

Sod Installation Guide

1 Measuring and Ordering

Measure the area of your planned lawn. Take the width x the length (in feet). This will give you the square feet needed. Adjust your square footage due to any mounds, valleys or features in the area. Schedule your sod to be delivered after your soil preparation is completed. It is crucial to immediately install your sod after it is delivered, so that your sod has a strong beginning.

2 Soil Preparing (before the sod arrives)



Kill any existing weeds and grasses (so they don't cause problems in your new lawn later) with a broad-spectrum herbicide such as Roundup. Depending upon the application, you may want to repeat the spraying a few times over a couple of days to make sure you have killed everything. Most herbicides will take a few weeks to fully work, so plan accordingly. Mark sprinkler heads with flags (turn on your sprinkler to locate every one) to ensure minimal damage when cutting existing sod out.



When old lawn is completely brown (dead), it can be easily removed with a sod cutter (available for rent at local hardware store). Be sure to cut thin. All you should remove is dead vegetation, not additional layers of soil. Rake away all excess dead grass, rocks and debris that is on the lawn surface.



Loosen top soil to a depth of 4 to 6 inches with a rototiller. If top soil is brought in, use a minimum of 3 inches and incorporate into the existing soil. Level the area using a rake.



Roll the area lightly with a lawn roller (available for rent at local hardware store) 1/3 full of water. This will firm the soil surface and reveal low areas that may need additional soil. Apply lime, if needed. We recommend an application of dolomite or agricultural grade limestone. Follow manufacturers rate for application. Rake area lightly. Final grade should be one inch below the sidewalk/driveway. Water the area lightly to provide a moist base for the turf.



The more attention you give to preparing your new lawn, the better success you will have. There are no shortcuts to a healthy lawn.

3 Installing



Install your lawn immediately upon delivery. Turf is a living plant that requires moisture and soil contact to survive. Locate a straight line to begin laying the sod, such as a sidewalk or driveway. Stagger stripes as though laying bricks to offset seams and promote better knitting together of edges.



Keep the rolls snug against each other without overlapping. A sharp knife makes clean cuts for a perfect fit. Avoid leaving small strips at outer edges as they will not retain moisture. On slopes, place the turf pieces across the slope rather than down. After you've laid about 200-300 sf of sod, spray it with a light mist from your garden hose. This will prevent the sod from drying out before you are finished with your complete project.



After installing your sod, you should roll your sod with the lawn roller. The roller causes the roots of the sod to make firm contact with the new soil under the sod and removes air pockets. When the rolling is done, go along the edges and trim with your sharp sod cutting knife for a complete and finished look. Apply a starter fertilizer on top of your sod prior to watering.



4 Watering



Water - Water - Water Keep your lawn damp for 2 weeks. It is very important to water new lawn frequently enough to keep it moist at all times, especially on hot and windy days. Once the sod has knit, it should be watered enough over the first few months to maintain a healthy growing condition. A good rule of thumb is to water 1 inch immediately. Water until 1 inch has accumulated in a flat container (tuna can). This amount of water generally is what it takes to moisten your soil to a depth of 4 to 6 inches. (Keep in mind that as the weather changes, so may the amount of water that is needed.) After the turf is well established it should be watered deeply at 7 day intervals during periods of no rainfall. You should water during the daylight hours, but not in the heat of the day. Late evening watering during hot weather may create fungus problems.

5 Maintaining Your Lawn

Avoid heavy use of your lawn for the first 2-3 weeks. This gives the roots an opportunity to firmly knit together. The first mow should not be attempted until the sod is firmly rooted and secure in place which is approximately 7-10 days from the time of installation. Mow 1 to 1 1/2 inches from ground level with a sharp mower. Mow often, taking approximately 1/3 of the grass height in one mowing. When growth is progressing rapidly, fertilizer is essential. The lawn can be fertilized 30 days after installation regardless of the month. Use a fertilizer with a complete balance of nutrients. Apply every 4-6 weeks at the rate indicated per the manufacturers instructions.

