

Tall fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*)



Image from University of California - Davis

Tall fescue is a cool-season bunch-type grass. There are many varieties of tall fescue, but turf type tall fescues are best suited for athletic surfaces. Tall fescue is tolerant to heat, drought, cooler temperatures, and disease. It also grows successfully with minimal care making it a popular species for low budget athletic surfaces. Tall fescue has bunch-type growth and has a tendency to clump if the stand is not maintained with proper cultural practices. Turf type tall fescues can be mixed with perennial ryegrass to increase density and recovery from environmental stresses and wear. Tall fescue is well adapted to athletic surfaces where wear resistance and recuperative capacity are important.

Identifying Characteristics:

Growth Habit: bunch-type, occasional and short rhizomes

Vernation: rolled

Ligule: short, truncate, membranous (0.5 mm) very jagged

Auricles: non-clasping, small, short, hairs on edges

Sheath: open, round, and smooth

Collar: broad, divided, hairy on edges

Leaf tip: pointed

Leaf Blades: adaxial: deeply ridged; abaxial: glossy, prominent midrib; edges of leaf blade are rough

Seedhead: panicle



Image from A.J. Turgeon