

HELPING YOUR SPORTS FACILITIES MEET THE DEMANDS OF TOMORROW



INFOCUS



WE'RE THE AMERICAN SPORTS BUILDERS ASSOCIATION



Who are we?

The American Sports Builders Association (ASBA) is a non-profit trade association comprised of builders, designers and suppliers for sports facilities. The Association's mission is to promote the highest standards of design, construction and maintenance.

What we do?

ASBA sponsors informative meetings, publishes books and technical construction guidelines for athletic facilities as well as its quarterly magazine, *Build It Right*, offers an awards program to recognize construction excellence, and keeps its members aware of the latest developments in the industry. It also offers extensive educational courses and voluntary certification programs in tennis court, running track and sports field construction, as well as a certificate program in pickleball court construction. It also has a philanthropic initiative, the American Sports Builders Foundation (ASBF).

How can we assist you?

ASBA is able to help coaches, athletic directors, officials and administrative personnel find the information they want, including diagrams, dimensions, construction information, upkeep and maintenance protocols, project planning tips and much more. ASBA supplies many of its services free to the public.

In the pages of this guide, you will find examples of ASBA's services, programs and resources. We hope that you will keep this information on hand, and use it as needed.

Additionally, we hope you will reach out to us to discuss any questions, needs or concerns you may have. We can be contacted through any of the means below.

sportsbuilders.org
info@sportsbuilders.org
443-640-1042

WHAT IS ON THE HORIZON?

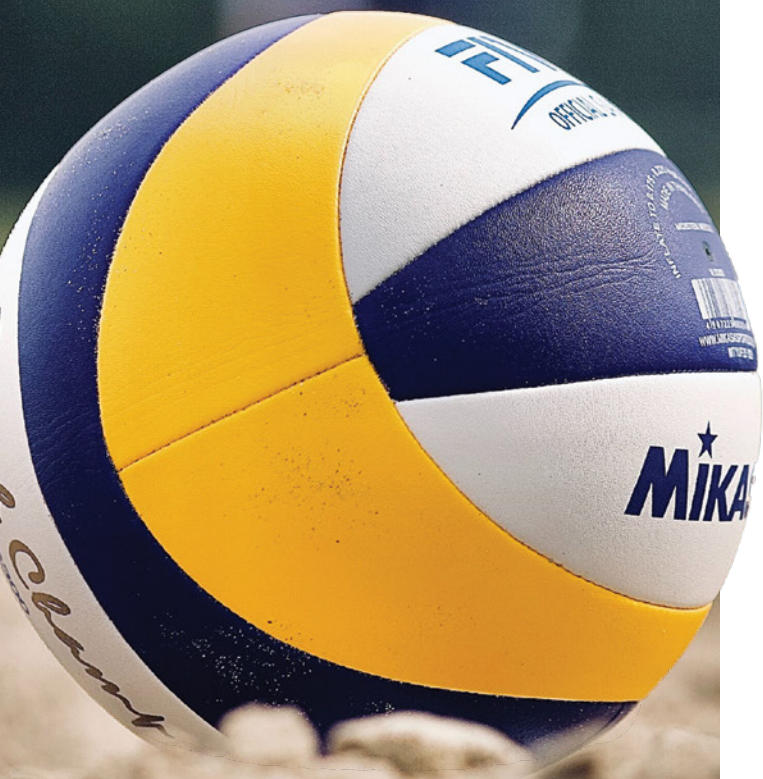
Planning Needs to Include Emerging Sports

What facilities do you need to improve, add onto or even build? To find out, keep an eye on the sports that are emerging, growing and making news.

Flag Football: One of the biggest storylines of the year is the emerging sport of flag football for female athletes. According to the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) High School Athletics Participation Survey, the number of participants in girls flag football more than doubled from 2022-23 to 2023-24.

The numbers speak for themselves: A total of 42,955 girls participated in flag football in 2023-24 compared to 20,875 the previous year – a 105 percent increase. Currently, flag football at the high school level lacks a set of rules nationwide; some schools play on full-size fields while others use smaller fields. NFHS has begun the process of writing rules that will take effect with the 2025-26 season.

Expect those high school players to want to play at the collegiate level as well. Currently, both the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) offer women's flag football as a sanctioned sport. And, in fact, the Atlantic East Conference, in partnership with the NFL and RCX sports, became the first NCAA conference to offer varsity female flag football, with an anticipated start date for varsity level status in spring 2025. The sport broke yet another barrier when it arrived at the HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) level; play is expected to start as soon as spring 2025.



Flag football will be included in the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles; it was included in the most recent iteration of the World Games in Birmingham, Alabama (2022).

Field Needs: Although, as previously mentioned the NFHS is still in the process of writing its own flag football rules, programs being hosted at the collegiate level already have information on field sizes, markings and more. NFL FLAG, one of the organizations currently sanctioning flag football nationwide, promotes fields of a smaller size than that of a standard field.

In many areas of the country, flag football is played in the spring, whereas tackle football is a fall sport. However, with the rise in popularity, both types of programs will need space for practice and conditioning; therefore, there may well be a need for more fields.

Wrestling: Another highlight is the sizeable jump in the number of girls wrestling at the high school level. The NFHS recorded explosive participation on wrestling teams nationwide with 64,257 participants last year – an increase of 102 percent from the 31,654 in 2021-22. Right now, 44 states sanction high school wrestling for girls; additionally, the sport is on track to be the NCAA's 91st championship sport, with the first women's wrestling championship to be held in winter 2026.

Facility Needs: As with flag football, this growth at all levels can mean a need for more practice, training and competition space, as well as equipment like mats.

Lacrosse: While the sport has grown in popularity nationwide, here's something new: The version of the sport that will be presented at the Olympics in 2028 differs from that seen in high schools and colleges, where 10 players are on each side. The discipline in 2028 will be known as Sixes, which has, as the name suggests, six players per side (including the goalie) and is played on a smaller field (70m x 36m) in four 8-minute quarters. World Lacrosse Sixes was first used at a major international sporting event at the 2022 World Games. Small-sided play has been making headway nationwide, and it is predicted to gain particular popularity at the college club level – as well as among adults who want to join social sports clubs after high school or college.

USA Lacrosse has information on field dimensions for both traditional and sixes play formats.

Note: *ASBA's publication, Sports Fields: A Construction and Maintenance Manual*, can provide in-depth information on field construction and care, and includes information on both natural and synthetic surfaces.

Esports: The number of participants in esports also increased at the high school level in 2023-24. A total of 27,051 students participated in esports last year, which included 23,041 boys and 4,010 girls – an increase of 3,129 participants from the previous year.

Gaming is also experiencing exponential growth in colleges nationwide. The National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE) started in 2016 with a total of seven members (the total number of schools at that time with esports programs) and now has more than 240 member schools and 5,000-plus student athletes, as well as sponsors and an annual convention.

Facility Needs: Facilities for esports can vary from independent setups used by students from home or dorm settings, all the way up to arenas that draw national, and even international, competitions. Colleges with competitive esports programs are increasingly having designated lounges and areas where students can train and compete.

Beach Volleyball: This came to the Olympics in 1992 and had what can only be described as a meteoric rise in popularity; in fact, it moved through the NCAA's Emerging Sports for Women program and achieved full championship status more quickly than any sport before or since.

The sport is continuing to grow not just at the college level but in high school and club play, since many athletes are pursuing college scholarships. Presently, more than 90 NCAA institutions offer beach volleyball, and youth clubs, seeing the opportunity for college scholarships, are creating their own programs to serve as feeder systems.

Facility Needs: In the rush to add the sport at the youth and college level, it is easy to overlook the fundamentals of construction, which includes not only court sizes and net heights but sand types and drainage considerations. Improperly constructed

courts will not provide a good playing experience and may not gain the enthusiasm expected. Proper construction, as performed by a contractor with sport-specific expertise, is necessary.

3x3 Basketball: 3x3 basketball, also known as half-court basketball (with three players on each team), made its debut at the 2020 Olympics (where the U.S. women took home the gold medal). Since then, it has been growing in popularity at street festivals, and also at the club level in colleges, as well as among post-high school and post-college students who want to keep up their game – but who have difficulty finding enough players for a full team.

Information on beach volleyball, basketball, wrestling and esports can all be found in ASBA's publication, *Courts & Recreational Surfaces: Construction and Maintenance Manual*.

Pickleball: The sport needs no introduction but (surprise!) is growing at the college level. USA

Pickleball has a Collegiate Grant Program, as well as an expanding list of USA Pickleball Collegiate Pickleball Clubs. DUPR (Dynamic Universal Pickleball Rating) hosted the Collegiate National Championship; meanwhile, the National Collegiate Pickleball Association (NCPA) offers its own championship as well.

Facility Needs: While many colleges simply encourage players to use tennis courts, those are neither marked for, nor equipped for, pickleball play, leading to requests to have courts relined. To avoid conflicts with tennis programs, set aside dedicated courts for pickleball. Start with ASBA's publication, *Pickleball Courts: Construction & Maintenance Manual*, which walks readers through the process of design, construction, maintenance, repair and other aspects of pickleball courts.

Tennis: In April, the USTA announced an ambitious, multi-faceted growth strategy aimed at making the United States the number one tennis-playing nation



in the world by 2035, which means increasing the country's tennis-playing population to 35 million total players, or 10% of the country's population. The strategy includes a dedicated focus on player attraction and retention, among other things. An increased number of youth initiatives are expected to bear fruit, which can drive up the number of players in high schools and colleges.

Facility Needs: The USTA has estimated that 40,000 new courts will be needed to handle player growth. While it's impossible to say exactly how many courts schools should consider adding in the future, it does mean they should be looking at the facilities they have, with an eye to their condition and to improvement.

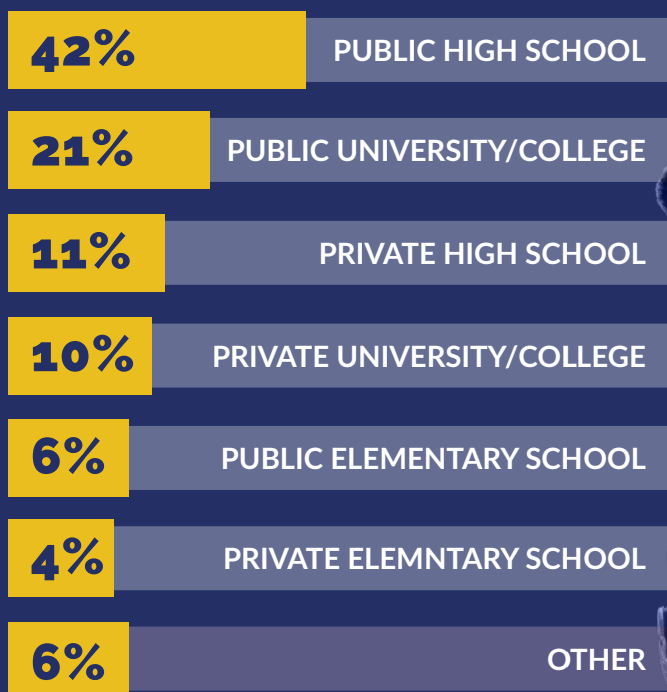
ASBA's publication, *Tennis Courts: Construction and Maintenance Manual* can help with overall evaluation of courts, as well as with ideas for potentially growing the number of courts on campus.



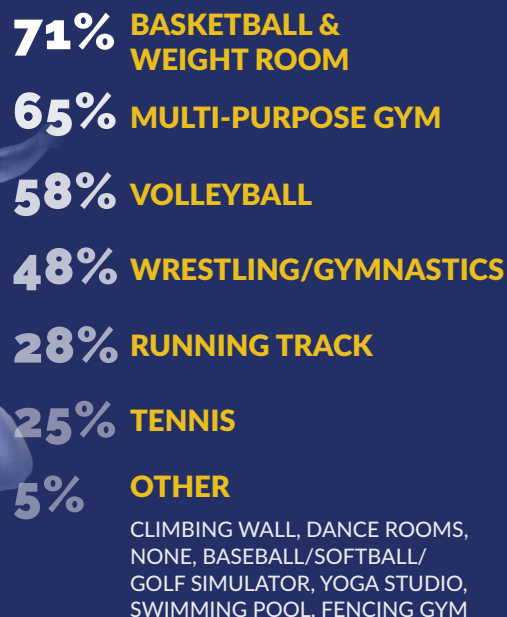
UPGRADING YOUR ATHLETIC FACILITIES

In this survey, discover insights into the current state and future plans for athletic facilities across a variety of educational institutions. Explore the different types of athletic facilities schools have, their plans for upgrades, and the decision-making timelines involved. Additionally, the survey identifies the individuals who play a role in the planning process and highlights the top challenges schools face.

What type of organization do you represent?

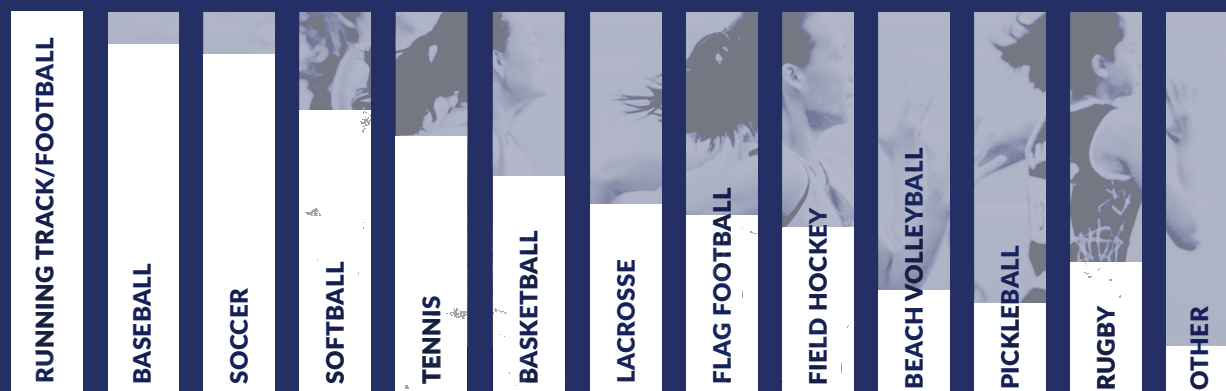


Please indicate the type of **INDOOR** athletic facilities your organization currently has:



Please indicate the type of **OUTDOOR** athletic facilities your organization currently has:

68% 61% 60% 50% 47% 33% 27% 25% 22% 12% 10% 13% 5%



Did you introduce any new sports this school year?

85% OF YOU SAID NO.

14% SAID YES!

20% GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL

13% WOMEN'S/MEN'S WRESTLING, WOMEN'S/MEN'S LACROSSE, SOCCER

7% BASKETBALL, GIRLS WRESTLING, BOWLING, SLIDE PLATE, ULTIMATE FRISBEE, TABLE TENNIS, ESPORTS, DEKA

Please rank how important the following factors are to you when you are deciding upon improvements to be made to your athletic facilities:

54% WHETHER THE FACILITY IS OPEN TO COMMUNITY USE

37% INCREASING MULTI-PURPOSE USE

30% ATTRACTING TRAVEL SPORTS, CAMPS, SHOWCASES

28% HOSTING TOURNAMENTS

27% INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY

27% INCREASING SPECTATOR ENJOYMENT

25% INCREASING SAFETY

18% HOSTING RECREATIONAL VS. TEAM SPORTS

Do you have plans to build or renovate your athletic facilities in the near future?

	1-2 YEARS	3-4 YEARS	5+ YEARS
MAIN STADIUM	33%	34%	33%
GRASS FIELDS	38%	31%	31%
TURF FIELDS	38%	28%	34%
SUPPLEMENTAL	44%	26%	30%
OUTDOOR	39%	33%	28%
INDOOR	35%	40%	25%
MULTI-PURPOSE	42%	31%	27%
INDOOR TRACK	32%	35%	33%
OUTDOOR TRACK	33%	34%	33%
LIGHTING	50%	50%	50%
EQUIPMENT	61%	26%	13%

With regard to improvements, what is the typical timeline for the decision-making process at your facility?

4%

> 1 MONTH

27%

3-6 MONTHS

30%

1-3 MONTHS

39%

< 6 MONTHS

Of the following individuals within your school system, please indicate who will be involved in the design and consideration of any new facility projects:

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

76%

FACILITY MANAGER

72%

COACHES

57%

SCHOOL ADMIN.

75%

USER GROUPS

42%

OTHER

11%

MAINTENANCE OF SPORTS FACILITIES





Sports facilities represent a sizeable investment. Keeping them in good shape means creating a plan and sticking to it. ASBA has compiled a suggested checklist for this work.

Note: While the checklist below contains suggestions, the most important job of all is to be proactive in all aspects of sports facility care and maintenance. Correct problems (or have a professional do so) as soon as you notice them. Waiting will not only waste time, but it will also lead to more expensive repairs or worse, to something that poses a danger to athletes.

Along those same lines, if new equipment or parts are needed, order them immediately so that you stay ahead of any problems with shipping delays.

Don't know where to find a professional to help you address your problems, or a place to order the equipment or supplies you need? Don't miss the article elsewhere in this e-zine about resources available to coaches and athletic directors from the American Sports Builders Association (ASBA).

Courts (Outdoor Tennis, Basketball, Pickleball, etc)

Surface: If you see surface cracks, take photos and text them to your court contractor who can advise you on the proper method of treatment. (Many cracks look similar to the untrained eye, but a contractor will be able to identify those that are a symptom of a larger underlying problem).

Sweep or blow off leaves and debris before they can stain the surface. (This is something that should be done on an ongoing basis, or at least until severe weather, such as heavy snowfall, precludes it).

Any stains you find on the court should be addressed with a mild detergent and water mixture and a soft brush. If that does not help, contact your surfacing contractor and ask for recommendations; harsh treatment may have the undesirable result of discoloring or damaging the surface.

If your court needs to be recoated, consult with your court contractor about the best time to do this work and make sure to schedule it so that the surface is competition-ready as soon as possible.

Nets: Check nets on basketball, tennis or pickleball courts. If they look frayed or worn, order replacements.

Paint: If net posts for tennis or pickleball courts look chipped or if rust spots are evident, do touch-up work with rust-proof paint. Posts set into sleeves can be removed for this work; if posts are permanently set into the court, be sure to protect the surface from drips or spills while painting. Basketball backboards and the poles that support them may also require touch-ups as may backboards or hitting walls. Remember to clean all surfaces thoroughly before painting.

Windscreens: Inspect windscreen regularly, looking for damage or wear. At the end of the playing season, hose off all windscreens, tag each section with location, remove and store. If any windscreens have become damaged, repair or order replacements.

Fencing: Check fencing, including rails, connectors, hinges and gates; repair or order replacement parts if necessary. Check to make sure gates do not drag across the surface and cause damage.

Lights: Turn on your lighting system and make sure all units are working; order replacements as needed. Consult an electrical contractor or your sports lighting vendor with any questions or problems.

ASBA reference manuals can provide further information:

- *Tennis Courts: Construction & Maintenance Manual*
- *Pickleball Courts: Construction & Maintenance Manual*
- *Courts & Recreational Surfaces: Construction & Maintenance Manual*

Track & Field Facilities Surface

Check the track surface; look for loose granules, worn spots, cracking or other surface problems. Ascertain that lane lines, numbers and markings are still clear and readable, both by athletes and officials. If you identify any areas of concern, call your track

contractor to discuss them.

Fencing: Check fencing, including rails, connectors, hinges and gates; repair or order replacement parts if necessary. Check to make sure gates do not drag across the track surface and cause damage.

Field Events: Carefully examine all takeoff boards, landing areas, throwing cages, vault boxes, sand pits, water jumps, stanchions and other equipment. Repair or order replacements, as necessary. Count hurdles and make sure they are in good repair.

Bleachers and Benches: Check bleachers and benches, looking for sharp edges, loose areas or anything else that could present a hazard. Repair or order replacements as needed.

Outbuilding and Storage Sheds: If equipment is stored in outbuildings or sheds near the facility, check all doors, hinges and locks.

Repaint any buildings as needed. If there are leaks in the roof, patch them; problems will not improve over time.

Lights: Turn on lights and make sure all units are working and that the competition area is evenly illuminated; order replacements or consult with electrical contractors or lighting vendors as needed.

Two of ASBA's reference manuals can provide further information; both are available at this link.

- *Running Tracks: A Construction and Maintenance Manual*
- *Sports Fields: A Construction and Maintenance Manual*

Sports Fields

The type of maintenance your field will require will depend upon any number of variables, including



whether the surface is natural or synthetic (and the specific type of grass or turf), as well as the amount of use the field receives and the local climate. It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss maintenance and repair for all types of fields.

However, the following points should be taken into consideration:

All fields, no matter what type, should be inspected throughout the playing season as well as the off-season. Look for problems with the surface, including drainage issues (for natural or synthetic fields), bare spots, ruts or holes (grass fields), pests or weeds, (grass fields), displaced infill or an uneven surface (synthetic fields) or any other problems. Talk with your field contractor, or for specific issues relating to natural grass, to a local agronomist.

ASBA's reference manual, *Sports Fields: A Construction and Maintenance Manual*, is a comprehensive resource on all aspects of field design, construction, maintenance and repair.

Indoor Facilities

Gymnasiums that host basketball, volleyball and other indoor sports benefit from regular maintenance. That includes the following:

Check Lighting: Make sure all fixtures are functioning and that the playing area is evenly lit. Call an electrical contractor or sports lighting vendor if there are any problems.

Keeping the Surface Clean: Whether wood or acrylic, indoor floors need care and some of that is preventive. Have mats near the entrance to keep athletes and students from tracking in dirt, mud or grit that can scratch or mark the floor. Require

non-marking court shoes to be worn by all athletes (including cheer or dance squads that may take the floor at halftime) as well as by anyone who will be standing on the surface for any reason, including maintenance personnel and game officials. Sweep and damp-mop the floor between games to remove any debris that has accumulated.

Wipe up spills promptly and remove substances like gum that can create a mess if left behind. Try to minimize the potential for pest infestations by cleaning up popcorn and other spilled food immediately after games have concluded.

Each season, speak with user groups to evaluate whether lines for additional sports need to be added to the gym floor. Do not use tape to mark lines on surfaces; professionals note that it can leave permanent marks on the surface or damage the finish.

Amenities and Accessories: Check the condition of bleachers and divider netting, as well as any sport-specific equipment like wrestling mats or movable goals. Make any necessary repairs or order new equipment as needed.

If floors show any signs of problems, including dead spots that affect ball bounce, delamination, loose areas or discoloration, call a contractor immediately and have them investigate the problem. Often, athletes will notice surface problems first and report them to coaches or officials. Maintain an open dialogue with athletes and encourage them to bring their concerns or suggestions to you.

The ASBA publication, *Courts & Recreational Surfaces: Construction & Maintenance Manual*, can provide further information on care and maintenance of indoor sports surfaces.



DO YOUR SPORTS FACILITIES NEED HELP? HERE IT IS

Let ASBA's Resources Get You Off to the Right Start

You've made the decision to get work done on your existing facilities. Maybe your tennis courts need resurfacing, or your field needs a refresh. Maybe your weight room could use a new floor, or you've decided to purchase new divider netting for your gym. Maybe, just maybe, you want to put in something new, like a beach volleyball court, some pickleball courts or a multi-sport area. Whatever you've decided upon, you can rest assured that your student athletes will benefit from it.

The next step you take, however, is the most crucial. Obviously, you want a finished product you're proud of — and that is a good reason not to trust an Internet search. Why? Because it might result in hiring a do-it-yourselfer who does not have the expertise you need, or a shoddy product that does not hold up.

Instead, get the professional results you want by going to the professionals. Head to the website of the American Sports Builders Association. ASBA, a non-profit trade association of builders, designers and suppliers of materials and equipment for sports facilities, exists to promote the highest standards of design, construction and maintenance. ASBA is able to help administrators, athletic directors, coaches and others find all the information they need. Some resources (many of which are free) are as follows:

Design Showcase App: ASBA's free mobile app that offers diagrams of various sports facilities, including those mentioned below. It is a great starting point

for those who want to find out about the necessary space considerations, markings and more.

ASBA's Online Directory: ASBA's website allows the reader to explore its Find a Builder, Designer or Supplier feature free of charge, using location or area of expertise.

ASBA's Bid Info Request Form: Allows users to provide information on upcoming projects and hear from the professionals who are best equipped to help them.

Information on Certified Builders: A listing of ASBA's Builder members who have achieved voluntary certification in constructing tennis courts, running tracks or sports fields, or who have received the Association's pickleball certificate.

ASBA's Library of Publications: In addition to those publications mentioned here, ASBA offers a full complement of books designed to inform the reader on design, construction, surface selection, budgeting, maintenance and more.

Technical Articles: ASBA has authored articles for a wide variety of trade publications; all can be accessed free of charge.

Additionally, we hope you will reach out to us to discuss any questions, needs or concerns you may have. We can be contacted through any of the means to the right.

LEARN MORE

ABOUT ALL OF OUR DIVISIONS

TRACK DIVISION



COURTS DIVISION



FIELDS DIVISION



www.sportsbuilders.org

info@sportsbuilders.org

443-640-1042





**Your source for quality
builders and designers who will
help you *Build it Right***



Promoting the highest standards of design, construction,
and maintenance for all types of indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

Visit us today at **sportsbuilders.org** to learn more.