

TURFGRASS SCIENTIST

Your office could be the field where champions play. Ready?

WHAT IT IS

Imagine designing the perfect green space where people play, relax, and compete—while using science to make it last. Turfgrass scientists do just that, creating and maintaining championship golf courses, stadiums, urban parks, and college campuses. This isn't just lawn care—it's plant science, soil chemistry, and environmental management, resulting in turfgrass that performs under tough conditions while staying beautiful.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Turfgrass scientists blend science, management, and hands-on fieldwork. Your day might include:

- Walking courses at sunrise checking turfgrass health
- Testing soil and adjusting nutrients for optimal growth
- Monitoring weather and calibrating irrigation to save water while keeping turfgrass perfect
- Troubleshooting disease outbreaks or pest problems
- Preparing fields for game day—ensuring surfaces are flawless for athletes
- Running and maintaining turfgrass equipment
- Meeting with agronomists or architects planning renovations
- Conducting research trials testing new grass varieties

DIG IN. DO GOOD.

READY FOR SUCCESS

Your success starts with curiosity about how plants grow and how soil works. Build a strong foundation in biology, chemistry, and soil science. Develop attention to detail, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. Be comfortable outdoors in all weather and take pride in creating spaces that thousands enjoy. Seek mentors, gain summer experience on golf courses or parks, and watch how science makes a visible impact every day.

EDUCATION REQUIRED

This career is rooted in plant science, soil management, and turf performance. **Most turfgrass scientists earn a bachelor's degree in:**

- **Turfgrass Science**
- **Horticulture**
- **Agronomy**
- **Crop and Soil Sciences**

Coursework covers plant physiology, soil science, pest management, and irrigation. Paid summer internships at real golf courses or sports facilities are typically required.

GETTING STARTED

Focus on science courses, especially biology and chemistry. Look for summer jobs at golf courses, parks, or sports facilities. Research universities with strong turfgrass programs like Penn State, NC State, or Purdue. Pursue internships during college for hands-on experience. Join professional organizations like the Golf Course Superintendents Association or Sports Field Managers Association to network and learn.



GROW BY
11%
UNTIL 2031

JOB OUTLOOK

The job outlook for turfgrass scientists is growing, with the US Bureau of Labor Statistics projecting 11% growth over the next five years.



EARN UP TO
\$100K

AVERAGE SALARY

Average salary for this role depends on education and position, and ranges from \$50,000 - \$100,000.