

above the soil, creating a layer of thatch that can impede water penetration, and increase disease and insect problems. Today's mulching mowers do a fine job of chopping clippings into small pieces, and blowing them into the soil for faster decomposition.

## Maintenance

1. *Keep grass mowed to the recommended height (about 1 ½ to 2 inches for most varieties; check the package)*
2. *Fertilize 2 to 3 times per year, using a slow-release type fertilizer.*
3. *Test your soil pH annually. Add lime or sulfur as needed to maintain a pH between 6.0 and 6.5.*
4. *Control weeds.* Your best defense is a thick, healthy turf, which will actually crowd out weeds. If weeds do emerge, treat by either pulling the roots out by hand, or using a chemical herbicide (Caution: be sure to follow label directions, to avoid damaging grass, ornamental plants and shrubs, or injuring pets and small children).



**#seedthedifference**

## There's a Twin City Seed Lawn Mixture Just Right for Your Lawn!

### **PURE BLUE Lawn Seed Mixture**

*A Blend of Elite Kentucky Bluegrass Varieties for Full Sun!*

### **ATHLETIC Lawn Seed Mixture**

*50% Kentucky Bluegrass  
50% Perennial Ryegrass*

### **SUNNY Lawn Seed Mixture**

*For Thick Lawns in Full Sun*

### **SUN & SHADE Lawn Seed Mixture**

*For Thick Lawn in Partial Shade*

### **SHADY Lawn Seed Mixture**

*For Thick Lawns in Full to Partial Shade*

### **DENSE SHADE Lawn Seed Mixture**

*For Thick Lawns in Full Shade*

### **LOW GROW FESCUE Lawn Seed Mixture**

*For Low Input/Maintenance Lawns*

### **TUFF TURF Lawn Seed Mixture**

*For Drought-Tolerant Lawns in Sandy Soils*

### **STREETS Lawn Seed Mixture**

*For Thick Lawns in Salty Soils (Boulevards)*

### **LANDSCAPER Lawn Seed Mixture**

*For Fast Germinating Lawns*



# Starting A New Lawn From Seed



## You're planting a brand-new lawn.

It's going to take some time; you're going to spend some money on tools and supplies; and you'll have to throw in a bit of elbow grease. With all that invested, you sure don't want to do it all over again next year! So, do it right, the first time. Your reward will be a lush, green, healthy lawn that lasts.

## When to Plant

The ideal time for planting most kinds of grass is late summer or early fall. That's the best time for germination and early growth for cool-season grasses; annual weeds are much less aggressive then as well. Warm-season grasses can also be started as early in the spring as possible.

## Preparing the Soil

1. *Remove all grass and weeds.* A large expanse of old turf is most easily removed using an herbicide containing glyphosate to kill all plants growing in the area to be restored. Use a rake or sod cutter to remove dead grass and weeds. For smaller areas, kill any existing vegetation by covering with black plastic for a few weeks. Or, use a rotary tiller (also available at rental centers) to turn under the top 2-3 inches of soil. Rake and discard all grass clumps, weeds, buried wood, roots, stones, etc.
2. *Till the soil to a depth of 6-8 inches.* Rotary tillers are the easiest way for most homeowners to turn their soil. Set blades to dig to a depth of 6-8 inches, and till the entire area to be seeded.
3. *Improve soil texture.* Grass does not grow well in either hard-packed, clay soils or in

loose, sandy soils. If your soil is sandy, add organic matter—such as compost, peat moss, or well-rotted manure—to increase moisture retention and aeration. If your soil is compacted clay, add organic matter and sand to create air spaces and increase moisture retention. Spread these amendments evenly over the soil surface.

4. *Adjust the pH.* Most grasses prefer a slightly acid soil (a pH of around 6.0-6.5); this allows the plants to absorb nutrients from the soil most readily. Test your soil to determine whether you need to add lime (to make it more alkaline) or sulfur (to make it more acidic). Spread lime at the rate of 4 lbs./100 sq. ft. for every point of pH below 6.5. Spread sulfur at a rate of 1 lb./100 sq. ft. for every point of pH above 6.5.
5. *Fertilize.* Spread a slow-release starter fertilizer over the soil, at the rate recommended on the package for new lawns.
6. *Till again to a depth of 6-8 inches.* Turn all the amendments in to the soil; a rototiller works best for this.
7. *Level the soil surface.* Begin by raking the surface flat, breaking apart large clods of soil. Then roll, or drag a weighted ladder or board over the surface to level. For best results, soak the soil thoroughly and let it dry; then, loosen, rake, and roll or drag again to fill in any areas that have settled.

## Seeding

1. *Spread the seed.* Use either a broadcast or a drop-type spreader. For best coverage, plant the seed in two passes: half at a time, at right angles to each other.

2. *Rake or tamp.* Give the seed good contact with the soil by raking or tamping it lightly, barely covering it (seed needs light to grow). Dragging an ordinary garden hose over the seeded surface works well.
3. *Mulch, for best results.* Mulch holds in moisture, to help the seeds sprout. Compost, peat, straw and cheesecloth all work well... but keep it light, so sun and water can get through to the seed.

## Watering

The most critical step in growing a strong, thin, healthy new lawn is proper watering. You need to keep the ground moist until the seedlings are up and established—until they're 2 ½ to 3 inches tall. For best results, let the sprinkler run just until puddles begin to form; and do that several times a day (2 or 3 times, maybe more, depending on the weather and your climate). Remember: frequent, light watering—not once-a-day drenchings!

## Mowing

When the seedlings are 2 ½ to 3 inches tall, it's time to mow. Some tips for mowing:

1. *Keep the mower blade sharp.* The most common cause of brown lawns is mowing with a dull blade.
2. *Cut only 1/3 of the length off the grass at one mowing.* If you cut more than that, you over-stress the plants, leaving them more susceptible to pests, drought, and disease.
3. *Leave only ¼-inch-long clippings.* Such small pieces will decompose and return valuable nitrogen to the soil. Leave longer clippings, though, and they tend to lodge.