

# TURF PLANTING & WATERING GUIDE

**Proper watering is the most important step in establishing healthy turf.** Too much or too little water can prevent roots from developing and lead to long-term problems. Follow the guidelines below to give your grass the best possible start.



## SOD INSTALLATION & WATERING

### Immediately After Installation

Water newly laid sod right away with 2" to 3" of water. This heavy initial watering allows water to soak through the sod and into the existing soil so roots can make proper contact. Water evenly across the entire area, paying close attention to seams, edges, and corners.

### Days 2 and 3

Apply approximately 1" of water per day. A simple way to measure this is by placing a shallow container, such as a tuna or cat food can, in the watering area and marking the 1" level. When the container fills, you have watered enough.

### Why Deep Watering Matters

Roots grow where the water goes. Deep watering encourages roots to grow downward, creating stronger, more drought-tolerant turf. Frequent shallow watering keeps roots near the surface and can lead to weak growth. Grass roots also need oxygen, so soil should be moist, never constantly wet.

### Days 5 through 14

Begin watering every other day (for example, days 5, 7, 9, and 12), maintaining the goal of 1" of water per application. Sod is typically fully rooted within two weeks of installation.

### After Two Weeks

Transition to watering once per week with approximately 1" of water. Skip watering during weeks with heavy rainfall.

### Additional Sod Care

Watering needs will vary based on weather, soil type, and time of year. Sandy soils dry out faster and may require more frequent watering, while clay soils hold moisture longer and require less. Grass along sidewalks, driveways, and buildings often dries faster due to reflected heat and should be monitored closely.

New sod can usually be mowed one week after installation. Avoid mowing when the soil is wet and limit heavy foot traffic for the first two weeks.

## LURVEY PRO TIP | Watering Smarter, Not More



**Water stress from too much or too little water is the #1 cause of poor**

**turf establishment.** Symptoms of overwatering and underwatering often look the same, so always check the soil before watering.



**Deep, infrequent watering encourages roots to grow down**

**into the soil, creating stronger, more drought-tolerant grass.** Shallow, frequent watering keeps roots near the surface and can lead to weak turf and disease.



**Never water on a fixed schedule.** Weather, soil type, sun exposure, and

rainfall should determine how often and how much you water.

## GRASS SEED PLANTING & WATERING

**All grass seed requires consistent moisture and proper temperatures to germinate.** Soil temperatures should be at least 50°F, with air temperatures at or above 55°F. Once a grass seed or young blade dries out, it will not recover.

### Before Watering

After seeding, lightly cover seed with approximately 1/8" of topsoil or compost. This helps protect seed from birds, wind, and drying out in the sun.

### Germination Timeline

- Not all grass seed sprouts at the same time.
  - **Rye** - 4 to 8 days
  - **Fescue** - 7 to 14 days
  - **Bluegrass** - 15 to 21 days

### Watering Before Germination

Until seed germinates, keep the soil surface consistently moist. Light, frequent watering 2 to 3 times per day is usually required. Adjust based on weather, sun exposure, wind, shade, and soil conditions to avoid washing away seed or creating muddy areas. The goal is moist, not soggy, soil.

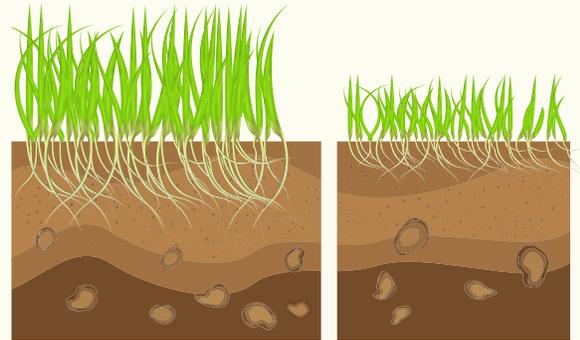
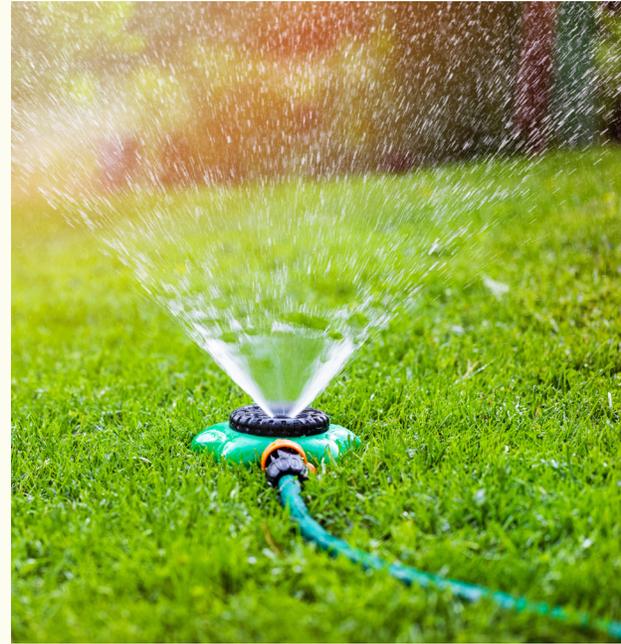
### Watering After Germination

Once seedlings emerge, reduce watering frequency and begin deeper watering. Transition to watering once per day or every other day, applying approximately 1" of water per application.

After two weeks, reduce watering to 2 to 3 times per week. When grass reaches about 4" in height, mow down to 3", removing no more than one-third of the blade height at one time. Grass cut too short develops shallow roots and requires more frequent watering.

### Seasonal Expectations

During periods of extreme heat, grass may naturally slow growth or go dormant. This is normal and does not mean the lawn is dead. Proper watering will help turf recover when temperatures cool.



Grass mowed too short results in shallow roots.

### LURVEY PRO TIP

#### How to Measure 1" of Water

Place a shallow container, such as a tuna or cat food can, in the watering area. When it fills to 1", you've applied the correct amount of water. This simple test helps prevent both overwatering and underwatering.



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