

Sod Lawn Installation

Starting over with sod

A new lawn installation is necessary if your existing lawn has a rough grade, is overly weedy, or too old to rejuvenate in a timely manner. A new lawn installation provides a uniform appearance across the entire turf area, which isn't always the case with spot seeding and renovations.

Sod lawn installations are more labor and material intensive up front, so are more expensive to install than seed lawns, generally costing 50-60% more than seeded lawns. However, the time, energy and water required to establish a new seed lawn is greater than that of a sod lawn, making the long-term cost of installation and establishment similar.

Sod lawn installations are good when a limited time frame for establishment is available. Turfgrass types are generally limited in sod lawns, which are generally bluegrass. Sod does not perform well in partially or heavily shaded conditions.

Sod lawn care

Once the new lawn is installed, continuing care is critical to the long-term success of the new lawn. Lawn Lad offers a Lawn Development Program to provide the necessary services to get your new lawn established and a guarantee that the installation is successful.

Installation steps

General steps in a new sod lawn installation include:

- A soil test is recommended prior to the installation, but can be performed at a later date if the time frame before installation is too short. A soil test checks the pH and nutrient levels of the soil so necessary corrections can be made.
- Kill existing grass and weeds with non-selective herbicide in areas to be replaced.
- Create new beds or adjust existing beds prior to new lawn installation.
- After the turf is dead it may need to be removed if the thatch layer is more than 1/2". A sod cutter is used to remove the old lawn down to the soil.
- The lawn area is scarified and rototilled as necessary to prepare the rough grade, removing major high and low areas. All debris is removed from the lawn

and hauled from the site.

- New top soil is added, raked out, rolled if necessary and finish graded for optimal drainage, creating an ideal seed bed.
- Sod is delivered to the site and installed to create the new lawn.

Benefits of a sod lawn installation:

- 1) Bluegrass:** Bluegrass is an ideal cool-season turf grass because of its many beneficial characteristics. Bluegrass generally takes 21 to 36 days to germinate in ideal conditions, plus time to establish. A sod farm requires up to two years to produce the bluegrass sod, which isn't as practical in a seeded lawn. Sod has a higher concentration of bluegrass than a seed lawn installation.
- 2) Instant lawn:** Sod provides an instant carpet of grass providing a finished look without waiting.
- 3) Faster establishment:** Sod must root into the new site, but the grass is already thick, full and lush. After two to three weeks of watering, a sod lawn is practically ready for daily use.
- 4) Fewer weeds:** Sod generally has very few weeds compared to traditional seeded lawn installations.
- 5) Fewer pesticides:** Due to the low weed content, fewer weed killers will be required for the lawn.

Drawbacks to sod lawn installations:

- 1) Watering:** Absolute diligence is required when establishing a new sod lawn. Sod is grass that has been cut from the field, so the grass has no root system. Keeping the lawn moist to the underlying soil is essential to create new roots for the sod. Further, letting sod dry out will cause it to shrink, making the seams separate. Open seams allow areas of grass to dry out quicker, and is an ideal place for weeds to take hold in your new lawn.
- 2) Shade:** Sod lawns, because they are grown in sunny fields, do not transplant well to shaded areas that are not conducive for grass growth anyhow. Sod lawns are most effective in full sun scenarios.



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See the FAQs regarding sod lawn lawn installations at www.lawnlad.com.

