

# Soil Preparation

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There is no better time to enhance a lawn's ultimate beauty and success than by improving the soil before any planting takes place.

## **Quick Fact: Why Is Good Soil Important?**

For optimum growth, turfgrass needs just four things (in the proper balance) to grow...sunlight, air, water and nutrients. Reduce any of these, or provide too much of any one, and the grass may die or simply suffer. In the right proportions, the grass will flourish, providing not only beauty to the landscape, but also a clean and safe place to play and many benefits to the environment.

## **Quick Fact: What Is The Best Soil For Turfgrass?**

Grass obtains three of these four essential factors (air, water and nutrients) from the soil, but many soils are less than ideal for growing grass. Some soils contain too much clay and may be very compacted... great for roads, bad for grass, because air and water aren't available to the roots and the roots can't grow. Other soils may have too much sand... beautiful on a beach, but difficult to grow grass because water and nutrients won't stay in the root zone long enough for the plant to use. Another frequently observed problem with many soils is that its pH (the degree of acidity or alkalinity) is too high or too low for optimum grass growth.

Loams, sandy loams and loamy sands, with a pH of 6.0 to 7.0 are the very best soils for producing a beautiful, high-use, low-maintenance lawn. Unfortunately, this ideal soil mixture is seldom found on any property after construction.

## **Quick Fact: How Deep Should the Soil Be For Turfgrass?**

The absolute minimum quality soil depth for a care-free lawn is 10 cm (4 inches); however, for deeper root penetration and the benefits that brings, the accepted standard is 15 cm (6 inches).

## **Quick Fact: Can Soils Be Improved?**

Practically without exception, not only can most soils be improved, they usually need to be improved to get the maximum results with only a minimum of other on-going effort.

The knowledge of what's necessary, the amount and availability of materials and the immediate costs of time and money are the factors that typically deter people from taking the steps necessary to improving the soil. While some people do not fully understand the importance of good soils for grass, many also believe they can save time and money by ignoring the need to improve their lawn's soil.

The fact is that failing to improve the soil before planting is only inviting a much greater and continual investment of both time and money, that will never return its value as fully as preparing the soil properly before planting any grass.

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