

Laying Guide Overview

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A month by month guide.

Step 1 Measuring and ordering.

Measure the area with a tape measure. To calculate your area in square metres times the length by the width. This will give you the square meter age. If you have an irregular shape and need some help on calculating you area contact us for some free advice.

Delivery days:

Smartgrass (Tall Fescue), Santa Anna Couch, Sir Walter Buffalo and male sterile Kikuyu are available Tuesday threw Friday. Saturday deliveries only occur during the warmer months.

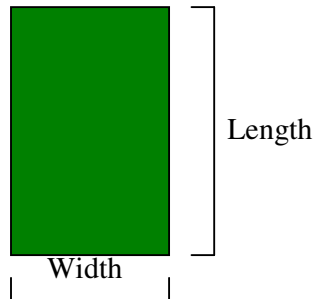
Place your order by phone or pop in and see us by 11:30am the day before and we will deliver your lawn the following day.

Orders of 30m² or more are delivered free of charge on the metropolitan area.

Length=

Width=

Total=



Step 2

THE PREPARATION OF NEW LAWNS

Having decided to install a new lawn whether turf or seed, we urge you to consider the most important part: ***THE PREPARATION:*** A badly prepared lawn can look good for a short time, but after a while, you will have problems with watering and growth. Spend your money wisely in the preparation and you will have a lawn that will last you many years with the least amount of problems. With water restrictions in place the better the root system of your grass, the hardier and more drought tolerant it will be. Your soil will vary from area to area so bring a sample to our garden centre and have it tested by one of our staff for free. We can advise you of the viability of using that soil for planting your lawn or the necessity of having it replaced or improved. A sample of soil, (a good handful each) from 2 or 3 different areas of your yard is enough.

If you have very clayey soil or soil that is hard or hydrophobic (water repellent) it is most advisable to have it excavated to a depth of at least 150mm and replaced with an 80/20 sand-loam mix or organic mix. (*When purchasing new soil from a garden supply place, it is wise to have the pH level of your soil checked.*)

Before installing the sand/loam it is advisable to treat the soil under the excavated area. If the soil base is friable enough this can be done by rotary hoeing some sand and/or gypsum into the soil. Gypsum at the rate of 1kg per 1 square metre, and enough sand to cover the area by 25mm, or treating the area by using liquid clay breaker, which will help in breaking down the clay. If the base is heavy clay and digs up in big lumps apply gypsum at the rate of 1kg per square metre and place the loam over the top.

If you have an area that has in the past supported a lawn, then the soil may still be quite suitable for your new lawn; however it will still need preparation. If the lawn was planted 10 or more years ago, the soil by now is probably quite water repellent and even though there are several things you can do to improve the water retention, most times this is only a short term solution, so soil removal and replacement is probably the best option. If the area has been neglected for some time and weeds have taken over they need to be treated before anything else is done. Spraying with a glyphosate based spray (such as No Grow) is recommended. This is a systemic, *non-selective* weedicide that kills from the roots up. Once the weeds are dead (usually 7-14 days) the area can then be rotary hoed. It is advisable to have a contractor do this. Spend a few extra dollars and ask the contractor as he digs a row, to then turn around and dig it again in the opposite direction and then repeat the process at a slightly deeper setting across the area. This way you will end up with a much finer finish on your area and find it is much easier to rake to final level. This is also the time to think whether you are going to install edging to separate your lawn from your garden and if you are going to install an irrigation system. Installing the edging now will give you a finished height to work to and installing the irrigation system now will save you digging your lawn up later. We recommend the installation of an irrigation system in your lawn simply because it will save you water in the long term and it waters your lawn evenly so it grows evenly.

Once you have reached this stage, level your area, raking out all rocks and debris and give it a light roll. The use of a water filled roller about $\frac{3}{4}$ full is recommended. Roll your lawn in one direction, then rake it level, then roll it at right angles to the first time and rake it level again. This will compact your soil so that when you walk on

it, you leave a footprint about 1cm deep, this is the ideal compaction. If you do not roll the area, the soil will settle unevenly and you will end up with depressions in the area. The finished level is what your lawn is going to grow on, so it needs to be a nice flat even surface. For roll out lawn, the finished height needs to be about 20mm below the level of your edges and for seed lawn about 2 – 4 mm below the edges that your lawn is butting up to. Whether you have had new loam brought in or just used your existing soil, we strongly recommend you use a wetting agent such as Munn's Weta-Lawn & Garden to assist in the penetration of water. Having now prepared the area, you need to decide whether to install roll out turf or seed. Apart from your wallet, here are a few considerations.

Seed

This is the cheaper of the two options. The preparation is the same, however after sowing; the area must be kept moist preferably by hand watering until germination, some 7-10 days away. In a month or so you will have a *reasonably* thick lawn and 15-22 weeks an established lawn.

Roll out turf

This is certainly the dearer of the two options. The preparation is the same, but once the area is prepared and levelled and the lawn is rolled out, your lawn is really simply what you see is what you get. The only reason this type of lawn will not grow is if you do not water it. For the first week after installation it requires watering at least twice a day. The second week it requires watering once a day. After 2-3 weeks you can walk on it and by the end of the 8th week it is reasonably well established.

PERMANENT WATER CONSERVATION MEASURES apply, however SA Water has granted an exemption to anyone laying a new turf or seeded lawn. You will receive a registration form when your lawn is delivered. For further information please refer to the SA Water Website.

Why not take advantage of our '**KICK START KIT**'. We can offer you great savings of 10% when you purchase our package consisting of Weta-Lawn and Garden granulated wetting agent, Munns Superstart starter fertiliser for sowing your new lawn and the first lot of Munns Greenup fertiliser for the next fertilise 6 weeks after sowing. Simply pick this up when you purchase your seed needs or order your turf from our garden centre, or we can have the whole pack delivered with your order of rollout turf.

Step 3

PLANTING & CARING FOR YOUR INSTANT LAWN

Your turf is delivered fresh within 24 hours of being cut and it should be laid immediately. If same-day laying is not possible on hot days, keep the lawn moist by watering the outside of the rolls. In the cold times of the year the lawn will last 2 or 3 days without damage, however when it is hot, if the turf is not laid within 24 hours of delivery it should be rolled out and kept moist. The longer the turf is rolled up, *the more it will deteriorate.*

The area should be firm and nice and even. Apply Munn's Weta Lawn & Garden wetting granules at the recommended rate & Munn's Superstart starter food at the rate of 1kg per 10sq meters. These will encourage much better moisture retention and penetration and rapid root development into your existing soil.

Each roll of lawn should be unrolled onto the area fitting each side and ends of the roll snugly against the other. Do not stretch the rolls to make them fit into small areas. Start on an area where you do not have to walk over your newly laid lawn. If you do not have a straight edge to work to, lay a string line and work from that. If your border is uneven this will allow an uneven pattern to form at the end of your rolls, this is ideal but not critical on a level surface. If you have a very sloping area, start from the bottom and work up, laying across the slope. If it is very hot, lightly water the area where you are working and at each 20-metre area, lightly water the lawn you have laid. In the hotter times of the year there may be some drying out of the edges of the rolls due to the dislodgement of the soil during transit. To overcome this, a light dressing of loam along the joins is recommended, but never completely cover the leaf area with soil or it will die.

Cut around your edges, sprinklers, utility covers, valve boxes, stepping stones etc with a sharp knife, hedge clippers, secateurs etc. Try to avoid cutting and re-using long thin strips because on very hot days these may die.

After laying, water the area for some 10 minutes, allow the water to soak in for a short time and then roll it in both directions using a half to three quarter filled roller. Now give it a good soaking for 20-30 minutes. Sorry—you have to keep off it for 2 weeks, and your pets 2-4 weeks.

Additional information for Sir Walter Buffalo (PBR)

Buffalo is usually cut with a minimal amount of soil on the root system. Therefore, after laying, a *light* top dressing of sandy loam is strongly recommended. The top dressing should cover the root zone only and *not the leaf*. It is essential to roll Sir Walter after laying to consolidate the roots into the soil. Thoroughly soak the area after laying, and if laying large areas when very hot, soak completed areas during the laying process. Root growth should commence in 10-14 days after laying and once growth has commenced, watering can then begin to be spaced.

Watering your lawn

You need to water your lawn at least twice a day for the first 7 – 10 days, 8am and 2pm are good times. If it is very hot a top up about midday and an afternoon water about 4pm is recommended. Water your lawn for some 25-35 minutes at a time. If your lawn is laid during the cooler months, slightly less water may be needed. If

laying your lawn in the cold time of the year when there is consistent rain, unless there is a 7 day period without rain, it is not necessary to water the lawn. Too much water can be as damaging as not enough. After the first 7–10 days, watering can be reduced so that at 2 weeks the lawn is firm enough to walk on because at this time it will probably need its first mow. The aim is to now give your lawn the equivalent of 25mm of water each time. To measure this, place some plastic containers on your lawn with a 25mm increment marked on them, turn on your watering system, time how long it takes to reach that mark, add 5-10 minutes and that is how long you should water your lawn for. By giving your lawn longer, less frequent watering, you will encourage deeper roots and result in a more vigorous high quality turf.

Fertilising your lawn

About 6 weeks after laying, fertilise with Munn's Buffalo Booster, Munn's Greenup or Golf Course Green, depending on the season, at the recommended rate. Your lawn will need to be fertilised at least every 3 months, this will depend on your soil type. After 1 full year, you can say your lawn is fully established. Remember that summer is a lawns' worst enemy. The first summer is the most important for your new lawn. Ensure your new lawn gets a little more water as needed for those really hot spells and it will thrive.

Mowing your lawn

Different lawns and different times of the year determine when the first cut is needed. With fescue it is usually after the 2nd week of laying. Always mow fescue grasses on the highest setting of the mower. It must be kept 5cm high in summer and may be cut to 4cm in the cooler months. Couch grass can be mown lower; however, when it is establishing do not let it get too long before the first mow or you will mow the green tip off of it and end up with a brown lawn. Mow couch grasses frequently and on the same setting for best results. Sir Walter Buffalo and Kikuyu and best mown at around 3-4cm high depending on personal preference.

General

For your lush green lawn to suddenly develop brown or dead patches, there has to be a reason. Before you try over-watering or over-fertilising, phone us and we should be able to diagnose the problem. Bring a small sample (a piece big enough to fit into an ice cream container) with a few centimetres of soil on it, half good grass and half affected grass so we can try to determine a solution. Once the grass is dead it is impossible to tell why it died. The most common cause of brown patches is lawn beetle and fungus.

Step 4

SOWING YOUR LAWN SEED

The following is recommended no matter which lawn seed you are using.

The use of an organic based lawn starter food such as Munns Superstart at the recommended rate, and a wetting agent such as Munns Weta Lawn & Garden is highly recommended.

Ensure you follow the recommended sowing rates of your seed per square metre. Using double the recommended amount of seed, especially for non running grasses, will result in them choking themselves to death, usually when they reach about the 3 month mark. With couch and kikuyu lawns, this is not generally the case and using slightly more than the recommended will result in a faster coverage.

If you have a very large area, it is advisable to divide the area up into measured areas, perhaps 50 square metre lots, mark the perimeters, then weigh the amount of seed that would normally cover this area. The ultimate coverage will be achieved by further dividing the seed in half and then walking back and forth across the area one way sowing half the seed and then walking at ninety degrees to the first sowing the other half. This will give you the best even spread.

When sowing couch or kikuyu seed it is best to tip the required amount of seed into a small container, mix in 2 or 3 handfuls of dry sand or gypsum and generally broadcast the mixture over the area. Couch seed is very fine like dust and kikuyu seed is also very fine. A small amount of these seeds is designed to cover a large area.

Always tip the seed from the packet in which it comes and mix it around. A lot of seeds these days come with wetting agents and some fertilizers already mixed in and these need to be mixed equally with the seed.

The first thing to do is use your rake to create shallow furrows for the seed to land into so less seed will blow about if windy. Rake to a depth of about half a rake tine and if you are sowing seed on a reasonably steep slope, rake up and down the slope to create the furrows. A very slightly damp surface will ensure the seed clings to the soil, too damp will cause problems with raking.

Take the amount of seed you require for the area in a container and walk on to the area to be sown. I have personally found the easiest way to sow lawn seed is with your hand. Take about three quarters of a handful of seed and opening the fingers slightly, shake your hand from side. If you walk backwards as you sow the seed it is easy to see the seed landing and therefore easy to maintain an even coverage. You can use a spreader, or mix the seed with the fertiliser, this entirely up to you. Each to his own. Do what you prefer. So long as the seed is spread evenly and at the recommended rate you will end up with the same result.

Having sown your seed, it is raking time again. This time across the area at 90degrees to the first time when you created the furrows. Again rake to about half a rake tine in depth and this will give you a nice even finish. If you are on that very steep slope, you would now be raking across the slope so the furrows will help keep the water from washing down the hill and washing the seed and soil with it.

The area is now sown and you will see that there is still some seed above the ground. This is normal and if you have followed the recommended sowing rates, there is still enough seed below the ground for your lawn to develop into a lush green area even

though some seed above the ground will be eaten by ants and the odd bird. *From now until germination the area must be kept damp!* Preferably water the area by hand and only until you see a sheen appear on the surface of the soil. You will see the soil in different areas staying wetter longer than others, so hand watering is the best option. If you must use an irrigation system, have it on for only for the shortest of times because creating pools of water at this time will increase the incidence of bare areas. After germination slowly increase the amount of water but decrease the number of actual irrigations. Once germinated, the idea is to make the roots travel down in search of water thus creating a hardy, deep rooted lawn.

Over sowing of bare patches should not be made until at least 12 -14 weeks after germination. Once mowing is started you will be surprised at just how fast the grass thickens once stimulated by mowing. Over sowing too early will choke some of the other grass.

NOTE; Your newly planted lawn will take up to 12 months before it has established a deep enough root system to achieve its maximum drought tolerance. Therefore, your lawn will require more water during its first summer, to enable to develop to its fullest, drought resistant potential.

Fertilising of your new lawn should firstly be about 6 weeks after germination with Munns Greenup at the recommended rate. Once established, fertilise with Munns Greenup in Spring and Autumn and Munns Golf Course Green Summer and Winter.

Mowing should take place when 40% of the new seedlings are about 5-6cm high. This is usually only a partial mow and then as you mow each week you will see it slowly become a full lawn. Never remove more than 30% of tip growth at each mow for the healthiest of lawns. Mowing heights differ from grass to grass.

Step 5

MOWING, WATERING & FERTILISING

Mowing your lawn:

Mowing frequency can be just as important as the cutting height in the overall physiological and developmental condition of the turf grass plant. The mowing frequency is determined by the shoot growth rate, environmental conditions and cutting height

New lawns – should be mown when seedlings are 5-7.5cm high, even if this entails only partial mowing of the area. Remove only about 1cm from the tips.

Established lawns – mowing height is an important factor in promoting healthy lawns. No more than 30% of the leaf area should be removed at any one mowing. The greater the percentage of leaf removal, the greater root growth stoppage occurs. Lawns that have been cut too low will have less ability to withstand stress. Irrigation and fertilising must take place more frequently and disease problems tend to increase. After establishment, mowing should take place on a regular basis as this, together with correct watering and fertilising, will encourage vigorous and healthy growth of your lawns. Keep mower blades sharp and do not cut wet grass unless absolutely necessary.

General mowing heights;

For cool season grasses (fescues and other non-running grasses): Mowing height in summer should be at least 5cm in summer and no less than 40mm in winter. Warm season grasses (running grasses) should be kept at approximately 15-20mm all year round. Do not cut couch grasses during winter, except to remove soursob or winter weeds. Do this by setting the blades above the couch and only mow the weeds.

Do's & Don'ts of Watering

Different lawn types have different water requirements. For instance, hardy, warm season lawns such as Munns Santa Anna couch, Kikuyu, Sir Walter and Palmetto Buffalo require much less water (as much as 30%) than cool season lawns. Many people fail to recognise that it is necessary to water cool season lawns during dry periods in the cooler months, whereas warm season grasses do not need watering in winter as that is their dormant period.

Note; A newly planted lawn will generally take up to 12 months before it has established a deep and hardy enough root system to achieve its maximum drought tolerance. Therefore your lawn will need more watering in its first summer to enable it to develop to the fullest its drought resistance potential.

DO

Water lawns in the early morning. Ideally, lawns should be watered in the early morning, somewhere between 5am and 9am is ideal, as water evaporation from the leaf is quite rapid.

DON'T

Water lawns in the late afternoon through to evenings as this will create shallow root systems, weakening the turf and making it less tolerant to heat, cold and drought and leave it vulnerable to disease and insects.

DO

Give lawns longer, less frequent watering. Deep penetrating irrigations that wet the soil to a considerable depth encourage deep roots and result in a more vigorous, higher quality turf.

DON'T

Give your lawn short and frequent watering. This type of watering will cause many lawn problems such as shallow roots, weed invasion, leaching of soil nutrients and fungal diseases.

DO

Seriously consider installing a watering system. One of the best ways to ensure trouble free watering and considerable time saving is to install an irrigation system, whether it is manual or automatic. Correctly installed, your lawn will be much more evenly watered and will save water costs.

Fertilising procedures:

Correct fertilising is necessary to keep your lawn healthy and green throughout the year. Reduced growth and paleness of colour are two of the main symptoms of poor nutrition in a lawn and the turf will look sparse and weak. Application of a balanced fertiliser is the simplest way to manage turf nutrition, supplying the turf with adequate levels of all nutrients. Fertilisers will leach out of sandy soils more quickly than clay soils. If your lawn exhibits signs as described above – feed it.

For the best result from your fertiliser, you should give your lawn a thorough soaking the preceding day. Then, after ensuring the blades of the grass are dry, apply your fertiliser as evenly as possible, either by hand or by using a fertiliser spreader, at the recommended rate. The fertiliser should then be watered in thoroughly after application. This will allow the roots to absorb the fertiliser more readily and prevent grass and root burn.

Step 6

FERTILISING AND MAINTENANCE A MONTH BY MONTH GUIDE

The following is a guide for the maintenance of the general types of lawns available in South Australia. It is compiled assuming the seasons follow the recognised months.

- December:** Fertilise warm season grasses such as Sir Walter Buffalo, Couches and Kikuyu with Munns Buffalo Booster and all other grasses with Munns Golf Course Green (except Dichondra).
As hot weather increases, brown patches may be areas of soil which now repel moisture. Aerate and treat with Munns Weta Lawn & Garden watered in with Wettasoil.
If rains are persisting this far into the season, don't be lulled into a false sense of security. Lawns require more than just the odd shower.
If irregular shaped brown patches appear, and get bigger, check for African black beetle and treat with Penniside and Munns Lawn Grub killer as recommended.
- January:** Correct watering times and amounts are critical at this time of the year. Long deep watering is essential for hardiness. Do not over water.
Rains persisting this long into the season can cause humidity leading to fungal problems. These will show as small circles, the grass turns blue/grey and the leaf turns straw coloured. Treat with Mancozeb.
- February:** Now is a good time to prepare for planting your new lawn in autumn, ask us for a preparation sheet.
Now is also the recognized time for the second hatching of the African lawn beetle grub. Treat with Penniside and Munns Lawn Grub killer as recommended.
- March:** Fertilise warm season grasses such as Sir Walter Buffalo, Couches and Kikuyu with Munns Buffalo Booster and all other lawns (except Dichondra) with Munns Greenup at recommended rates.
Pre-treat lawns for winter grass with Dacthal
Now is generally a good time to plant lawns. Plugging with couch at this time will not give a full cover by summers end; however the plugs will be well established for the return of spring.
Apply Munns Weta Lawn & Garden and water in with Wettasoil as an aid to moisture penetration and retention.
- April:** As warm season grasses start to become dormant, lift the mowing height to accommodate.
Another treatment with Dacthal will cut the germination of winter grass drastically.
- May:** Usually the first of the rain. Be aware of pooling of water on your lawn area and mark or make a map for reference in spring to remedy.
Water that remains on top of your ground for long periods means poor drainage that in time will damage your lawn.

In the last 2 weeks of this month an application of Munns Buffalo Booster can be applied to take Sir Walter Buffalo, couch and kikuyu grasses into winter.

June: If you did not fertilise Sir Walter Buffalo at the end of May, do so now with Munns Buffalo Booster mix, and all other lawns (except Dichondra) with Munns Golf Course Green. Running grasses will tolerate the cold better, with an application of fertiliser now. Winter grass will start to germinate with the rains, treat with Endothal. (Winter grass Killer)

July: Moss can be a problem in poorly drained areas. This needs to be treated as it appears or it will choke out lawn grass and leave bare patches. Use Munns Quickfix or Moss Kill and Lawn Food.

August: Ground preparation for spring planting of lawns can be started now. By spraying your weeds in the intended area and encouraging more to grow and treating again will ensure you a relatively weed free area. Use No Gro 450 weedicide at the recommended rate.

September: Fertilise Sir Walter Buffalo, Couch grasses and Kikuyu with Munns Buffalo Booster and all other lawns (except Dichondra) with Munns Greenup at the recommended rate. Apply Munns Weta Lawn & Garden and water in with Wettasoil as an aid to moisture penetration and retention. Warm season grasses (couch, buffalo & kikuyu) will now start to emerge from their winter dormancy.

Pre-treat lawns for crab grass and paspalum with Dacthal.

As the ground warms so broadleaf weeds will germinate. Treat when healthy with Tri-Kombi, or on Buffalo, Bin-die.

The last 2 weeks of September to early October is the recognised time to pre-treat your ground for the hatching of beetle larvae, use Pennside. Read our African black beetle information sheet for further information.

October: If necessary, scarify running grasses to de-thatch them. If you have not used a wetting agent for water penetration or retention, do so now.

If you have not fertilised your lawn, do so now.

Running grasses planted as viro-cells or plugs late last season will now be starting to run. Plant new viro-cells or plugs now for maximum coverage.

November: As the season warms up, ensure correct mowing heights for your grass. Mow all lawns regularly so each mowing removes only a small amount of leaf. Black beetle is now active, treat with Pennside and Munns Lawn Grub killer.

Note:

This information is designed to give you a very basic understanding of what occurs to your lawn during the year. If you have any queries, just ask us. We have many lawns

on display and have free information sheets on all aspects of lawn maintenance etc.
Come in and see us.