

# Maintenance Tips: Caring for New Seed

Your beautiful new lawn has been installed, and you want to make sure it stays that way. Here are some tips to keep it lush, green, and healthy.

## Initial Watering

The key to making sure proper germination of new seed is to keep it properly watered for the first month. Immediately after seeding, water thoroughly making the ground moist. The new seed should be kept moist and watered 2 to 3 times daily during the first 7 to 14 days, depending on the season, making sure to keep the ground moist. In the first week, it is very important to keep the newly seeded lawn moist. During this time stay off the seeded areas to ensure proper germination. During hot weather, sprinklers should run several times a day to ensure the seed never dries out, but be careful to not overwater. At the end of week 2, dry up the yard enough so you can mow.

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## Third and Fourth Weeks

The following 2 weeks are used to transition from frequent daily watering to fewer cycles per day and increase the number of days between watering. During week 3, reduce watering to 1-3 times per day and skip a day between watering if the new lawn is too wet. By week 4, water 1 to 2 times every other day. After week 4, your new yard should be ready to go 2 to 3 days between watering. Water your lawn in the evening or early morning when less evaporation occurs. To reduce run-off on hills and promote deep root growth, reduce watering times in half. One hour later, run the irrigation cycle again and apply the rest of the water. This allows the water to soak into heavy soils.

## Remainder of First Season

Your new lawn will need more water the first growing season and especially the first 6 months. As roots grow deeper over the course of a year, it will need less water. If your lawn looks dry, it probably needs watering. The key to new seed care during this time is deep watering less frequently. This will help the roots grow down and develop a deep root system that uses less water. It is ok after the first two months to stress your lawn a little. This means let your yard dry out a bit and when you see signs of stress starting to appear, make sure to water. This will also allow you to fine tune the sprinkler system and adjust heads for proper coverage and change nozzles for more or less water in certain spots.

## Mowing

Your new lawn should be mowed when seedlings reach mowing height. Patience is a virtue when it comes to caring for your newly seeded lawn. To help your new yard flourish, you'll want to limit activity, including mowing, for the first 2 to 4 weeks. Your seed needs time to germinate, so

keeping off the lawn will help your new seed grow faster. The first mowing of seeded areas should begin when the grass leaves reach a height of 3 to 3 1/2" inches. Keep in mind, only small portion of the leaf blade should be removed. For example, if your grass is 4 1/2" inches tall don't mow shorter than 3 inches. In seeded areas, water lightly prior to mowing to keep seed down during mowing.