



One of the hot topics in playground surfacing centers around whether aliphatic or aromatic binders are to be used in the top layer.

Aromatics are the workhorse of the rubber industry. They are lower cost, and have a slightly varnish-like color, which can yellow colors slightly once in the sun.

Aliphatics on the other hand are crystal-clear and do not yellow colors.

Which to chose? Aliphatic binders cost about \$1.50-\$2.00 more per square foot, consequently about 90% of people are perfectly fine using aromatic binder.

There are some situations where you would want to specify aliphatic binder, such as using light, pastel colors which cannot tolerate any yellowing. Whites, light tans, light blues (which can take on a greenish appearance with aromatic binder) and other lighter colors benefit from aliphatic binder.

THE CHOICE IS YOURS, however you must factor in the additional cost if you are going to specify aliphatic binder, as aromatics are used to price projects, unless otherwise directed. It is not done so automatically if there are light color granules used on a project.

Over time, the binder gets scuffed off with UV and foot traffic, revealing the core of the rubber granules. So, the yellowing becomes less of an issue in the ensuing years.