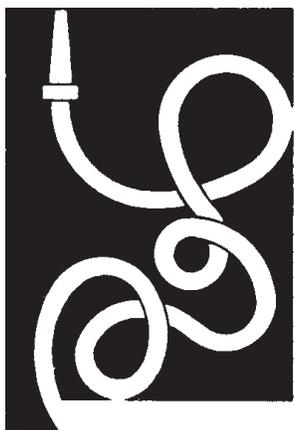


General Lawn Care

Once your lawn is established there are some basic rules to follow to keep it in great shape. Proper watering, fertilizing, and mowing will insure a lush green turf.

Watering Your Lawn



“How often do I water the lawn?” is one of the most frequently asked questions. The answer is simple—when it needs it. Determining when the lawn needs watering is not always easy.

Watering requirements for your lawn are based on: type of soil, seasonal temperature, wind, humidity, frequency of rain, type of grass and maintenance practices.

One way to determine if it needs watering is to watch the blades of grass. As they dry out, the blades either roll or fold exposing the bottom of the blade and turn grayish in color. Another sign is when the blades of grass do not bounce back when you walk on them.

One of the most significant ways to find out how much water your lawn needs is to use the “can test method”. You can measure the output of your sprinklers by placing five or more straight sided cans or coffee mugs randomly around your yard. Run your sprinkler system for 20 minutes. Measure the water in each of the cans and determine the average amount of water in each can. (The fact that the containers may hold varying amounts of water tells you something about the uniformity of the system. You may want to adjust the sprinklers and re-do the test.) Multiply the average by 3 to determine the sprinkler output per hour. Check the chart on the back of this sheet to find the total number of minutes to water your lawn each week.

Deep watering is important in California gardens, it pushes the roots further into the soil making your lawn sturdier and the time between watering further apart. This results in a lawn that is more drought tolerant and less likely to stress during the hot summers we experience.

When should you water? Actually, the ideal time is early morning because there is likely to be less heat and wind. And disease is minimized by allowing the lawn to dry off during the day. Watering at night is not recommended.

Fertilizing The Lawn



Lawn grasses live in an unnatural environment, crowded together and competing with each other, along with neighboring trees and shrubs, for water and nutrition, and they are mowed frequently, which is highly irregular in nature. Because of this, lawns must be fertilized to maintain their color, density and vigor. Plus, a healthy lawn will be more resistant to insects, weeds and diseases.

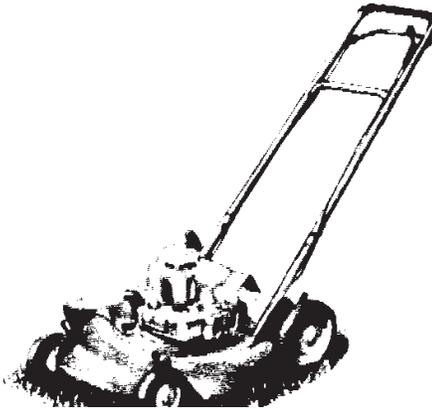
Complete fertilizers containing all three of the primary nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium) in a basic ratio of 6-2-1 has proven to be generally good for fertilizing home lawns. A product like **Master Green** which has 25-6-4 formula provides this approximate ratio.

In general, most lawns require 4-6 pounds of actual nitrogen per year. Apply this over the course of the growing season with 4-6 applications of fertilizer at 6-8 week intervals. Most fertilizer labels recommend application rates which supply approximately 1 pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet—use this as your basic guide when estimating

how much fertilizer to buy. Check with our Certified Nursery Professionals if you have any questions regarding timing and amounts.

Many specialized combinations of fertilizers with pesticides and or herbicides are available. Again consult our Certified Nursery Professionals for specific information about these products.

For proper application follow the directions on the product label. Here you will usually find the proper setting for various spreaders such as the **Ortho Whirlybird** or a drop-type spreader.



Mowing The Lawn

A lawn mowed at the right height, and at the right time resists weeds, insects and diseases. Frequency of mowing is determined by the fertilizing program, grass variety, watering practices, and the time of year.

Lawns should be mowed when they are 1/4 to 1/3 inch taller than the recommended mowing height. Check with one of our Certified Nursery Professionals for a recommendation. Different grasses vary in their needs.

If you wait too long to mow your lawn it can be dangerous. If you cut away too much of the grass you may burn the exposed stems. Roots can be shocked by heavy mowing and take several weeks to recover. Height of lawn and depth of roots are related. When grass is mowed to the recommended height, roots will grow deeper.

Mowing Hints

1. Don't mow a wet lawn.
2. Remove sticks, stones, toys, etc. from the lawn before mowing.
3. Alternate mowing patterns.
4. Check for correct blade height.
5. If the ground is uneven, adjust the height so as not to scalp the high spots.
6. Be sure the mower blade is sharp—dull blades tear the grass.

Minutes to water each week* if hourly sprinkler output is:

	0.5"	1.0"	1.5"	2.0"
JAN	42	21	14	11
FEB	59	29	20	15
MAR	92	46	31	23
APR	126	63	42	32
MAY	151	76	50	38
JUNE	151	76	50	38
JULY	176	88	59	44
AUG	168	84	56	42
SEPT	143	71	48	36
OCT	101	50	34	25
NOV	59	29	20	15
DEC	42	21	14	11

*Note: Chart is factored for cool-season turf (Tall Fescue, Kentucky Bluegrass and Perennial Ryegrass) growing in the "Central Coast Interior Valleys".