



Covering Guidelines For Ultradwarf Bermudagrass Putting Greens

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Ultradwarf bermudagrass putting greens have limited cold tolerance and without protection, they are susceptible to cold temperature injury. Turf covers are used to prevent this injury and are kept on hand in most areas of the transition zone. Because golf is played throughout most of the winter in the Southeast Region, turf covers are used only for short periods of time and are removed for golf. January is a good time to review the basic covering guidelines.



The expense of a cover can be easily justified when compared to the cost of completely replanting a bermudagrass green.

Types of Covers

Numerous turf covers were tested under research conditions at Mississippi State University and the results indicate that all of the commercially available products tested worked well. Read this article for more information: [Turf covers for winter protection of bermudagrass greens](#). Not surprisingly, the most popular covers are the ones that are lightest in weight and easiest to handle. The covers we see most often are the black or white woven polypropylene product. Turf covers are available from numerous suppliers, but it takes time to get the product due to the specialized sizing for each green site and the manufacturing process. Emergency covering products such as pine or wheat straw can be used, but they may be more expensive and more labor intensive to apply. Permanent covers are a better choice. With proper storage and handling, covers will last 15 to 20 years.

When to Cover

The most common philosophy is to cover green when the predicted low temperatures are 25 degrees F or less. Although some golf courses have different thresholds for covering, remember that the role of a cover is not necessarily to keep the cold out, but to retain the warmth of the soil. Since cold temperatures can harm bermudagrass, a conservative approach is wise. Covering the greens requires a coordinated team, but when everyone is in sync, the process can take as little as three minutes to cover a green and four minutes to uncover it. Click on this link to see a live demonstration of covering and uncovering a putting green: [Video on Covering and Uncovering a Putting Green](#). Covers are stored adjacent to each green site when not in use. This link provides more information on covering protocols: [Ultradwarfs in the Off-Season - A Winter Wonderland](#)

Conclusion

Appropriate use of turf covers helps prevent winter injury. The cost of covers ranges between 15 to 20 cents per square foot and they last for at least 15 to 20 years. This investment of approximately \$20,000 is well worth it. If you have any questions on when to use turf covers on ultradwarf putting greens, please contact either Patrick O'Brien or Chris Hartwiger.

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