How to Identify Your Grass Type

Lawn Grass Identification

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OVERVIEW

Video Instructions



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mADTBiGi-cA

If you're wondering, 'What kind of grass is my lawn?' You're not alone. Proper lawn care starts with correctly identifying your grass type. Whether you're choosing fertilizer, applying weed or disease control, or scheduling seasonal tasks, knowing your turf type helps you tailor your lawn care to what your lawn actually needs.

Why Identifying Your Grass Type Matters

Understanding your grass type allows you to select the appropriate lawn care products, optimize maintenance schedules, and diagnose issues accurately.

1 Select the Right Lawn Care Products

Choosing the best turf and lawn care products without knowing your grass type can damage your lawn, as different grasses have varying sensitivities. Warm-season grasses (like Bermuda or Zoysia) require very different care than cool-season grasses (like Ryegrass or Kentucky Bluegrass). Weed control is grass specific; for example, a herbicide that is suitable for Tall Fescue could harm Centipedegrass.

2 Time Your Lawn Maintenance Schedule

Lawn care schedules differ between warm and cool season grasses. Knowing your grass type helps you avoid mistakes like overseeding too early or fertilizing during dormancy, helping your lawn stay healthy year-round.

- **Cool-Season Grasses** (like Fescues, Ryegrass, Kentucky Bluegrass, and Bentgrass) grow most vigorously in spring and fall, making those the best times for fertilization and overseeding.
- **Warm-Season Grasses** (like Bermuda, Zoysia, St. Augustine, and Centipede) thrive during summer and should be fertilized after soil temperatures consistently reach 65 F, typically in late spring.

3 Diagnose Lawn Problems Quickly

Some pests and diseases target specific grass types. Knowing your grass type helps to accurately diagnose any lawn and garden issues. Many lawn issues are species-specific, for example:

- **Bermuda Grass** is prone to spring dead spot, especially in poorly drained soils.
- **Fescues** and **Ryegrass** are susceptible to brown patch and dollar spot in humid conditions.
- **Centipede** may turn yellow from an iron deficiency if the soil pH is too high.
- **St. Augustine** frequently battles chinch bugs and gray leaf spot in warm, moist environments.



How to Find Your Grass Type

If you're asking what kind of grass you have, use this three-step approach to identify your lawn grass type. These steps work best when used together; your region gives you a starting point, grass blade details help you compare species, and outside resources help confirm your findings.

1 Region-Based Lawn Grass Identification



Your geographic location significantly influences the type of grass you have in your lawn, so start by considering your climate zone.

- **Cool-Season Grass** is best suited for the **northern U.S.,** where winters are long and summers are mild. Cool-season grasses include:
  - Fescues: Found across many northern and transition regions.
  - Kentucky Bluegrass: Common in the Northeast and Midwest.
  - Perennial Ryegrass: Often mixed with Bluegrass and Fescue for quick germination.
  - Bentgrass: Typically used on golf courses or closely mown specialty lawns.
- **Warm-Season Grass** dominates the **southern U.S.,** warm-season grasses include:
  - Bermuda: Found in the Deep South and Southwest, tolerant of heat and drought.
  - Zoysia: Popular in the Southeast and Southern Transition Zone, known for density.
  - St. Augustine: Best for humid, coastal areas like Florida and Texas Gulf Coast.
  - Centipede: Often used in the Southeast due to its low maintenance and low fertility needs.
- The **Transition Zone** (mid-Atlantic, southern Midwest) is a blended area. Both cool and warm season grasses may be used depending on the local climate and your individual lawn goals.

2 Visual Grass Blade Identification



Each grass has distinct physical traits; you should observe the texture, color, and growth habits to determine your lawn's grass type. Here's what to look for:

- **Bermuda Grass:** Fine blades, dense runners, gray-green hue.
- **Bentgrass:** Very fine texture, light green, carpet-like growth.
- **Centipede Grass:** Light green, coarse texture, creeping growth.
- **Fescue Grass (Tall):** Dark green color, upright clumps, coarse blades.
- **Kentucky Bluegrass:** Soft, blue-green color, boat-shaped blade tips.
- **Perennial Ryegrass:** Glossy, narrow blades, dark green color, rapid growth.
- **St. Augustine Grass:** Medium to dark green color, broad, flat blades, thick mats, coarse and rough texture.
- **Zoysia Grass:** Thick, carpet-like with stiff blades, dark green color.

3 Utilize Lawn Identification Resources

Still can't tell what kind of grass you have? Ask your local extension office. You can contact the extension departments for your county or state, where they can often identify your lawn type from a sample or high-quality photos. Learn more: What Is an Extension Office?



How to Care for Your Lawn Grass

Every grass species has specific needs. Follow these general care tips and remember to always read the labels and follow any instructions when putting products on your lawn.

Cool-Season Grasses
(Fescues, Kentucky Bluegrass, Ryegrass, Bentgrass)

- **Fertilization**: Apply nitrogen in early spring and fall. Avoid high-nitrogen fertilizers in summer to prevent stress. It's best to perform a soil test before fertilizing your lawn.
- **Mowing:** Keep the mowing height higher during summer to reduce heat stress. Maintain 2.5-4 inches depending on the species.
- **Overseeding:** Fall is the best time for overseeding to repair or thicken the lawn.
- **Watering:** Water 1-1.5 inches per week. Deep and infrequent watering encourages strong roots.
- **Pest & Disease Watch:** Monitor for brown patch, dollar spot, and grubs, especially during warm, humid conditions.



5 Star Fescue Grass Seed Blend - 10 lbs.
$47.38
★★★★½ (72)

Warm-Season Grasses
(Bermuda, Zoysia, St. Augustine, Centipede)

- **Fertilization**: Start once soil temps reach 65 F. Apply nitrogen through summer but avoid heavy feeding in late fall. It's best to perform a soil test before fertilizing your lawn.
- **Mowing:** Mow lower than cool-season types, typically around 1-2 inches for Bermuda and Zoysia; 2.5-4 inches for St. Augustine and Centipede.
- **Overseeding:** Avoid overseeding, unless dormant seeding with rye in winter for green color.
- **Watering:** Water 1 inch per week during active growth. Increase during drought.
- **Pest & Disease Watch:** Monitor for chinch bugs, grubs, and leaf spot, especially during hot, humid, or drought-stressed conditions.



TifBlair Centipede Grass Seed
$61.98
★★★★☆ (37)

Check out our Lawn Care Guides for more detailed, grass-specific care instructions.