravel will lead to excessive equipment wear and poor putting quality following topdressing. Too much very fine sand and perhaps even fine sand can lead to problems with insufficient drainage and air-filled porosity.

Some of the micronutrient analyses are still being run and hopefully next month I'll have a table showing the pH and the micronutrients in these same sands.

In choosing the sand you use, some things you need to consider are: purpose of the sand program, frequency of application, rate of application, cost of sand, availability, amount of traffic and available time to topdress. Feel free to contact me about specific questions you have regarding these sands.

Table 1. Topdressing sands from Minnesota

#	Source
1	Fine sand from Northwestern Aggregates Inc., Burnsville
2	Fine sand from J. L. Shiely Co., St. Paul
3	Fine sand from Mueller & Sons Inc., Shakopee
4	Fine sand from Fischer Sand and Aggregate Co., Apple Valley (Pit #6)
5	Fine sand from Granite City Ready Mix, St. Cloud
6	Fine sand from Hardrives Inc., St. Cloud
7	Fine sand from Arsenal Sand and Gravel Co. Inc., Arden Hills
8	Granusil #40 from Unimin Corporation, Le Sueur
9	Silica sand from J. L. Shiely Co., Shakopee*
10	Silica sand from Twin City Silica, Lake Elmo

\*This sand will not be under production until around September 1981. The final product may differ from the sample tested here.


Table 2. Grain-size distribution of topdressing sands from Minnesota.

#	Very Coarse Sand & Gravel > 1.0 mm	Coarse Sand 0.5-1.0 mm	Medium Sand 0.25-0.5 mm	Fine Sand 0.1-0.25 mm	Very Fine Sand or Smaller < 0.1 mm
	% by weight				
1	21.1	30.8	35.8	10.4	2.0
2	21.4	26.0	36.4	15.1	1.1
3	15.0	23.9	35.7	23.7	1.7
4	8.8	21.0	44.0	22.1	4.2
5	5.4	35.1	50.9	7.8	0.8
6	2.3	19.3	53.3	22.6	2.5
7	1.4	21.3	59.2	15.7	2.4
8	0.0	1.8	94.2	3.9	0.1
9	1.5	12.8	49.3	35.5	1.0
10	0	0.5	26.2	67.5	5.8

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