



Caring For Your Newly Laid Turfed Lawn

Turf Care

DO NOT WALK on newly laid turf for at least 3 weeks or until firm to walk on without leaving a depressed footprint. **BOARDS** to be used to walk on when moving sprinklers.

Watering

- It is essential for the lawn to be watered regularly in order for the pieces to knit together, this normally takes two weeks from laying the new turf
- It is best to water the turf early morning and late evening when the temperatures are low
- Water for at least 35 minutes per area. The water should go all the way through the turf and onto the surface of the soil below
- Please note you should not try to water with a hose pipe only, you will need some sort of oscillating sprinkler attached to the hose pipe
- On an established lawn, watering is only necessary if you need to maintain a green colour. Established turf will not die if you do not water it, unless your lawn is on thin or very sandy soil
- If you intend to water the lawn it should be done thoroughly and frequently. Water the soil until it is moist to a depth of 6 inches. If water runs off the surface before this depth of moist soil is achieved, switch off the hosepipe or water another part of the garden before resuming. Water again when the soil dries to this depth
- A light shower of rain may not soak through to the soil and may have to be added to by watering

Mowing

- The new turf will be ready to mow 21 days after laying. It is best to not water the day before you cut the grass, this will allow the ground to firm up so no foot prints are left when cutting the grass
- Mow regularly and as often as necessary to maintain a neat appearance, the closer you cut the more often you should mow
- For most lawns the mower should be set to cut no lower than 1½ inches and should be used once a week, depending on the growth. Try to avoid leaving the lawn uncut for periods of weeks when the grass is growing fast
- When reducing the height of cut, never remove more than 30% of the length of grass. A cylinder mower will give the best results, provided it is kept sharp and the blades are set to cut the grass efficiently
- It is best to mow when the grass is dry, but in prolonged wet weather mow when it is wet rather than letting the grass grow too tall
- Mow in winter if mild periods have encouraged growth

continued

Feeding

- **Do not feed newly laid turf.**
- Lawns growing on poor soils need more feeding than those on rich soils
- Feed your lawn each spring and, if necessary, through the summer with a proprietary lawn fertilizer at the recommended rate. A phased release fertilizer suggested will slowly release essential nutrients to produce and maintain the green colour for months
- If you need to feed after August, use a proprietary autumn lawn fertilizer at the recommended rate
- Do not feed your lawn between October and March until frost free conditions prevail

Rolling

- Rolling should not be necessary on most soils
- A roller should never be used to put right the surface irregularities, possibly caused by subsidence. These should be corrected using compost top dressing

Weeding

- It is inevitable that weeds appear from time to time in the lawn, spreading from other parts of the garden or from further afield. Remove weeds by hand when you see them
- Ready for use sprays can also be used for spot treatment of weeds or for more widespread invasions the whole lawn may be treated with a recommended liquid weed killer
- Make sure the weeds that you want to control are specified by the weed killer you choose
- Always buy a proprietary brand of weed killer and follow the manufacturers instructions carefully
- If you use a weed and feed product, check the instructions in case there are special recommendations for recently laid turf

Moss

- Moss will develop in a lawn only if the grass is too weak to compete with it. The reason for weakening of the grass may be waterlogged, compacted soil, mowing too close or too frequently, inadequate feeding or very dry conditions. The cause should be identified and corrected
- For short-term control, various chemical treatments are available, but moss will reinvade if the grass is not invigorated

Scarifying

- The removal of the brown fibrous “thatch” layer which develops between the soil and the grass shoots is not always necessary. Only if the dead material is more than ¾ inch thick should any attempt be made to remove it
- Scarifying can be beneficial to a lawn if done sensibly. It is also harmful if overdone
- Some types of turf need less scarifying than others
- Light raking by hand to raise horizontal shoots is worthwhile from time to time in the moving season

Aerating

- Using a garden fork or a special spiking tool relieves compaction and helps surface water to drain away. It also allows more air to reach the roots of the grass, which aids healthy growth
- Make sure the holes are at least 3 inches deep – the higher the better. On very clay soils a hollow tine tool may be used to remove cores of soil and a sandy top dressing brushed in

Diseases

- Red thread disease makes bleached or pinkish patches on the lawn surface. Very often bright red “needles” are also formed at the tips of the leaf blades. Red thread is often linked to low soil fertility and can be discouraged by speeding up grass growth through feeding. Alternatively, use a proprietary fungicide at the recommended rate
- Fusarium patch disease tends to occur when the air is mild, still and damp. It causes the leaf blades to collapse and yellowish-brown patches appear on the lawn. This is often a symptom of overfeeding in early autumn. This disease is usually more harmful than red thread and speedy attention with a fungicide (at the appropriate rate) is needed.
- Small brown toadstools often appear in the year after turf is laid. They are not damaging to the turf and will die out

Fungi Growth

Many types of toadstools are capable of growing in lawns; this is a perfectly natural occurrence. The cause is a combination of rich organic matter, moisture and warmth; this can activate the growth of fungi spores.

The air carries billions of these microscopic spores around. They float in the breeze and might land anywhere. Although it is not clear the exact condition is required to activate spores, the combination of moisture, rich organic matter and warmth are the main considerations. Autumn is a very common time for toadstools to grow

The life cycle of a toadstool is so very short (one to five days normal) that spraying with a fungicide is not necessary. Brushing the toadstool with a yard brush is a solution; alternatively you can try iron sulphate (½ ounce in a gallon of water per sq. metre).

Often the problem of toadstools is short term. Toadstools are particularly common in establishing new lawns and periodically afterwards.

Our advice is to bear with the short term problem and try not to resort to chemicals. The only completed solution would be to have a totally sterile lawn with no organic matter, which is not desirable to anyone. The spores cannot be prevented from landing, so largely the problem is best left to run its course.

