

Steps to Establishing a New Lawn from Seed

1. Choose the [BEST SPECIES and VARIETIES \(go here for information on the advantages and disadvantages of different turf species\)](#) for your lawn situation. [PURCHASE GOOD QUALITY SEED! \(go HERE for Colorado turf seed sources\)](#) The preferred time for seeding cool-season species (bluegrass, fescues) is mid- to late-August or early September (June-July at higher elevations). Warm-season species (buffalograss, blue grama, bermudagrass) should be seeded from late May-mid July.
2. Have a basic soil test performed IF IT HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY DIFFICULT TO GROW GRASS ON THE SITE.
3. Practice pre-plant weed control, especially when difficult perennial weed species are present (Canada thistle, bindweed, [quackgrass](#), [bentgrass](#), [bermudagrass](#)). Use a herbicide with no soil residual activity (glyphosate), and allow the herbicide to fully translocate before cultivating the soil (10-14 days). Follow ALL label instructions.
4. Incorporate any fertilizers called for by soil test results to a depth of 4-6 inches, or as deeply as possible. If the soil organic matter content is less than 5%, incorporate (4 to 6 inches deep) 3-5 cubic yards of compost per 1000 square feet (this is enough compost to cover the soil about 1 inch deep).
5. Prepare the area for seeding by smoothing and removing large rocks and other debris. Over-cultivation will produce a fluffy seedbed that is prone to compaction and crusting.
6. Apply one pound of N per 1000 sq. ft. using urea, diammonium phosphate, or any starter type of fertilizer.
7. Seed in two directions (right angles) with one-half of seed each direction. Apply seed using a fertilizer spreader (low setting). Lightly rake/drag seed into seed bed. Slopes prone to erosion should be mulched with clean straw, netting, or matting of some type.
8. Irrigate lightly and frequently (to keep soil surface moist) during germination. This may require 2-3 light watering events daily during sunny, dry, hot weather. As the seedlings begin to mature and form a deeper root system, begin to water less frequently and increase the amount of water applied each time you do water. The deeper, less frequent irrigation regime will continue to encourage the formation of a deeper root system.
9. Avoid the use of preemergent herbicides (the one exception being siduron; brand name Tupersan) when seeding a new lawn.
10. Postemergent broadleaf weed herbicides (2,4-D, MCP, dicamba, and similar products) should NOT be applied until the turf has been mowed 4-5 times.