

ZOYSIAGRASS CALENDAR

This calendar of suggested management practices is designed to assist you in the seasonal care of your lawn. Location, terrain, soil type and condition, age of the lawn, previous lawn care, and other factors all affect turf performance. For these reasons, the following management practices and dates should be adjusted to suit your particular home lawn conditions.

MARCH – MAY

MOWING: Mow the lawn when it first turns green in the spring using a reel mower set at 3/4 to 1 inch or a rotary mower set as low as possible without scalping the lawn. Mow before the grass grows taller than 1 1/2 to 2 inches. Recycle nutrients by not collecting clippings unless they are unsightly or in clumps.

FERTILIZATION: Apply 1/2 pound of nitrogen per thousand square feet three weeks after the grass turns green. In absence of a soil test, use a complete (N-P-K) turf-grade fertilizer with a 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio (for example, 12-4-8 or 16-4-8). Submit a soil sample to determine nutrient requirements, if you haven't already. (Contact your county Agricultural Extension agent for details.) Apply lime if suggested.

To determine the amount of product required to apply 1/2 pound of nitrogen per thousand square feet, divide 50 by the first number in the fertilizer ratio. For example, for a 5-5-15 fertilizer, divide 50 by 5. The result is 10 pounds of product per thousand square feet.

IRRIGATION: Water to a soil depth of 4 to 6 inches. Probe with a screwdriver to determine moisture depth. Zoysiagrass needs a weekly application of 1 to 1 1/4 inches of water. On sandy soils, it requires more frequent watering, for example, 1/2 inch of water every third day. It is often necessary to irrigate an area for three to five hours to apply 1 inch of water. (It takes 620 gallons of water to apply 1 inch of water per thousand square feet.) Because clay soils accept water slowly, irrigate these areas until runoff occurs; wait one-half hour until the water has been absorbed, and then continue irrigating until the desired depth or amount is obtained. A dark, bluish gray color, footprinting, and wilted, folded, or curled leaves indicate that it is time to water. Proper irrigation may prevent or reduce pest problems and environmental stress later in the summer.

WEED CONTROL: Apply preemergence herbicides to control crabgrass, goosegrass, and foxtail by the time the dogwoods are in full bloom. Apply postemergence herbicides in May as needed to control summer annual and perennial broadleaf weeds such as knotweed, spurge, and lespedeza. Products containing two or three broadleaf herbicides are usually more effective in controlling several different broadleaf weeds in a lawn. Be sure the product is labeled for use on zoysiagrass. Apply only if weeds are present and wait until three weeks after the grass turns green. (See Agricultural Extension Service publication AG-408, Pest Control Recommendations for Turfgrass Managers.)

INSECT CONTROL: Check for white grubs and control them if necessary. (See White Grubs in Turf, ENT/ORT-67, AG-366).

THATCH REMOVAL: Vertically mow after the grass turns green to remove thatch if it is more than 1/2 inch thick. Do not attempt to remove too much thatch at one time because zoysiagrass has a slow recovery rate. It may take several years to get thatch under control.

RENOVATION: Replant large bare areas using sod or plugs planted on 6- or 12-inch centers. (See Carolina Lawns, AG-69.) Applying a preemergence herbicide that does not interfere with root growth after plugging helps prevent weed encroachment.

JUNE – AUGUST

MOWING: Follow the March-May mowing guidelines

FERTILIZATION: Apply 1/2 pound of nitrogen per thousand square feet in late June or early July and repeat in mid-August using March-May fertilizer guidelines.

IRRIGATION: Follow the March-May irrigation guidelines.

WEED CONTROL: Apply postemergence herbicides as needed to control summer annual and perennial broadleaf weeds such as knotweed, spurge, and lespedeza. Do not apply postemergence herbicides unless weeds are present, grass is actively growing, and the lawn is not suffering from drought stress. Crabgrass, goosegrass, dallisgrass, nutsedge, annual sedges, and sandbur can be controlled with postemergence grass control herbicides. Two or three applications 7 to 10 days apart are required for effective control. Zoysiagrasses are sensitive to these compounds so select the application carefully. (See Agricultural Extension Service publication Pest Control for Professional Turfgrass Managers, AG-408.)

INSECT CONTROL: Follow the March-May insect control guidelines. August is the best time to control grubs because they are small and close to the soil surface.

THATCH REMOVAL: Vertically mow in June using the March-May thatch removal guidelines.

SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER

MOWING: Mow the lawn using the March-May guidelines.

FERTILIZATION: Fertilize with 1 pound of potash (K₂O) using 1.6 pounds of muriate of potash (0-0-60), 2 pounds of potassium sulfate (0-0-50), or 5 pounds of sul-po-mag (0-0-22) per thousand square feet. To determine the amount of product required to apply 1 pound of potash per thousand feet, divide 100 by the third number in the fertilizer ratio. For example, for a 6-6-12 fertilizer, divide 100 by 12. The result is 8.3 pounds of product per thousand square feet: $100/12 = 8.3$

IRRIGATION: Follow the March-May irrigation guidelines. Dormant zoysiagrass may still need to be watered periodically when warm, windy weather prevails.

WEED CONTROL: Apply preemergence or postemergence herbicides as needed to control winter annual and perennial broadleaf weeds such as chickweed and hen bit. Preemergence herbicides will not control existing perennial weeds. Apply postemergence herbicides only when weeds are present. (See Agricultural Extension Service publication Pest Control for Professional Turfgrass Managers, AG-408.)

INSECT CONTROL: Follow the March-May insect control guidelines.

DECEMBER - FEBRUARY

MOWING: Follow the March-May mowing guidelines. Zoysiagrass does not need to be mowed when dormant.

FERTILIZATION: Do not fertilize.

IRRIGATION: Dormant zoysiagrass may need to be irrigated periodically to prevent desiccation especially when warm, windy weather prevails.

WEED CONTROL: Apply broadleaf herbicides as necessary to control chickweed, henbit, and hop clover. Selective herbicides can be applied in November or December to control annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*) and several annual broadleaf weeds. Apply postemergence herbicides only when weeds are present. (See Agricultural Extension Service publication Pest Control for Professional Turfgrass Managers, AG-408.)

DISCLAIMER: Recommendations for the use of agricultural chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use agricultural chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact your county Cooperative Extension Service agent.

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