

FALL LANDSCAPING / LAWN CARE

Cool Season Grasses (ex. Tall Fescue):

Mowing

Mow to 2 ½ to 3 inches in height.

Fertilization

Have your soil tested. Ask your local Extension agent about a free soil test. Then apply the nutrient your lawn needs. If you don't test, apply a complete nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium (N-P-K) turf-grade fertilizer with a 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio (that is, 12-4-8 or 16-4-8). For a basic level of fertility, fertilize with 1 pound of N per 1,000 square feet in mid-September and again in November (about the time the grass is green but not actively growing).

You need to apply 1 pound of N per 1,000 square feet, so how much fertilizer do you need to buy? Divide 100 by the FIRST number on the fertilizer bag. (The first number always represents N content.) For example, if you've got a 10-10-10 fertilizer, divide 100 by 10 and you get 10. That means you need to buy 10 pounds of fertilizer for every 1,000 square feet of lawn.

Weed Control

Apply broadleaf herbicides to control broadleaf weeds like chickweed and henbit, as necessary. Caution: Some herbicides may affect newly seeded turf. Follow label directions. See Pest Control for Professional Turfgrass Managers for more information.

Insect Control

Curative applications applied in early fall may control some white grubs, but efficacy will vary depending on the size of grub. Later instars (larger grubs) are harder to treat than early instars. Identify and make note of problem areas for preventive applications in late spring/early summer.

Aeration

Aerate lawns that are subject to heavy traffic or grown on clay soils. Remove plugs and break them up to put the soil back into the lawn.

Renovation

Overseed thin, bare areas as weather cools (September 1 to October 1). Use a blend of "turf type" tall fescue cultivars at 6 pounds of seed per 1,000 square feet. In the absence of a soil test recommendation, apply a starter-type (high phosphorus) fertilizer. Keep the seedbed moist with light watering several times per day. Do not let the seedlings dry out.

Don't forget to feed your soil

You can raise or lower the pH level with a product such as [Mag-i-cal](#)*

In addition to aerating, products such as [Love Your Soil](#)* can help to soften and loosen hard, compacted soil. A proper year-round maintenance schedule should allow you to aerate less often.

The best time to aerate and overseed is roughly 6 weeks prior to the first frost. In our area, that is estimated to be on/around October 31, 2021. The weekend of September 18th should be the ideal time for your renovations and rehabilitation.

*I have no affiliation with these products or companies, just sharing what I use for my lawn.

Original Article - <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/tall-fescue-lawn-maintenance-calendar>

Warm Season Grasses (ex. Bermuda grass)

Mowing:

Continue to mow the bermudagrass lawn at the normal mowing height until the weather starts to cool in the fall. Once nighttime temperatures fall below 70 °F, slightly raise the mower to allow more leaf surface. This will allow the turf to become acclimated by the time the first frost occurs.

Fertilization:

Do not apply nitrogen at this time. Lime or sulfur may be added if recommended by a recent soil test. Potassium, commonly known as potash, may be applied to enhance winter hardiness if a soil test indicates insufficient levels of potassium. Apply 1 pound of potash (K₂O) per 1,000 square feet 4 to 6 weeks before the first expected frost by using 1.6 pounds of muriate of potash (0-0-60) or 2 pounds of potassium sulfate (0-0-50) per 1000 square feet.

Insect Control: Any insects that were missed during the nymphal stage in the summer will have grown to a size where damage is occurring. Apply an insecticide to reduce the population and reduce further turf damage. This is best done before the first frost.

Disease Control: For disease control, especially large patch, it is extremely important to treat with fungicides during the fall months. With warm temperatures through September and the possibility of excessive rainfall that may occur during that period, diseases can spread rapidly. However, with cooler nights and shorter day lengths, control can be quite difficult because of slow turf recovery during this time. Turf weakened by disease in fall will be slow to recover in the spring; therefore, fungicide applications are needed to control disease before the grass goes dormant. In certain situations where large patch have been prevalent yearly, preventative fungicide applications may be needed starting in early October to stay ahead of the disease.

Weed Control: Many winter annual grassy and broadleaf weeds can be managed by applying a pre-emergent herbicide in September with a second application 8 to 10 weeks later. Follow all label directions on the product for application rate. Granular herbicides must be watered into the soil soon after application. Follow label directions as to post application watering.

Broadleaf weed herbicides can be applied as necessary for control of chickweed, henbit, and other cool-season broadleaf weeds. Bermudagrass is sensitive to certain herbicides, such as 2,4-D, so follow label directions for reducing rates and use with caution. Selective herbicides can also be applied during winter for control of annual bluegrass and other winter annual grassy weeds. Contact the local County Extension office for weed identification and control measures.

Original Article - <https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/bermudagrass-maintenance-calendar/>