



## CARING FOR LAWNS

Lawn is one of the most pleasing ways to cover a large area in the garden. A rich green lawn sets off your house to its best advantage and makes a wonderful area for children to play, and adults to sit and enjoy the scenery.

### 1) Choosing Grasses

A lawn can be easy to care for but, remember it's made up of living plants and, like all living things, they have needs that must be taken care of. Start by choosing a grass that is suitable for your climate and conditions. Most grasses are sun-lovers so in very shaded areas it may be better to select another ground cover.

#### GRASS TYPES:

*Warm Season Grasses* - Grow best in late spring, summer and early autumn.

**Couch** - a hard wearing lawn that survives with little care. Couch is a running grass that can be established from seed, runners or turf. Couch seed only germinates reliably when temperatures are between 20 and 30 degrees celsius. Couch hates shade and likes a soil pH of 6- 7. Many couch cultivars available from turf suppliers. Hybrids are also available.

**Kikuyu** - A fast growing, running grass that is vigorous and needs to be regularly mown to keep it as a good looking lawn. Takes a small amount of shade. Can be established from runners, seed and turf.

**Buffalo** - Running grass that forms a dense, coarse-textured lawn that is hard wearing but slow growing. Grown from turf or runners. There are newer cultivars that have softer leaves and are said to be more shade tolerant.

**Carpet Grass** - Running grass with broad leaves that resemble buffalo. It tends to discolour in cold winters and is best grown in subtropical or tropical areas. It is tolerant of acid soils but is regarded as a weed in finer turf.

**Queensland Blue** - A fine-leaved running grass that suits frost-free districts and has fine blue-green leaves. Queensland Blue Couch is for the warm climate lawn enthusiast and can be established from seeds or turf.

**Durban Grass (sweet smother grass)** – A broad-leaved, warm season grass that is more shade-tolerant than other warm season grasses. It is used as a ground cover under trees in warmer climates.

**Zoysia** – Known as Empire Turf, Zoysia japonica is rapidly becoming a popular lawn that is drought tolerant, hard-wearing, slow growing and has good cold tolerance.

*Cool Season Grasses* -Grow best in autumn and spring.

**Chewings Fescue** - This grass is most often mixed with other grasses to form a fine turf. It is normally grown from seed.

**Kentucky Bluegrass** – Usually grown from seed, most often in seed mixtures. Shade tolerant but needs good watering to survive hot summers.



Bent - A fine textured lawn grass that has relatively high maintenance requirements. It can be established from runners or turf.

Tall Fescue - Selected forms of what was originally a coarse, hard wearing lawn grass. Modern cultivars are finer and softer. Once established, it's more drought tolerant than other cool season grasses but always need to be left with plenty of leaf. Available as seeds or turf.

Ryegrasses - Fine-leafed perennial ryegrasses are most often included in seed mixes. They germinate readily and grow quickly, but need good watering during dry periods. Usually grown from seed.

## 2) Mowing

With established lawns, cut warm season grasses to 2.5 cm and cool season grasses to 4 cm. Cut as frequently as possible and remove as little growth as possible.

Never mow grass too low or 'scalp' the grass. Grasses need their leaf blades to make food for the plant.

## 3) Lawn watering

Couch is the most drought tolerant grass. Other warm season grasses, such as kikuyu, buffalo, carpet grass and Queensland blue couch, are reasonably drought tolerant. As a rule, cool season grasses need more water, although turf type tall fescue is relatively drought tolerant once well established.

Water in the morning rather than the evening and give thorough, less frequent soakings rather than short, frequent waterings. Don't allow surface runoff.

## 4) Fertilising Lawns

Regular light fertilising during the growing season is better than infrequent, heavy fertilising. Use a correctly balanced fertiliser (such as Thrive Lawn Food). Don't use highly nitrogenous fertilisers like Sulphate of Ammonia. Yates Lush Lawn Lifter is an enriched organic-based lawn food with a good combination of slow release organic particles and fast acting minerals. Lush Lawn Master lasts for up to 3 months.

## Shopping List

- Lush Lawn Seed
- Thrive Lawn Food
- Lush Lawn Lifter
- Lush Lawn Master