



How to Take Care of a New Lawn Seeding?

Congratulations with your newly installed lawn from Wes Roberts Landscaping. We have put together a few important tips for maintaining your new lawn. If you should have any questions after reading this information, please contact our office at (724)342-1548.

Remember to be patient with your new lawn. The first 4 - 8 week period, following lawn installation, is the most critical time for proper follow-up care. Lawn establishment failures are mainly due to improper follow-up care during this critical time period. Please follow these simple instructions to achieve a dense, uniform and well-rooted lawn within your property.

Watering

Water is the most important factor in establishing a lawn. If you remember nothing else, remember this, **KEEP IT MOIST**. Soil within the top ½" should be kept consistently moist. Initially this may require early morning, mid-day and evening watering's of about ¼" to ½" each time. A good way to determine how much water is being applied to the soil is to place a container (i.e. a tuna can) in the sprinkler's path and time how long it takes to collect ½" of water. Daily irrigation (¼" to ½") should be continued for 3 to 4 weeks. During hot or dry conditions, you may need to increase the watering during the early morning and evening watering time to maintain moisture in the soil surface. There are a lot of variables, so remember, keep the soil moist.



SPECIAL NOTE: To maintain a uniform watering schedule, a water faucet timer should be used to set the various watering times throughout these critical weeks. Remember - keep a consistent moist environment for proper grass seed germination.

After four weeks, your new lawn still requires a minimum of 1" of water a week for continued growth. The watering schedule, at this point of establishment, can be changed to twice a week before 5:00 P.M. with a deep soaking of ½" or more of water. But during hot or dry conditions, watering should occur during early morning hours until the lawn matures.

Fertilizing

Fertilizer applications are critical for the development of a healthy established turf. Following the application of starter fertilizer that we applied at installation, new seedlings need $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of nitrogen per 1,000 sq. ft. every 6 weeks. We use a 24-0-6 65% slow release fertilizer which will result in a much healthier, thicker lawn than a lawn compared to other fertilizers. The fertility requirements provide the nutrients for growth and the ability to fight off diseases, weeds and insect infestation. Once the lawn has been established, a yearly maintenance program should be set up to maintain a healthy, vital turf stand within your property.

SPECIAL NOTE: PLEASE do not apply a weed & feed to your new lawn. There are herbicides that will impeded the germination process.

Mowing

The first mowing of a new lawn should begin when the leaves reach a height of $3\frac{1}{2}$ " to $4\frac{1}{2}$ ", removing only $\frac{1}{3}$ " of the leaf blade. After this initial mowing, your lawn should maintain the overall height of 3" throughout your property. Cutting the grass shorter than $2\frac{1}{2}$ " to 3" will sacrifice root penetration down into the soil, and weaken your lawn. The root system accommodates the height of the leaf blade so that the higher the cutting height the deeper the roots develop for a thicker, healthier lawn. A longer cutting height also gives the added advantages of conserving soil moisture and less area for weeds to penetrate into the lawn.



SPECIAL NOTE: Remember to keep your mower blades sharp at all times. Lawns cut with dull blades loose moisture more rapidly and are subject to disease problems, and become dried out turning pale brown in the summer sun.

Weed Control

The seeding process inevitably exposes existing weed seeds within the soil. These weed seeds will germinate along with your new grass seed. Usually within the first few weeks, a combination of annual grasses and broadleaf weeds will appear. Although these weed type plants are unsightly, they can easily be eliminated in time. An application of liquid weed control can be applied after your entire lawn has been mowed 8 to 10 times. There are weeds like crabgrass that may have to be treated the following year depending on when your lawn was installed. These annual grass type weeds grow for one season, go to seed and die out. If you maintain a good fertilizing program you will be able to eliminate them the following year. A Crabgrass preventer should only be applied after your lawn has been in for a full year and no additional seeding is planned within 2 to 3 months prior to or following its application. The longer you can tolerate the weeds the better for the new grass seedlings to become established; unless the weeds are so bad they are squeezing out grass areas throughout your property.



Traffic Control

Traffic should be restricted on a new lawn for at least a month. New seedlings are damaged by foot traffic. Limit the traffic as much as possible

Straw Mulch

We typically use straw mulch on new seedlings. We suggest leaving the straw mulch on the lawn indefinitely. Mowing the lawn and mulching the straw will decompose most of it in the first year. If you plan on removing the straw we suggest not to do it for at least 8 weeks following the planting. You risk damaging the newly formed seedlings.

Patience

Please be patient with the process of starting a new lawn. Seeding is by far the best way to establishing a lawn for the long term. With proper care, as outlined above, you will achieve a healthy, enjoyable lawn for years to come.

