

# How to Get Rid of Crabgrass

## Treat and Control Crabgrass in Your Lawn

By DoMyOwn staff

### OVERVIEW

#### What's the Best Way to Kill Crabgrass?

Crabgrass is best controlled by applying a pre-emergent herbicide in early spring before soil temperatures reach 55 degrees Fahrenheit, followed by post-emergent treatments to kill existing crabgrass. Maintaining a thick, healthy lawn through proper mowing, watering, and fertilization is essential to prevent crabgrass from returning.

#### Video Instructions



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggaG4wr782o>

Crabgrass is an annual grassy weed that spreads quickly and can overtake thin or stressed lawns if left untreated. The most effective way to control crabgrass is to prevent it with a pre-emergent herbicide in early spring, then use a post-emergent [crabgrass killer](#) to eliminate any weeds that have already sprouted.

- Spray a [pre-emergent herbicide](#) in spring to prevent crabgrass seeds from germinating
- Apply [post-emergent herbicides](#) on actively growing crabgrass weeds
- Improve lawn health to block future growth

Below, you'll learn when to apply crabgrass control products, how pre- and post-emergent treatments work, and which professional-grade herbicides are most effective for eliminating crabgrass and preventing it from returning.

#### When to Apply Crabgrass Control Products

The best time to apply a crabgrass pre-emergent is early spring, before soil temperatures reach 55 degrees for several consecutive days. Once crabgrass has sprouted, post-emergent herbicides should be applied while the weed is actively growing and not drought-stressed.

- Pre-emergent timing: early spring.
- Post-emergent timing: late spring through summer.
- Overseeding: depending on the product, wait until the pre-emergent window has passed.

#### STEP 1 What Is the Best Pre-Emergent for Crabgrass?

Crabgrass pre-emergent herbicides stop crabgrass by preventing the seeds from germinating in the ground. Because crabgrass preventers do not kill existing weeds, application timing is critical for effective control.

#### Video Instructions



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aiuy7q2Y3bs>

To work properly, pre-emergent herbicides must be applied before soil temperatures reach 55 degrees Fahrenheit, which is when crabgrass seeds begin to germinate. In most areas, this occurs in early spring, though the exact timing varies by location. Your local extension office or soil temperature data can help determine the best application window in your area.

When selecting a [pre-emergent product](#), choose a herbicide specifically labeled for crabgrass control. Many pre-emergents must be watered in after application to activate the product and create a protective barrier in the soil. Always read and follow the product label carefully to protect your lawn and ensure maximum effectiveness.

Common active ingredients for crabgrass prevention include [prodiamine](#), [pendimethalin](#), and [dithiopyr](#). Dithiopyr stands out because it can also control crabgrass post-emergence up to the 1-3 tiller stage, in addition to providing pre-emergent protection when applied early.

### Products needed for Step 1

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**Barricade 4FL Pre-Emergent Herbicide - 4 oz.**

**(Prodiamine)**

**\$35.53**

★★★★☆ (18)

## STEP 2 What Kills Crabgrass After It Has Sprouted?

To get rid of crabgrass that has already started to sprout in your lawn, use a [post-emergent herbicide](#) to kill actively growing weeds. For best results, post-emergent crabgrass killers should be applied early in the plant's growth cycle, when crabgrass is small and easier to control. Be sure to read all product instructions, and in this case, use a post-emergent labeled for crabgrass control.

### Video Instructions



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKmo04Veiy4>

Post-emergent treatments are most effective when applied before mid-summer, as mature crabgrass plants become significantly harder to kill. Applications should be made when your lawn is healthy and not under drought or heat stress.

For effective post-emergent crabgrass control:

- Treat crabgrass while plants are young and actively growing.
- Use a surfactant or methylated seed oil (MSO), if recommended on the product label, to help the herbicide stick to weed leaves and absorb into the plant for better control.
- Avoid applications when temperatures exceed 85 degrees.
- Do not apply during drought conditions or when grass is stressed.
- Follow label instructions regarding mowing before and after application.
- Water the treatment area beforehand if required by the label.
- Always choose a product labeled as safe for your specific grass type.

### Products needed for Step 2

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## Drive XLR8 Herbicide Crabgrass Killer

On Sale!

**\$59.98**

Was: ~~\$69.98~~

★★★★☆ (449)

### Healthy Lawn Practices That Reduce Crabgrass Growth

A thick, healthy lawn naturally suppresses crabgrass by limiting the sunlight and open soil that crabgrass seeds need to germinate.

- Mow your lawn to about 2-2.5 inches to shade crabgrass seeds.
- Water deeply and infrequently to promote strong turfgrass roots.
- [Fertilize](#) grass to encourage dense turf growth.
- [Overseed](#) grass in thin areas to reduce open soil areas. Unlike many herbicides, [Tenacity](#) can be applied at the time of overseeding cool-season grasses, providing early weed control while new turf establishes.

### Crabgrass Treatment Infographic

(Click to Enlarge)

**Crabgrass Treatment** Lawn Care Guides  
by DoMyOwn.com

**Signs of Crabgrass**  
Crabgrass interrupts your lawn's smooth, even appearance by forming unsightly clumps of dark green, broad leaves. The clumps grow outward (rather than upward) from the middle, like the legs of a crab.

**Crabgrass Growing Conditions:**  
Crabgrass grows in full sun, and thrives in the heat of the summer.

**Treatment**

- 1 Apply pre-emergent herbicide at 55+ degrees**  
Pre-emergent applications are a great option to help you avoid crabgrass problems in the summer. They are applied in the spring when soil temperatures reach 55 degrees.
- 2 Apply post-emergent herbicides**  
Post-emergent treatments, or products applied directly to existing crabgrass plants, is another popular way to treat crabgrass. Young crabgrass plants are easier to control, so treat as soon as you notice crabgrass growing in your yard.

**Tip** You can apply some pre-emergent herbicides more than one time, especially if you are not sure if you missed some spots. Crabgrass seedlings can germinate at different times so a reapplication can help control those late "bloomers".

DoMyOwn.com Give our pros a call: 866-581-7378  
Mon-Fri 9am-5pm ET