

Planting A New Lawn

STEP 1: Be sure your site has been graded so that the surface water drains off. You don't want any puddles. This will usually have to be done with a dozer or tractor. This step is commonly referred to as the rough grading.

STEP 2: If you are using native soil, spread 2 inches of organic matter over the top and till it to a depth of 6 to 8 inches. It takes 6 yards per 1,000 square feet to give you a 2-inch layer. I like to use dark fine bark. It is also smart to till into the soil some fertilizer and lime. Double the normal rates on the bag since it is being blended into the soil.

STEP 3: If you are importing soil, apply at least 6 to 8 inches. Less than that will only give you grief later on! The best way to add topsoil is to spread 3 inches and till it into the native soil and then add another 3 inches on top to smooth out and cover the small rocks. Now is the time to finish grade. Large areas can be done with a tractor but ultimately you will need to use a landscape rake. The object is to get the ground as smooth as possible. Sometimes it is necessary to roll the soil to help compact it. If you are leaving footprints deeper than one-quarter inch, you should roll. You can rake and roll until the cows come home, but get it as smooth as you can.

STEP 4: Spread more lime and fertilizer at the normal recommended rates and then seed at 6 to 8 pounds per 1,000 square feet. With the fertilizer, lime and seed all sitting on top of the dirt, drag one of our handy-dandy seed rakes over the ground to "plant" the seed.

STEP 5: Keep the seed moist until it germinates, about one to two weeks. That means keeping the soil dark colored and not flooding or washing the seed away. Mow the lawn when the new grass reaches 2 to 3 inches high. Be sure to have your lawn mower blade sharp and be careful not to leave ruts in the soft soil.

STEP 6: After the third mowing you may treat for weeds and fertilize again. Check with our staff for the best products to use and refer to our Lawn Care By The Month guide.