



Turf for Landscape

Turf selection for the landscape has become more confusing than ever. In the past, only St. Augustine and Common Bermuda Grass were readily available. But now, gardeners can now choose from Zoysia Grass, Buffalo Grass, Sea Shore Paspalum, as well as improved varieties of St. Augustine and Bermuda. With so many varieties of turf on the market, there is also a wide range of colors to choose from to create a desired landscaping effect. Finding the right turf to complement your home is as important as selecting the right trees and shrubs to landscape it.

ST. AUGUSTINE

A thick, coarse grass that is the best choice for shady lawns. Recommended varieties:

- Del Mar - More compact, cold hardy, emerald green, improved shade tolerant
- Raleigh - Aggressive, cold hardy
- Palmetto - cold hardy, good shade tolerance, but not resistant to S.A.D. virus like other St. Augustine
- Floratam - drought tolerant, chinch bug resistant, limited cold tolerant

ZOYSIA

Dense, medium to fine textured grass with good insect and disease resistance. More competitive against weed invasion because of its density.

- Emerald - Extremely dense, fine leafed, dark green turf grass, good shade tolerance
- El Toro, Palisades, and Jamur - Similar look and aggressive performance, dense growing, medium textured, good drought and shade tolerance.

BUFFALO

Native, fine textured, drought tolerant grass. Lower maintenance requirements, limited shade tolerance.

- 609 - blue green color, good density, probably the best Buffalo for home lawns.

- Prairie - more open growth pattern, lime green leaves, more native look.

SEA SHORE PASPALUM

Recently introduced dark green grass. Dense, soft textured, tolerates poor soil and water quality.

- Sea Isle 1 - only currently available selection, resistant to drought and wear.

BERMUDA

Aggressive, fine textured grass, good drought and wear tolerance. Its aggressive growth can be a problem to keep out of flowerbeds, where it can be impossible to remove.

- Tifway 419 and TifSport - Low growing, lush selections that get their names from golf fairways and sports fields where they are commonly used
- Common, GN-1 and Tex Turf-10 - Not as fine leafed as Tif. Extremely tough and durable

While grass selection is important, site conditions such as exposure, soil depth and water availability also determine successful establishment of turf. Here's what you should consider:

- All grasses like full sun but some tolerate some shade.
- The soil stores water and nutrients and the deeper it is, the less frequently you have to water and fertilize.
- The minimum soil depth needed to have a healthy lawn is at least six inches but the more soil you have the better off you will be in the long run.
- Water requirements vary between varieties but in most of Texas all lawns will require weekly watering to remain green in the dry heat of summer.