

THE HOMEOWNERS' A B C'S OF FERTILIZING

Tip: Don't buy what you don't need! It is wise to have your soil tested before you apply



lime or fertilizer. You may not need the phosphorus or potassium. Soil testing is available for \$7.00 by the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service-call # 727-1401 for information.

Soil should be tested every 3 to 4 years!



Hello, Grass, what's your name?

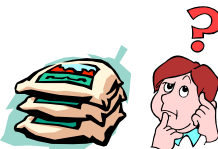
A. Know your lawn grass name & the recommended amount of nitrogen that should be applied per year.* (See chart below)

Cool Season Grasses- amount of Nitrogen allowed
Tall fescue-2.5 lbs. /1000 sq.ft. per year
Fine fescue (creeping red fescue, hard fescue, sheep fescue, chewing fescue) 2.0 lbs. /1000 sq.ft. per year
Not recommended for Hampton Roads area
Kentucky bluegrass-2.5 lbs. /1000 sq.ft. per year

Warm Season Grasses-amount of Nitrogen allowed
Bermuda-grass-3.0 lbs/1,000 sq.ft. per year
Zoysiagrass-2.0 lbs/1000 sq.ft. per year
Centipedegrass
St. Augustine

*Apply one pound of soluble Nitrogen/1000 square feet per application. Only apply lime, phosphorus & potassium if indicated by soil test.

If a slow -release fertilizer is used; the per-application maximum is based on the % of soluble nitrogen in the fertilizer. For example, if only 50 % of the fertilizer is soluble nitrogen, 2 lbs. of total nitrogen could be applied in one application. However, you can not exceed the annual maximum for grass type.



B. Understand how to read fertilizer packaging-

Fertilizer Analysis is indicated by *three numbers on bag* -12-4-8 =12 % Nitrogen- (N), 4 % phosphate (P₂O₅), 8% potash (K₂O)

Fertilizer Analysis on Bag	½ lb of N per 1,000 sq.ft.	1 lb of N. per 1,000 sq.ft.	1.5 lb Slow -release N per 1,000 sq.ft.	2.0 lb Slow -release N per 1,000 sq.ft.
	Below lbs. of fertilizer needed	Below lbs. of fertilizer needed	Below lbs. of fertilizer needed	Below lbs. of fertilizer needed
6-2-0	8.3	16.6	25.0	33.0
10-10-10	5.0	10.0	15.0	20.0
12-4-8	4.1	8.3	12.5	17.0
16-8-8	3.1	6.2	9.4	12.0
20-0-16	2.5	5.0	7.5	10.0
23-3-7	2.1	4.3	6.5	8.6
28-0-12	1.8	3.6	5.3	7.2
31-0-0	1.6	3.2	4.8	6.4
33.5-0-0	1.5	3.0	4.5	6.0
38-0-0	1.3	2.6	3.9	5.2
46-0-0	1.1	2.2	3.2	4.4



C. When to apply Nitrogen to lawn in Hampton Roads, Virginia-

Cool Season Grasses-Nitrogen application by month.

Quality Desired	Lbs of Nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft.			
	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	May 15- June 15 *
Low	0	1	0	0- ½ lb.
Medium	1	1	0	0- ½ lb.
High	1	1	1	0- ½ lb.

Important comments:

1. Fine fescue perform best at 1-2 lbs of N per 1000 sq. ft. per year
2. Applications in successive months should be approx. 4 wks. Apart
3. 3. Natural organic & activated sewage sludge should be applied early in the Aug. 15 to Sept. 15 & Oct. 1- Nov. 1 for max. Effect.

*only if nitrogen was not applied the previous fall or to help a new lawn get better established.

Warm Season Grasses - Nitrogen application by month.

Quality Desired	Lbs of Nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft.			
	April	May	June	July/August
Low	1	1	0	0
Med	1	1	1	0
High	1	1	1	1

Important comments:

1. If overseeded for winter color add ½ to 1 lb or readily available N per 1000 sq. ft. in Sept./Oct. and /or Nov.
2. Applications in successive months should be approx. 4 wks. Apart
3. Centipedegrass & mature zoysiagrass perform best at 1 to 2 lbs. of N per 1000 sq. ft. per year
4. Improved winter hardiness on Bermuda grass will result from application of potassium in late Aug. or Sept.

No earlier than April 5 No later than September 30

Avoid applying fertilizers to sidewalks, driveways, and curbs. If fertilizer gets on hard surfaces, sweep, don't hose, it back into the grass. This will prevent run-off.



MOWING TIPS: Higher mowing heights during **summer months** for **cool-season grasses** will reduce stress levels of the turf and *increase the likelihood of the grass surviving drought*. **Frequent mowing is an important part of turf maintenance**. It is best to **remove no more than one third of the vegetation at one mowing**. If mowed too closely, root growth is slowed.

This reduces the lawn's tolerance to heat and drought. Also, weeds are more likely to invade closely cut lawns.

Turfgrass	Mowing Heights (inches)
Tall fescue	2 to 3
Creeping red fescue	2 to 3
Bermudagrass	1/2, to 1
Zoysiagrass	3/4 to 1
Kentucky bluegrass*	1 1/2 to 2 1/2 * not recommended grass for area
Perennial ryegrass*	1 1/2 to 2 1/2 * not recommended grass for area

Be sure to keep your mower blade sharp! **Dull blades cause excess leaf damage and deplete the plant's stored reserves during summer months**. Grass fertilized and mowed improperly is more susceptible to weeds, insects and diseases. If you don't fertilize, *your lawn will gradually thin and weeds may invade*.

Proper and timely fertilization can be good for both your lawn and the environment. There is less chance for nutrient and soil runoff to surface waters from a healthy stand of grass than bare soil or thin grass. Healthy lawns will have less disease, insect and weed problems, reducing the need for pesticide applications. Well-maintained lawns look appealing and are more wear tolerant

Why too much "lawn fertilizer" is harmful to the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

Excessive nutrients in runoff water rob oxygen from the water & create "dead zones" that are detrimental to seafood survival.



Information extracted from *Ecological Turf Tips...to protect the Chesapeake Bay*, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Publication 430-011, Reprinted 2000, and VA. Department of Conservation & Recreation., Chesapeake Club requirements- Master Gardeners- James Williams, Carol King, Mike Deibler