

Growing Grass

Understanding the Different Types of Grass

Platt Hill Nursery offers blends of seed that are formulated for the various sunlight conditions and traffic patterns of your yard.

PERENNIAL RYE

Fast germinating, tough play lawn.

New Lawn: 1 lb. covers 100 sq. ft.

Overseeding: 1 lb. covers 250 sq. ft.

Germination: 10-14 days

LANDSCAPE MIXTURE

Custom blend for Platt Hill Nursery, used exclusively at Platt Hill Nursery. Sun.

New Lawn: 1 lb. covers 300 sq. ft.

Overseeding: 1 lb. covers 500 sq. ft.

Germination: 14-30 days

SUN AND SHADE MIX

Performs well in sun and shade; heat and drought tolerant.

New Lawn: 1 lb. covers 300 sq. ft.

Overseeding: 1 lb. covers 500 sq. ft.

Germination: 10-30 days

SHADE MIXTURE

For use in shade areas where moisture is not a problem; performs well in full or partial shade.

New Lawn: 1 lb. covers 300 sq. ft.

Overseeding: 1 lb. covers 500 sq. ft.

Germination: 14-20 days

CHAMPION TALL FESCUE

Performs well in sun and shade; requires less water and fertilizer than sod; good for play areas; excellent heat and drought tolerance; grass blades not as fine as Kentucky Blue Grass.

New Lawn: 1 lb. covers 200 sq. ft.

Overseeding: 1 lb. covers 300 sq. ft.

Germination: 14-30 days

KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS

Finest blade of all grass types; need water and fertilizer for best appearance; not good for heavy traffic areas. Full sun.

New Lawn: 1 lb. covers 300 sq. ft.

Overseeding: 1 lb. covers 500 sq. ft.

Germination: 20-30 days

Spring Lawn Care (April-May)

FERTILIZING: When applying a spring fertilizer use an organic like Milorganite or a high nitrogen synthetic like Scotts. The nitrogen will boost growth as the soil warms and the grass begins to grow.

PRE-EMERGENT HERBICIDE: Since pre-emergents affect any germinating seeds, they need to be applied in a timely fashion to be effective. When the soil temperatures rise to the mid-50°s seeds begin to germinate. A good indicator is when the forsythia bushes begin to bloom.

HERBICIDES: Spring is a good time to get a good knockdown on weeds which are vigorously growing at this time.

MOWING: Do not remove more than 1/3 the height of the grass. Removing too much of the blade stresses the grass and causes excessive clippings that when left on the lawn in clumps can smother the grass beneath.

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Summer Lawn Care (June-August)

FERTILIZING: Avoid applying a high nitrogen fertilizer during the reduced rainfall of summer. Excess fertilizer can burn a lawn during hot, dry periods. The best choice for a summer fertilizer is Milorganite because it is a low release fertilizer that will not burn the lawn.

HERBICIDES: A selective herbicide can be used; however, better control of weeds can be achieved in late summer as temperatures begin to cool and weeds begin to grow again.

MOWING: Sharpen the mower blades. Sharp blades cause less stress to the grass. Raise the mower deck, grass does not grow very fast in the heat and the dryness of the summer. Longer grass will result in a greener and less stressed lawn.

WATERING: Cool season grasses like Kentucky Bluegrass change from bright green to yellow-brown in the summer. This means it is entering a dormant state and will come back in fall; it is just resting. If you need to water the lawn, long deep waterings only once a week are more beneficial than short waterings every other day.

SEEDING: Late summer into early fall is a great time to seed new lawn or patch bare spots. The combination of warm days and cool evenings as well as the increase in precipitation are conducive to germination and root development.

DISEASE AND INSECTS: Because this is a stressful time of year for lawns, they often show signs of disease or insect damage. Often the culprits are over-or-under-fertilizing, and excessive watering. Grubs are actively feeding in August and September so systemic grub control needs to be applied in mid-summer to be effective. If grubs are noticed late in the year, a fast acting grub control is needed since the systemic will not have time to act on the vermin.

Fall Lawn Care (September-November)

FERTILIZING: Fall root growth is very important to grass, so fertilize with a high phosphorous fertilizer (10-16-20).

HERBICIDES: Late summer and early fall is a time when weeds are moving more fluid to their roots and a great time to increase the chances of killing tough weeds.

MOWING: When you mow for the last time of the season, lower the mowing deck shorter than usual. This prevents matting of the grass blades which can cause some fungal diseases.

AERATING: Heavy clay soils benefit greatly from annual aeration helping to prevent soil compaction.

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Starting Grass From Seeds

1. **PREPARATION:** Remove debris, rocks and sticks. This is a great time to improve the soil by adding peat, compost or manure. Loosen the soil by tilling the surface. Rake and level the seed bed. Apply a starter fertilizer to the area.
2. **SEEDING:** Use a quality seed selected for the sun and traffic pattern of your lawn. Sow the seed 1/8" to 1/4" deep. Mulch with straw, peat moss, or fine compost to conserve moisture and keep the seed in place. Minimize traffic on newly seeded areas to prevent soil compaction. Grass seedlings are easily broken and killed.
3. **WATERING:** Thoroughly soak the area after sowing and continue watering 3-4 times each day never allowing the soil surface to completely dry out. Grass seedlings quickly die without water. Light, regular waterings are better than washing away the seed with infrequent, heavy watering. Continue to monitor watering diligently for at least 30 days.
4. **MAINTENANCE:** Mow when leaf growth reaches 3-4". Fertilizer can be applied 30 days after germination. To prevent soil compaction minimize traffic on a newly seeded lawn.

Starting Sod

(Sod is 100% Kentucky Bluegrass)

1. **PREPARATION:** All areas to be sodded should be finish-graded with the grade 1" below walks and drives ensuring sod will be even with these surfaces after installation. Remove debris, rocks and sticks. This is a great time to improve the soil by adding peat, compost or manure. A starting fertilizer high in phosphorous is recommended before the sod is laid.
2. **LAYING SOD:** Begin laying sod along a straight edge, such as a drive or walk. Set the sod pieces tight against each other, but do not overlap. Sod should be laid with the joints staggered (in a brick like pattern). Any excess or shaping around an obstacle can be trimmed with a sharp knife.
3. **WATERING:** After a large area has been laid, begin watering and completely saturate the sod. Water sod thoroughly with a penetration to a depth of 6". Sod can dry out quickly in hot weather, especially along the edges of the pieces and along paved edges. All watering recommendations are subject to the amount of rainfall and heat during the establishment period.
WEEK #1: Water daily.
WEEK #2: Water every other day.
WEEK #3: Water every 3rd day.
Each watering episode should last 2-4 hours.
4. **MAINTENANCE:** Mow when leaf growth reaches 3-4". Fertilizer can be applied 30 days after installation. To prevent soil compaction minimize traffic on a newly sodded lawn.