

## WATERING

### Initial Watering

Initial watering of your new lawn is critical to its success. After laying, completely saturate your entire lawn area until it is squelching under your feet, once you have achieved this, just constant top ups are required to keep your lawn thriving. This will depend on weather conditions as to how often a sprinkling is required, on hot days maybe 1-2 times per day over the entire lawn area laid or in cooler months just once a day.



#### Tips:

- As soon as you have your new lawn down you need to water it.
- If you don't, your lawn will dry out and start turning brown.
- If you are doing a large area don't wait until it is all finished, start watering once you have a few metres down.
- The first hour in the sun is critical.
- Water methodically, thoroughly soak every square metre before moving onto the next section.
- The surface soil must be kept moist until the roots of the turf have established.

### How Much Water to Use

The amount of water your lawn will need will depend on local conditions. You can leave a towel out on the lawn for the first few days, when the towel dries out, your lawn will immediately need more water, this is very critical for the first few days. Also move the towel around just so you don't do any damage to the lawn.

#### Tips:

- Deep and regular watering is preferred in the first six months.
- If using limited water resources, (like on tank water) a great idea is to top dress your lawn the same day it is laid with river sand about 1 cubic metre per 100 square metres, this retains about extra 50% moisture in your newly laid lawn, most times it only needs watering every second day rather than every day.
- Use sprinklers that suit your soil, that is on very sandy soil try using a soaker hose which enables the lawn to absorb the moisture before it leaches away.
- On heavy soils, always use a tap timer which prevents runoff by forgetting to turn off the tap.



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## Watering Established Lawns

The establishment period will differ as to the time of year the lawn is laid, generally in summer 3-4 weeks and in winter maybe 4-6 weeks.

Continue watering your new lawn on a regular basis, 4-10 days apart depending on soil types, slopes with run off and weather conditions. Regular watering will encourage the lawn to continue to grow strong and healthy roots.

However, once the root system has become somewhat established 4-6 months old, you will need to water on a needed basis which is easily done by visual inspection on the leaves, you will notice a slight wilting of the leaf and they will lose colour to a dull green in patches, this is the way the plant survives dry conditions. The leaf will close together to conserve moisture, which reduces the amount of surface area open to the elements.

On the Sunshine Coast our weather allows us to forget about watering lawns for at least 6-7 months of the year as we are in the path of regular showers and rain periods.

## Is Your Lawn Established?

To test, try to lift a corner of the turf, if it holds well it is established, if it comes away in your hand it needs more time. This is also the way to determine whether the lawn is established enough to be mown. This can take between 1-8 weeks depending on location and the time of year.

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## Until Your Lawn is Established

It is important that your lawn receives regular watering and is prevented from drying out for the first 6 weeks or at least until it has been mown twice by which time it should be well established.

Less frequent deeper soakings will encourage good strong deep roots.

If your lawn becomes slightly patchy 4-6 weeks after installation it is usually due to extreme weather or lack of correct watering during early establishment. There is not a lot you can do if this occurs, except give it some time and it will return to normal.

### Tips:

- Deep and infrequent watering of an established lawn promotes a healthy root system.
- Watering in mornings or late afternoon is best.
- Watering after mowing is preferred.
- Watch out for irrigation systems which may have a dry spot in corners.
- In sandy soils water crystals are a great idea.
- Shady areas require less water.

## Established Lawns

Once your lawn is established watering can be cut right back. Sir Walter lawns in most parts of Australia hardly need any regular watering to keep alive once established. Except in really sandy locations such as Western Australia where weekly watering will be required. Always check and comply with any local water restrictions.

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