



GRASS SEED INFO SHEET

When to start a new lawn: If you choose to plant your new lawn in the spring, begin just as soon as the soil is dry enough to work, preferably mid-April to mid-May. This will give your new grass time to get well established before the hot, dry weather sets in. Fall is often a better time to start your lawn, from mid-August to the end of September. Your seedbed is less likely to dry out at this time of year, and the grass should be well established before winter.

Preparation: The area to be seeded should be as level as possible, with a gentle slope away from buildings. If possible, avoid steep slopes or terraces where water may erode or wash away topsoil. The entire surface should have a layer of good topsoil about 12 to 15 cm deep. It may be advisable to mix peat moss or composted manure into your topsoil for best results.

Sowing: It pays to select good quality seed. It is also wise to choose a mixture of at least two or three turf grass varieties in accordance with your requirements. This will depend on sun and shade conditions. Don't skimp when seeding. It is best to use a mechanical spreader, although small areas may be hand seeded. Distribute the seed as evenly as possible, applying half the seed traveling back and forth, crossing your first pattern at 90° with the balance of the seed. Rake lightly, and then roll lightly to ensure that the seed is in firm contact with the soil. Make sure that you properly set your spreader rate for sowing seed.

Fertilize: Rake the surface thoroughly to prepare the seedbed and avoid any depressions that may hold surface water. Apply a good quality starter fertilizer, preferably with a higher middle number representing the proportion of phosphorous. This will assist in developing a healthy root system. Young seedlings have a hefty appetite, so don't skip this important feeding. We recommend a 4-12-10 fertilizer.

Watering: This may be the most important step. With the first watering, make sure that you apply enough water to wet the soil down to at least 15-20cm. Apply the water gently so that you don't wash the seed away or create puddles. You may have to water several times in short intervals until the bed is thoroughly wet. After that, water often enough to keep the top inch or so of the seedbed moist until the seed germinates. Remember, seeds get only one shot at germination. Let them dry out, and they're dead. Sprinkle the seedbed lightly with a handheld hose several times a day (especially if it's hot or windy) to get even germination across the entire lawn. However, you don't want to overdo it. Too much water causes the seed to rot. Watch the color of the soil surface. As the soil dries, the surface becomes lighter in color. When you notice about half to two-thirds of the surface lightening up, it's about time to water.

First Mowing: When new grass has grown to a height of 8-10 cm, it may be cut, but not to shorter than 5-6 cm. Do not let the grass grow so long that it will not stand upright. While there must be reasonable growth of leaves to develop a healthy root system, mow the lawn regularly so cuttings will be only 1.5-2 cm long. This avoids having to remove clippings. Mow when the soil is slightly dry; otherwise, you might tear up the new turf.

Over seeding: Over seeding can improve your new and established lawn and your lawn will continue to improve with age, if you follow these simple rules:

Keep your lawn free of weeds, either by hand weeding or with a weed control product.

Fertilize your lawn at least three times a year, following directions on the package.

Each spring or fall, after cutting the grass short, rake thoroughly and, if necessary, add a little top dressing. If the soil appears hard and compacted, go over it with an aerating roller, then top dress and reseed as above.

Try and keep your lawn cut to about 5-7 cm in height, and avoid leaving cuttings longer than 1.5-2cm on the lawn after mowing.

Information courtesy of: <http://landscapeontario.com>

