

## WEED CONTROL

May and September are excellent times to control broadleaf weeds. Liquid sprays are highly effective. Granular products are also effective, most of which should be applied to a wet or dewy lawn to be sure the material sticks to the weeds. Check label for rates and directions. Annual grassy weeds (crabgrass) are best controlled in late April with applications of a weed preventer product.

## REMOVING THATCH AND AERIFYING

Vigorously growing turf will occasionally develop accumulations of thatch. Thatch, a brown, peat-mossy looking material below the grass plants, should not be allowed to reach thickness of more than ½ inch. Removing thatch can be done with several types of power equipment. Hand raking is generally not sufficient. Aerifying will speed thatch breakdown and assist in root development.

## INSECTS AND DISEASE

Homeowners or a lawn professional should occasionally monitor for insects and diseases. Only after specific pests have been identified should control methods be instituted.

## MOWING

Turfgrass should be mowed to a height of 1 ½ to 2 ½ inches. Gardeners should strive to not remove more than 1/3 the total height at any one mowing. This will assure the grass plants plenty of green leaf surface and avoid injury to the plants. Clippings should be allowed to remain on the lawn. They return fertilizer to the soil and do not add to thatch build-ups. Returning clippings to the lawn can also help save our landfills.

# HOME LAWN CARE CALENDAR

## March

- ☞ Dormant seed bare spots

## April

- ☞ Seed bare spots or entire lawn.
- ☞ Apply starter fertilizer

## May

- ☞ Apply crabgrass preventer to existing turf, unless overseeding
- ☞ Control lawn weeds
- ☞ Fertilize turf late this month

## June - July

- ☞ Monitor for Sod Webworms and Chinch Bugs, control if necessary
- ☞ Water turf as needed to prevent dormancy
- ☞ If turf experienced Grub damage last year, apply a full season Grub preventer in June

## Late August – Mid September

- ☞ Seed whole lawns or fill bare spots, ryegrass blends can be seeded until early October
- ☞ Fertilize turf
- ☞ Control lawn weeds
- ☞ Check for grubs, apply contact control if necessary

## September

- ☞ Remove thatch and aerate

## Late November (Thanksgiving)

- ☞ Fertilize turf with product high in fast release Nitrogen



Preferred Seed products distributed by:

Your Complete Guide To

# LAWN PLANTING & LAWN CARE



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## Selecting a Seed Mixture

Seed for a sunny location should contain 65% improved Kentucky Bluegrass varieties with the balance in perennial ryegrass and fine fescue.

A shady mix should contain 65% improved fine fescue with some perennial ryegrass and shade tolerant Kentucky Bluegrass.

Gardeners should also consider blends of improved perennial ryegrass for sunny lawns. These new varieties are fine textured, much less stemmy than old common types, and most contain endophytic fungi. This naturally occurring fungus makes these varieties resistant to surface feeding insects such as chinch bugs, sod webworms and bill bugs.

Why improved varieties? Plant breeders have discovered new varieties of all grass species that stand up better in drought conditions and also are resistant to insects and diseases. These modern varieties are an excellent investment as they perform admirably as years pass.

## Planting Time

Mid August through the end of September is the best time to seed a new lawn. Rainfall is usually adequate and cooler temperatures create an excellent environment for seed germination and growth. April is the second best time to seed turf grass.

Dormant seeding in late winter will thicken up turf where patches of bare soil exist. Dormant seeding is most successful on level or nearly level ground.

Seeding at other times of the season will usually require additional irrigation but can be successful if soils are kept moist.

## Preparing the Seedbed

### SOIL TEST

When possible, a soil test should be conducted to determine the soil pH. Lime should not be added unless a soil test has determined its need or past experience has indicated soil pH to be below 6.0.

Soil pH's above 7.5 will require additions of sulfur or iron sulfate to lower the pH.

### FERTILIZE

Prior to roto-tilling or spading, spread starter fertilizer over the soil. Fertilizers should be applied at the following rates:

5-10-5 at 20 pounds per 1000 sq. ft.

18-24-12 at 6 pounds per 1000 sq. ft.

### GRADE AND LEVEL

Smooth and level surfaces with a rake, at the same time removing any foreign materials, sticks, stones and clumped soils. Always grade away from foundations.

### SEEDING RATES

Rate of seeding depends entirely on the blend of seed. Blends high in Kentucky Bluegrass are generally seeded at a rate of 3 pounds per 1000 sq. ft. Fine Fescue blends at 6 pounds per 1000 sq. ft. and Perennial Ryegrass blends at 7 pounds per 1000 sq. ft. Refer to manufacturer specifications for recommended seeding rates.

Lightly roll or rake seed to ensure good soil contact. Do not bury.

### MULCH

Newly seeded turf should be mulched with seed establishment mulch as per the package recommendation or clean straw at a rate of 50 pounds per 1000 sq. ft. (about one bale). The thickness should be approximately one inch and soil should be clearly visible through the straw.

### WATERING

Water is very important to newly seeded lawns. Use a sprinkler three times a day for 15 to 20 minutes each time. (Example: 10:00 am, 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm.) For working couples, watering immediately before and after work may be sufficient for properly mulched lawns. But do not water after 5:00 pm. Hand sprinkling does not provide adequate moisture and is not recommended.

### FOLLOW-UP FERTILIZER

An application of a regular lawn fertilizer should be applied at half rate three to four weeks after the seedlings have emerged.

## Lawn Maintenance

### FERTILIZER

Cornell University recommends three applications of fertilizer a year.

### LATE MAY

Applications will assist the turf in maintaining the good growth it established earlier in the season. Slow release nitrogen is very beneficial in this application.

### EARLY SEPTEMBER

This is the most efficient time to fertilize a home lawn. This will promote top growth but more importantly a healthy root system for winter hardiness and next summer's dry weather. This application should contain at least some slow release nitrogen.

### LATE NOVEMBER

After the plants have stopped growing, but are still green, is the time to apply the third application.

Accelerating root growth is the key and quick release fertilizers should be used. Cut rates in half on very well drained soils.

### WATERING

An established lawn should receive 1 to 1 ½ inches of water per week. A rain gauge or coffee can will assist in monitoring rainfall and sprinkler times.

