

STEP BY STEP LAWN GUIDE

HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY GROW A
LAWN FROM SEED

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CHOOSING YOUR LAWN SEED

The first decision you need to make is an important one - which seed is the right one for your lawn?

Firstly, you'll need to find the grass type that grows best in your location and climate. Grasses can be divided into two groups: Cool Season and Warm Season.

COOL SEASON GRASSES

Grow best in temperatures between 15 and 25 degrees celcius and include Ryegrass, Fescues, Bluegrass and Bentgrass.

They're at their best during the spring and autumn periods, and are suited for the cooler climates, e.g. Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria, ACT and some areas of New South Wales. The temperate area shown in blue is suitable for Cool Season Grasses to be sown.

WARM SEASON GRASSES

Grow best in temperatures between 28 and 32 degrees celcius and include Couch grass, Kikuyu, and Buffalo grass.

They have better heat and drought tolerance than cool season grasses and are suited to temperate areas, e.g. New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia.



CHOOSING SEED BY SEASON

Summer

Warm season grasses should be sown so they can tolerate the heat while establishing.

Autumn

Cool season grasses will grow in Temperate areas of Australia e.g. Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria, ACT and some areas of New South Wales. In Northern States the warmer season varieties will grow if temperatures are above 25 degrees celcius. Cool Season grasses can establish through to winter but may not survive the heat of summer in warmer areas.

Winter

It is not ideal to grow lawn in Winter in the Temperate areas. In tropical areas and Northern parts of Australia you can continue to grow warm season grasses.

Spring

In Temperate areas of Australia it's possible to begin sowing grasses as the warmth starts to appear in the soil. Soil temperatures need to be around 20 degrees minimum.



PREPARING THE GROUND

After removing stones and other debris from the lawn area you can prepare the ground. Good drainage is very important so digging or aeration with a fork will help.

If the soil is heavy you can add more sand so drainage is improved. If the soil is light or sandy, work in a good amount of peat to give body to the soil, prevent drying out and loss of nutrients.

At this stage any levelling should be done and care must be taken not to remove too much topsoil from any one area. Subsoil does not make for a good seedbed! It's low in nutrients and will give variations in growing habitat and colour.

When you're ready to sow roll or rake the ground. Go one way across the area, rake it over then firm it and rake it again until you've got a firm seed bed.



FERTILISING BEFORE SOWING

Give your new lawn the best start possible.

Apply a pre-seeding Starter Fertiliser to the seedbed a few days prior to sowing the seed or on the same day and rake it into the soil.

This will stimulate root growth and provide the essential early feed to get the lawn off to a good start.

Apply the fertiliser in two directions so you can an even coverage.

The Great Aussie Lawns range of fertilisers provide the perfect start to a new lawn. View the range at www.aussielawns.com.au

Depending on the size of your area, using a broadcast fertiliser spreader can make the job even easier. From handheld spreaders to larger varieties, we supply the Earthway range of spreaders to make the job easier.

HOW TO SOW LAWN SEED

When to Sow

Ideally aim to sow your seed when it's not too cold and not too hot. If it's too cold it'll be hard for the seed to establish, while too much heat puts stress on the seed. Refer to our product guidelines and Choosing Your Lawn Seed page at www.aussielawns.com.au

Spreading the Seed

For a good establishment follow the suggested sowing rate recommended on the product. We have sowing guidelines on all our product pages.

An easy way of sowing the seed is to divide the seed into two batches. Sow one section from left to right, then from front to back for an even spread.

Cover the seed lightly by raking the soil gently.

Protect the area from little feet, animals and any other threats while the seed is germinating and establishing.

Advanced Seed Starter Fertiliser (with higher levels of phosphorus) will assist with the growth of your seedlings.

FEEDING YOUR LAWN

A good lawn Fertiliser is an essential part of lawn care. It's simple to apply and helps you create the best looking lawn.

New Lawns

Once the lawn is grown (usually after the first 12 months of growth) it needs regular feeding to ensure good establishment. your new lawn should be fertilised once in early Spring, again in mid Summer and once more in Autumn.

Feeding in smaller portions (spoon-feeding) is also an option if done regularly, as it will maintain a more even grass growth.

Established Lawns

A regular program of Fertilising, four times a year will ensure your lawn remains healthy. Fertilising at the correct rate will ensure the right amount of nutrition is applied.

September is a great time to apply a complete Fertiliser high in nitrogen to encourage growth after a cold winter. If you've oversown after Winter, time your Fertiliser application also to assist in germination.

After vigorous growth during spring your lawn needs another application of fertiliser before Summer.

Autumn is the time to start feeding and preparing your lawn for the coming winter months. The best time to do this is two applications of Fertiliser; one in March and one in April/May before the weather gets too cold. Mow a little higher to give your lawn protection against frosts.

"Great Aussie Lawns Fertilisers contain Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium together in the recommended ratio . Your lawn will remain healthy with good colour after use with the ability to fight off pests and diseases."



WATERING YOUR LAWN

NEW LAWNS

When you've sown your seed you then need to be careful to always water with a fine spray. Anything stronger will remove the seeds! During the establishing period for a new lawn the surface needs to be always kept moist. If the weather is particularly warm and windy you'll need to spray often with a gentle watering.

You may need to constantly water during periods of drought. This will ensure establishment and to avoid the seed getting scorched.

Care needs to be taken not to overwater your new lawn as pooling will drown the seed.

ESTABLISHED LAWNS

The amount of watering you'll need will depend on the type of lawn seed. Cool Season grasses need more watering. In the depth of summer they'll need deep watering 2-3 times a week. Warm Season grasses need less water. One deep watering a week should be sufficient.

In the summer months at Great Aussie Lawns we recommend Wett Up to help with difficult to wet lawns. Wett up is a granular lawn wetting agent that helps prevent water repellent soils in your garden and lawn. Apply Wett Up 1-2 times each summer and save water from run off. It's also non-hazardous.

MOWING YOUR LAWN



When mowing for the first time it's important to allow good establishment of the grass.

Cut the grass for the first time when it's around 4-5 cm high. Trim lightly and gradually lower the blades to an ideal cutting height of 25 - 30mm. Mow regularly, trying not to remove more than a third of growth at any time.

Don't mow when the grass is wet.

The best advice for mowing a lawn is "little and often".

For the last few cuts of the year gradually raise the height of the blades. Also follow this advice in dry summer periods.

When mowing regularly the cuttings can be left on the lawn. With fewer cuttings it's recommended to remove them for use in compost or mulch.



MAINTENANCE OF YOUR LAWN

It's not difficult to maintain your lawn so it looks tip top and survives the challenge of heat and cold throughout the seasons.

Watering

In periods of drought, watering can help new and existing lawns. If really dry weather follows the sowing of grass seed water the area with a fine spray keeping the seedbed constantly moist until the grass is about 40mm high. Once the lawn is established sprinkle the lawn with plenty of water (enough to reach the roots) approximately 10mm to 20mm at a time. This will secure a deeper root system.

Fertilising

With an established lawn you should fertilise twice a year, in Spring and Autumn. The Spring fertilise provides your lawn with nitrogen to encourage growth after a colder winter. A fertilise in Autumn before the winter ensures your lawn is prepared to survive the colder weather. It's best to split this into two applications: one in March and one in April or May before the weather gets too cold.

Raking/Scarifying

Normally one good raking / scarifying a year either in Autumn or Spring is all that is required. This will move the dead grass which prevents drainage and stunts growth while aerating and encouraging the formation of new shoots.

Spiking

Spiking only needs to be done when renovating a neglected lawn or if the soil is badly drained or compacted. It can be done prior to top dressing in autumn. Spiking can be done with an ordinary garden fork, though there are machines available to complete this also.

Top Dressing

For a first rate lawn apply a top dressing on an annual basis. The mixture is usually made up of peat loam and sand. Minor hollows will be removed which have developed and an improved soil surface is gradually built up.

SEASONAL LAWN CARE

Seasonally, your lawn has different requirements particularly in the southern states of Australia where climates vary more. A few tasks done as the seasons change will mean your lawn stands up to the challenges of each season.

Spring... time to tidy up after the winter months, sow new lawn seed and fertilise before the heat of summer. Also you'll want to:

- **Clean up unwanted weeds and have a general tidy up. Eradicate Wintergrass and any weeds that have generated throughout winter.**
- **Lower your mowing heights**
- **Now is the time to establish a new lawn. Choose the correct seed by looking at our Lawn Seed Selector here.**
- **Time to Fertilise: A Fertiliser in Spring will promote stronger, healthier grass. Soil temperatures are warming up so it's better conditions for growing. Use a Slow Release Fertiliser (like our Gold Pro Controlled Release Fertiliser) at a rate of 3kg per 100 sqm.**
- **Get the lawn looking tip top by Overseeding any bare areas that are sparse after the winter. Overseeding is easy and will promote a denser lawn cover. Great Aussie Lawns 'Rapid Green All Season Couch Blend is perfect now. The ryegrass is fast to germinate and the couch gives your lawn summer heat tolerance and hardiness. Fertilise while overseeding with Advanced Seed Starter Fertiliser. See our Overseeding Guide at www.aussielawns.com.au**

Summer... Time to enjoy your lawn but ensure it survives the hot months. You can...

- **Watch your Watering: We recommend longer watering, less often. The water will penetrate better, gets down deeper and promote greater root depth.**
- **Lawns can be grown now and is the time to plant Couch and Kikuyu as they need soil temps 25 degrees and above. These varieties will withstand the summer heat once established.**
- **Raise mowing heights to relieve turf of stress in the midst of summer. A longer grass length means the lawn holds more moisture and can withstand the heat of summer better.**



SEASONAL LAWN CARE

Autumn: A few jobs done in Autumn prepares your lawn for surviving the winter. You want to:

- **Fertilise again with a high analysis product like our Renovator Plus Fertiliser. Complete this once at the start of autumn and repeat 6-8 weeks later.**
- **Top dressing your lawn is easy and effective in stimulating new growth. Apply a mixture (usually made up of peat loam and sand) over your lawn. Top dressing stimulates new shoots, promotes runners and encourages denser growth of grass.**
- **Aerate or spike your lawn in Autumn. This improves soil drainage and stimulates the growth of new roots.**

Winter: Lawns are slow growing but easy to maintain. A few tips for winter...

- **Raise your mowing heights again**
- **In the southern states, seeding can be slow due to lower soil temps. Great Aussie Lawns can recommend when to sow based on your location. See our Lawn Seed Selector page to check your area.**
- **If you have a good cover at the start of winter it eliminates space for weeds to germinate.**

HOW TO OVERSEED A LAWN

You can improve the appearance of existing lawns dramatically by overseeding. Sowing new lawn seed into your existing lawn rejuvenates it and improves its colour and general appearance.

Complete this task in spring to rejuvenate your lawn after winter, or in early autumn when there's still warmth in the soil. Overseeding also helps new grass retain its green colour longer in the drier months. Newly seeded lawn has stronger roots than older grasses. Lawn that's been oversown will also be less prone to weeds as the denser the lawn the less area for weeds to take hold.

- 1. Mow the lawn closely. Choose a time when the lawn is dry. Remove any rubbish from the surface of the lawn before mowing.**
- 2. Rake the lawn to remove and break up the layers of dead matted grass or thatch.**
- 3. If the ground is compact it needs to be loosened to improve the root growth and the drainage. It can be spiked with a fork to a depth of at least 15cm.**
- 4. Select a suitable mixture of lawn seed from our range. Ideally you should try to choose the same type of seed as your existing lawn.**
- 5. Mix the seed and sow either by hand or machine depending on area mass. To ensure an even lawn the seed should be sown in two directions at right angles. Mix the seed with sand to give a more even seed distribution.**
- 6. Feed the lawn with a fertiliser (like Advanced Seed Starter Fertiliser) after sowing the seed.**
- 7. Then follow with Advanced Seed's Renovator Plus after 6-8 weeks.**
- 8. To get a dense grass growth and to remove minor hollows it top dress the lawn with a mixture of sand peat and loam.**
- 9. Water regularly with a fine spray keeping the seedbed constantly moist. After establishment irrigation should be restricted. Water between 30-40mm at time to secure a deeper root system.**
- 10. Mow on a high cut when the grass is 40-50mm. Trim lightly and gradually lower blades to an ideal cutting height of 25-30mm. Mow regularly trying not to remove more than 1/3 of the growth at any time.**



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We have blending facilities on site and follow labelling standards endorsed by the Australian Seed Federation.



Australian Seed Federation
SOWING SEEDS