



Fall in love with your lawn!

Step 1: Lawn Tools

Before you seed you'll want to mow your grass as short as possible. This will allow the new grass to quickly catch up in height and not have to compete with the existing grass for sunlight. Next, you will need to remove the layer of thatch that has accumulated over the course of the summer. Thatch is a build-up of old grass and organic debris that settles in between the grass and the soil. Removing this layer will expose soil surface for the seeds to settle in. You can do this by using a verticutter, a power-rake blade on your mower, or a hand rake if you're looking for some exercise.

Did you remember to clean up?

It's important to clean up your yard after verticutting and before seeding. This includes raking your yard to remove leaves and debris.

Step 2: Grass Seed

While bluegrass is the softest and usually the most desirable, its roots are often shallow and hard to keep maintained without the assistance of an irrigation system. Fescue is much coarser in texture, but its roots penetrate deep into the soil, allowing it to withstand drought much better.

We usually recommend a blend of both fescues and bluegrasses, increasing your chances for success with multiple types and varieties. Most varieties are suitable for an average amount of sunlight, but there are specific varieties available for yards that are in deep shade.

Which grass seed is right for you?

<p>Colonial #4 A blend of 4 different turf-type fescues and 1 blue grass. (90% fescue, 10% bluegrass)</p>	<p>Blue Grass Blend Use if you don't want any fescue in your blue grass yard. Avoid clumping (fescue)</p>	<p>Dyna Green – Shade Blend A combination of turf-type tall fescue, bluegrass and hard fescue. Very shade tolerant (90% fescue, 10% bluegrass)</p>
<p>Dyna Green – Fescue Blue A turf type fescue with sun latterly spreading varieties and no blue grass!</p>	<p>3rd Millennium A single variety seed that is both sun and shade tolerant and very disease resistant</p>	<p>Perennial Rye Grass A fast grower that establishes and matures quicker than other grass seed types. (50% sun, 50% shade)</p>

Step 3: Fall fertilizer

Once seed has been put down, you'll want to apply fertilizer. When looking at fertilizers and soil amendments, you'll notice an analysis of three numbers, indicating the nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium (often referred to as N-P-K) levels. Nitrogen is crucial for growth and foliage (think grass blades), phosphorus feeds flowers and is essential for fruit production, and potassium aids in root development and growth.

Our *step three – Fall Fertilizer* has an analysis of 19-0-4. This is a phosphate-free, fall fertilizer that restores nutrients such as iron to green and thicken your lawn after several months of heat and limited rainfall. We believe in using a phosphate-free fertilizer because our soil naturally contains enough of this nutrient and excess amounts can have a negative environmental impact. This excess phosphorus can run off into storm drains, lakes, and waterways. Choosing a phosphate-free fertilizer for your lawn will avoid further contributing to this issue.

Step 4: Seed cover

Once your seed and fertilizer have been spread, cover it with an organic material such as straw, sticky straw, mulching pellets, compost, or peat moss. This will keep your seed in place, fend off opportunistic birds, and help provide a suitable home for the seed to germinate. Water new grass lightly every day, keeping the soil moist, until it is at least 2-3 inches tall, unless we receive a significant amount of rain that day. Slowly taper back on watering as fall progresses. You may need to water a couple times a month through the winter if we do not receive at least an inch of rain per week.

Which seed covering is right for you?

Peat Moss Use for 2-3 ft. areas. -Holds 10-12 times its weight in water keeping the grass seed moist!	Mulch Pellets Use for 2-3 ft. areas. -When wet creates a layer of mulch over the top of your seed.
Wheat Straw 1 bale covers 600-700 sq. ft. -Use for larger areas	Sticky Straw 1 bale covers 500 sq. ft -Perfect for slopes, and Colonial Gardens recommended.

Step 5: Winterizer

Step four in our program is a Winterizer and should be applied approximately five weeks after you've put down your seed and fertilizer. Winterizer is a nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium formula and has an analysis of 30-0-0. It can be followed up with a second application in November or December. This is a late fall fertilizer designed to help grass plants build storage in the roots for survival as we head into winter dormancy. It is specially formulated to encourage thick, rapid growth and rooting the following spring.

Take advantage this month and get your lawn in the best shape possible before winter arrives. Your hard work will pay off next spring when the temperatures warm and your lawn is the most lush and green on the block.

Visit us online at www.colonialgardenskc.com to learn more and to view upcoming classes and workshops.

