

Zoysiagrass Maintenance Calendar

This calendar of suggested management practices is designed to be a general guide in the care of your zoysiagrass lawn. Location, terrain, soil type, health of lawn, previous lawn care, and other factors affect turf performance. For these reasons, the following management practices and dates should be adjusted to suit your particular home lawn conditions.

March Through May

Mowing: Zoysiagrass performs best when mowed between $\frac{3}{4}$ and 2 inches. Begin mowing as soon as the lawn turns green in spring. Always leave the clippings on the lawn in a practice called 'grass-cycling'. Grass clippings decompose quickly and do not contribute to thatch. If prolonged rain or other factors prevent frequent mowing and clippings begin to clump, they can be collected and used as mulch. For more information on mowing lawns refer to [HGIC 1205, Mowing Lawns](#).

Fertilizing: Apply $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 pound of nitrogen (N) per 1,000 square feet several weeks after the last expected frost of the spring. In most circumstances, do not apply more than 2 pounds of N per 1,000 square feet per year to zoysiagrass lawns. Submit a soil sample to determine nutrient and lime requirements. In the absence of a soil test, use a complete nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium (N-P-K) turf-grade fertilizer with a 4-1-2 ratio, such as 16-4-8. Apply lime if suggested.

To determine the amount of product needed to apply $\frac{1}{2}$ pound of N per 1,000 square feet, divide 50 by the first number in the fertilizer ratio. For example, for a 16-4-8 fertilizer, divide 50 by 16. The result is 3.125 pounds of product per 1,000 square feet: $50/16 = 3.125$ pounds of 16-4-8. For more information on fertilizing lawns refer to [HGIC 1201, Fertilizing Lawns](#).

Irrigation: As a general rule, irrigate when 30 to 50% of the lawn shows sign of wilt. Probe with a screwdriver to ensure the top 4 to 6 inches of soil are moist following irrigation. Do not irrigate again until the lawn shows sign of wilt. In general, zoysiagrass needs a total weekly application of about 1 to $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches of water. Sandy soils often require more frequent watering, for example, $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch of water every third or fourth day. For more information on watering lawns refer to [HGIC 1207, Watering Lawns](#).

Weed Control: Apply preemergence herbicides to control summer annual weeds when forsythia or redbuds are in full bloom. Apply postemergence herbicides in May as needed to control summer annual and perennial broadleaf weeds. Be sure that the product is labeled for use on zoysiagrass. Apply postemergence herbicides when weeds are present, and at least three weeks after the lawn greens up. For more information on weed control refer to [HGIC 2310, Managing Weeds in Warm Season Lawns](#).

Disease Control: Irrigate properly; overirrigation promotes disease. [HGIC 2152, Leaf Diseases of Lawns](#).

Thatch Removal: Vertically mow in May to remove the thatch after the lawn becomes green and is actively growing, but only if the thatch is more than $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick. After dethatching, irrigate with $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch of water. Fertilize with 1 pound of N per 1,000 square feet if the lawn has not already received a spring fertilizer application.

Renovation: Replant large bare areas using sod or sprigs (3 to 5 bushels per 1,000 square feet). Some zoysiagrasses can be seeded at 1 to 2 pounds per 1,000 square feet. Do not cover the seed with more

than 1/8-inch of soil since zoysiagrass seed require light for germination. Do not interseed hybrid zoysiagrass lawns with common zoysiagrass. Use sod or sprigs of the existing hybrid instead.

June Through August

Mowing: Zoysiagrass performs best when mowed between 3/4 and 2 inches.

Fertilizing: Apply 1/2 to 1 pound of N per 1,000 square feet every 4 to 8 weeks.

Irrigation: As a general rule, irrigate when 30 to 50% of the lawn shows sign of wilt. In general, zoysiagrass needs a total weekly application of about 1 to 1 1/4 inches of water.

Insect Control: August is the best time to control white grubs because they are small and close to the soil surface. Mole crickets will begin to hatch in June. Use a soap flush technique to determine if mole crickets are present. For details on the soap flush technique, see [EIIS/TO-1, Mole Cricket Management for the Home Lawn](#).

Weed Control: Apply postemergence herbicides as needed to control summer annual and perennial weeds.

Thatch Removal: Vertically mow to remove the thatch if it is more than 1/2 inch thick. It normally is best to vertically mow in spring whenever possible.

September Through November

Mowing: Continue to mow the lawn between 3/4 and 2 inches. Raise the mowing height by 1/2 inch as winter approaches if the lawn will not be overseeded. Mowing height is usually raised in mid-September in the Piedmont and early October in other areas.

Fertilization: Do not apply nitrogen to zoysiagrass after the end of August. In sandy soils or when soil tests report deficient potassium (K) levels, apply 1 pound of potash (K₂O) using muriate of potash (0-

0-60), potassium sulfate (0-0-50), or Sul-Po-Mag (0-0-22).

Irrigation: Irrigate when 30 to 50% of the lawn shows sign of wilt. Dormant zoysiagrass may need to be watered periodically when windy weather prevails.

Weed Control: Apply preemergence or post-emergence herbicides as needed to control winter annual and perennial broadleaf weeds. Preemergence herbicides do not control existing perennial weeds. Apply postemergence herbicides only when weeds are present. Do not apply herbicides designed to control annual bluegrass if the lawn is to be overseeded with ryegrass.

Insect Control: Continue to monitor for white grubs and control if necessary.

Disease Control: Irrigate properly; overirrigation promotes disease.

December Through February

Mowing: Mow overseeded zoysiagrass at 1 inch before the grass gets taller than 1 1/2 inch. Do not collect the clippings unless they accumulate heavily on the surface. Dormant zoysiagrass that has not been overseeded need not be mowed.

Overseed Fertilization: Do not fertilize zoysiagrass that has not been overseeded. Apply 1/2 pound of N per 1,000 square feet in December and February, for overseeded zoysiagrass.

Irrigation: Dormant zoysiagrass may have to be watered periodically to prevent desiccation, especially when windy. Watering is particularly important for lawns that have been overseeded.

Weed Control: Apply broadleaf herbicides as needed to control winter weeds. Selective herbicides can be applied in November or December to lawns that have not been overseeded to control annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*) and several winter annual broadleaf weeds.

This information is supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service is implied. All recommendations are for South Carolina conditions and may not apply to other areas. Use pesticides only according to the directions on the label. All recommendations for pesticide use are for South Carolina only and were legal at the time of publication, but the status of registration and use patterns are subject to change by action of state and federal regulatory agencies. Follow all directions, precautions and restrictions that are listed.