

## SUMMER WATERING TIPS FOR YOUR LAWN

We've touched on how and when to water your lawn in other blogs this summer, however with the current temperatures we felt inclined to dedicate an entire article to the Daleys Turf team's summer watering tips.

75-85% of the weight of a healthy grass plant is water, so you can already tell how important it is to your lawn. Water is essential to the lawn plant's ability to manufacture food, form tissue, absorb nutrients, germinate and cool. Being able to cool is imperative, for without it the plants become susceptible to wilting, desiccation and even death.

Since your lawn loses most of its water during times of high temperatures, high light, low relative humidity and lots of wind then summer in Queensland is an important time to make sure that the water levels to the plants are maintained.

### How Much Water Does a Lawn Need?

Firstly you need to know whether or not the variety of lawn you have is drought tolerant. You should treat all lawns that are under 12 months old as not being drought tolerant and pay particular attention to their watering during the warmer months.

The most drought tolerant varieties are:

1. Couch
2. Soft Leaf Buffalo (such as 'Sir Walter')
3. Queensland Blue
4. Zoysia

The least drought tolerant varieties are:

1. Kikuyu
2. Broad Leaf Carpet Grass
3. Fescue

On average a lawn will need one inch or 2.5cms of water per week. You can measure this by placing an empty can in the middle of the lawn with a line marked at that level. When the line has been reached and as long as the entire lawn has received around the same amount as that area, then the lawn has been watered enough.





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## How Do I Know When to Water?

You need to water when the lawn plants change from green to a purplish-bluish colour, lighten or brown or when the lawn plants do not spring back into place when you have walked on them. Watering is also needed when the local rainfall has been insufficient in providing the required weekly amount of water.

## How Do I Water My Lawn?

Regardless of whether you use a handheld hose or an irrigation system the basics are the same.

1. Water between 5am - 10am only.
2. Stick with deep and infrequent watering to encourage a deeper, healthy root system and reduce the risk of weed infestation.
3. Only water the lawn - driveways and paved areas just don't need it and neither does your water bill.
4. Do not over-water as this can lead to excessive blade growth, fungal disease, an increase in the need to mow more frequently and the risk of excessive runoff of pesticides and fertilisers into the storm water system.
5. Do not under-water or the lawn plants may go dormant, stopping their ability to grow and repair.

If you do use an irrigation system to water your lawn, make sure that the sprinkler heads are low to the ground. A higher mist will easily be spread too far on the wind. Check that the system is providing a uniform distribution over the area of the lawn and that overlap is minimised. You can use numerous empty cans spaced out over the lawn, water your lawn and then check how much water each has collected. You can also use this method to determine if your system is set up to be turned for the correct amount of time for the required watering. Make sure you turn an automatic timer off if your local area has received adequate rainfall.

If you're struggling with a drought intolerant lawn in our Queensland summer, then it may just be time to have a drought tolerant variety installed.



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