

## Guide to having the best lawn on your street

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To an outsider, a well-manicured lawn shows that you take pride in your home. Not only that, but it also does wonders for your lifestyle, because when you have a lush green carpet at your feet, it's satisfying to be outside enjoying it. But when it's patchy and covered in weeds the last thing you'll want to do is even look at it.

So how do you get that perfect bountiful lawn that you so long for? It's easier than you think. All you need to do is follow and understand the basics of proper lawn care. Luckily, we've put together a thorough guide to set you off in the right direction. With our guidance, you'll have the best lawn on the street in no time - no matter what time of year it is.



### Lawn care throughout Australian seasons

In most parts of Australia we have relatively mild seasonal changes, but they are changes nonetheless, so your approach to caring for your lawn should be different depending on the weather.

### How to take care of a lawn in summer

Summer anywhere can be a difficult time for lawns, but especially in Australia where our summers are relentlessly hot and dry. And with the addition of summer water restrictions, our lawns can look a little worse for wear.

But fear not, because there are a few things we can do before summer hits to ensure that our lawns are the very best they can be given the circumstances.

Read: [The do's and don't's of watering your lawn](#)

The best thing you can do is create a deep watering and deep root system - with a deeper root system, the roots that bring your lawn to life are less likely to get dry and die after a few hot summer days.

You can build a deeper root system yourself and you should start working on it a few months before summer starts. Basically all you need to do is water your lawn less often and for much longer each time you do it.

You should reduce your watering frequency by half, and watch your lawn with a close eye, when it starts to look a little bit wilted, then it's time for your lawn to get a big drenching of water.

Remember to water it way more than you would usually.

By taking this approach, when your lawn gets thirsty, its roots grow deeper into the soil in search of water and to keep safe from the heat.

You can also use a wetting agent to encourage your lawn and soil to soak up any water you give it.

While lawns get thirsty in summer, the irony is, they can also tend to do a pretty bad job of water absorption. This is because soils start to dry out in the summer heat, and with that, can become water repellent with water running straight off the soil. It's a strange phenomenon, but luckily wetting agents exist. If you want to keep your lawn lush, then they are your friend.

Lawns should still be mowed regularly throughout the summer, but if you live in a drought-prone area, then the lawn mowing height should be increased. Regular mowing helps to make sure that too much leaf isn't removed in one single mowing session, which can easily kill lawn that is stressed from the summer heat.

What to avoid:

Fertilising should be avoided on hot days because if the fertiliser isn't watered into the lawn thoroughly, the results can be disastrous. If it's a super hot summer day then you'll want to avoid weed sprays, insecticides and fungicides. If you feel like your lawn really needs these things, then speak to a licensed and trained professional first, because you could be doing more harm than good.

## How to take care of a lawn in autumn

By the time autumn rolls around, your lawn will be breathing a big sigh of relief. While Australian summers can be ridiculously hot, they can also come with a lot of heavy rainfall. So by autumn, you may notice things like seed heads growing, discolouration and thinning - these are usually caused by super heavy rainfall.

There are a few ways to fix this and make your lawn look its best. Firstly, give your lawn a dose of nutrients with a good NPK mix fertiliser. Secondly, get yourself a pair of spiked shoes and start aerating your lawn to help loosen the soil up, because when you get heavy rain during the summer, it can make the soil very compact.

Remember also that winter will soon be on its way, so while you're tending to the after-effects of a hot summer, you'll need to prepare for the potentially cold weather ahead to keep your garden and lawn green. Take a look at our tips below.

## How to take care of a lawn in winter

It can be difficult to get a beautiful and thick lawn throughout winter - so what's the secret? Well firstly, it comes down to the lawn variety that you've chosen.

In Australia, we tend to choose grass varieties that are more suited to our climate - which is generally quite warm. These grasses are in high circulation because they tend to thrive as the weather heats up, but in winter, they tend to experience slowed growth and can make your yard look patchy, dull and bare.

So how can you make your lawn look its best during winter? Well, the real work begins a season ahead, in autumn, and the process is quite simple. What's most important is that you're consistent and diligent. By winter you'll reap the rewards.

Here's what you should do:

Prune back any trees or shrubs that create a lot of shade on your lawn. If you don't, then you're likely to see more areas of rot or stunted growth.

Don't water as much, because with the cold air coupled with less sun, you are increasing the chances of your lawn acquiring rot or diseases.

Fertilise your grass a couple of months before winter arrives, and then 8 weeks later, fertilise again. Just make sure you purchase a fertiliser that is specifically for winter as these contain more iron, which is essential for maintaining the health of your lawn.

Kill broadleaf weeds before they take over in winter.

Increase lawn mowing heights. Why should you do this? You'll want to leave enough length in a blade of grass so that your lawn can photosynthesise. This can be harder for lawns to do in winter because there's a marked decrease in daylight hours. Essentially, by making sure there's still a bit of length in your lawn you're increasing the food supply to the grass.

Don't leave lawn clippings on the lawn because they can cause fungal problems if left in a damp environment.

## How to take care of a lawn in spring

When spring is in the air, Australian lawns come out of a dormant phase just as Northern Hemisphere lawns do. This is when lawn care is most important.

After winter it's common to be left with a patchy and dull lawn. The good news is that spring brings ideal growing conditions, meaning with the right care, your lawn will bounce back to its luscious self in no time.

Make sure you give your lawn a good fertiliser because it's the most opportune time to do so. When new growth begins, the grass needs more nutrients, so fertilising at the outset of Spring is vitally important. Fertilisers used in spring should be slow release so that it can reap the benefits all the way into summer.

Read: [How to get your garden ready for spring](#)

Fertiliser will make the lawn greener, thicker and healthier. Fertilise first early in the season and then three more times at two month intervals. A slow release fertiliser will ensure that you don't "burn" the lawn and that it receives nutrients at a measured pace.

A good fertiliser will also help to thicken your lawn up, which will have a knock-on effect of keeping any pesky weeds at bay. Don't water your lawn if it's damp - you can check this by digging a finger into the dirt. If it feels dry, give it a drink.

## Popular grass varieties for Australian backyards

The type of lawn variety you get for your yard should be dictated by the kind of soil you have, the size of your lawn, how much sun it gets and ultimately, your climate.

## Most popular Australian lawn varieties

There are plenty of lawn varieties available in Australia, and the five most popular are:

1. Buffalo grass
2. Zoysia Grass
3. Queensland Blue Couch
4. Couch grass
5. Kikuyu grass

All five of these grasses are best suited to warm seasons, which is generally the type of climate we see in most parts of Australia. However, like we all know, climates across Australia can vary, so if you live in an area prone to drought or in a cooler climate near the mountains, then the grass variety best suited to your home will be different.

## Subtropical lawn varieties

If you live in Northern Queensland or parts of the Northern Territory, then you probably experience humid conditions year round. Lawns in these regions also need to be made up of turf that is drought tolerant.

The best lawns for these conditions include:

Sir Walter Buffalo turf Platinum Zoysia Empire Zoysia Japonica Zoysia Macrantha Empire Zoysia Japonica. Image source: Wikimedia Commons.

### Best lawns for high traffic areas

If you have kids or dogs who regularly run around your yard, you'll want a lawn that can withstand a daily trampling. The most hard-wearing lawn types are:

Zoysia Kikuyu Couch

Blue couch grass. Image source: Wikimedia Commons.

### Drought tolerant lawn varieties

If you live in a hot and dry region of Australia that regularly experiences drought, then you'll need a lawn that thrives in dry and hot conditions.

Plenty of homeowners who live in these climates are turning towards native grasses, which are generally built for these conditions. Some of these varieties include:

Weeping grass Wallaby grass Redgrass

You can also get a variety which is a blend of all three. The combination of all three gives the advantage of high Redgrass growth throughout the warmer months, which helps to protect the other two varieties. When the weather slightly cools, Redgrass becomes dormant, allowing the other two varieties to grow and shine.

Read: How much does a rainwater tank cost?

### Cool climate lawn varieties

If you live in a cooler climate, then it's best to steer clear from warm climate grasses. Some popular cool season grasses include:

Tall Fescue Perennial Ryegrass Bluegrass

Fine Fescue

Bent Grass

A fescue grass variety.

No matter where your home is, before you pick a lawn variety, make sure you do your research. The last thing you want is a variety of lawn that isn't tolerant of its climate. A thriving lawn is made exponentially easier when you pick a variety that is best for where you live.

### What's the best way to encourage lawn growth when a lawn is patchy?

If your lawn is thin and patchy, there are a number of things that you can do to remedy the issue. In Australia, spring is a good time to reseed and fertilise your lawn. But before you do any of this, check to see if your soil is compact - if it is, you'll need to aerate it.

You can easily check by taking a garden fork and pushing it into the grass. If it doesn't go in reasonably easily, then it's probably time to aerate your lawn. When you aerate your lawn, you will allow your seeds to grow.

Simply aerate, scatter seeds, fertilise and add topsoil. For larger areas, you can replace the lawn with a new roll of turf.

### New lawns - what's the best way to go?

When it comes to getting a new lawn, homeowners are often torn between seeding and turfing.

Rolling out a new turf obviously is the most convenient and effective option, while seeding seems like a good option for the budget conscious.

However, things like climates and time can derail progress. Seeding can take months and months to give you a decent looking lawn, with some grass varieties needing to be over-sowed multiple times to achieve the thickness associated with a lush lawn. In warmer climates seeding is often a waste of

time, as extreme heat and torrential summer downpours can simply wash seed away. It's up to you to choose what option is best for you.

## How to control weeds

Weed control is an ongoing lawn care battle and one that is best tackled early and often. A little preventive maintenance can save you from having to take drastic measures later on.

Many Australians are very cautious about using strong herbicides on their lawns, and understandably so. The best way to avoid having to do this is to use a weed wand and target the individual weeds as they come up. If you do this before they have a chance to spread their roots and seeds, you'll keep them under control and avoid those ugly bald and brown spots that are a telltale sign of poor lawn care.

You can also refer to the different lawn varieties above. With the right care, some lawns have the potential to grow very thick, which will limit the amount of weeds that are able to take root in your lawn in the first place.

## How much mowing is too much mowing?

Experts say that mowing is the least understood aspect of lawn care. With the mistaken belief that cutting grass short (and often) will stimulate growth (lawns aren't like hair), homeowners actually achieve the opposite.

Mowing too low "scalps" the lawn and results in a thin lawn, a shallow root system and ultimately leads to the need to replace your turf. Not an ideal situation to be in.

## Watering your lawn

Obviously, watering a lawn is a very important part of lawn care, but with water restrictions being a necessary part of modern Australian life, regularly watering your lawn can quickly become a problem. There are ways to get around this: to go for varieties that don't need as much water or to encourage a deep-rooted system by watering less in the summer.

Another way to water your lawn without wasting water is to install an underground watering system. A sprinkler isn't always the best approach and can be wasteful in a number of ways:

When you water the lawn with a hose or a sprinkler, you tend to overwater one area and underwater another.

Sprinkling the surface of the lawn results in excessive evaporation.

Above ground watering leads to water run-off. All of that run-off is wasted water.

The place where your lawn needs water is beneath the surface. An underground drip irrigation system will keep the soil moist with a minimum of water. An automated system is the best, ensuring that your lawn always gets water when it needs it and is never over or under watered.