

# TURF & STEM



## COOL SEASON GRASS RENOVATION GUIDE

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A DIY Guide for Homeowners



TURF & STEM ON YOUTUBE

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## SAMPLE RENOVATION TIMELINE

	July				August				September				October			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
PLANNING		Review products for pre-emergent restrictions Purchase equipment Purchase chemicals	Test irrigation Mower maintenance Check weather forecasts	Order seed												
Killing the Grass and Weeds					First application of grass killer		Second application of grass killer		Seed-safe weed control						Weed Control	
Removing the Debris								Rake / Dethatch Aerate Level or fix any low spots								
Seeding									Apply Seed		Spot Seed					
Watering			Regular Watering		Regular Watering				Watering scheduled for 3 to 4 times per day			Reduced Watering, 2 to 3 times per day		Water as needed		
Fertilizing									Starter Fertilizer						High Nitrogen	
Mowing			No Mowing			No Mowing	Low Mowing			No Mowing			First Mowing	Regular Mowing		Low Mowing

This plan is intended as a general guide for areas that have “cool season” grasses. Adjust accordingly depending on your specific location and weather.

All recommended products (with active ingredients) are available online or at major retailers.

Please make sure to read and follow all instructions. Do not exceed the annual active ingredient quantity per acre as listed on the label.

Always wear appropriate personal protective equipment. This includes eye, and skin coverings and respiratory masks. Be cautious of children and pets.

Please be aware of the environment. Know the impact before you spray or spread herbicides and insecticides.

If you have any questions, reach out to us on social media, or go to our website [www.TurfandStem.com](http://www.TurfandStem.com).

## DIY LAWN RENOVATION GUIDE

### INTRODUCTION

A lawn renovation is a simple, easy to do project that anyone can accomplish. If you are willing to do a little heavy lifting and dedicate some time, you won't need to hire a company, buy a guide or watch a video with 17 steps. By following these basic concepts, you will have a new, fantastic looking lawn that improves your homes curb appeal and makes you the envy of the neighborhood.

Mother Nature has been growing grass long before we humans ever started keeping lawns. Take a look around, there's grass in the cracks of your driveway, in your flower beds, between the pavement and sewer grates, and sometimes in gutters. There is grass everywhere in this world, and 99.99% of it was grown without human assistance. Nature does not require top dressing, aeration or a compost spreader. With your help and hard work, grass can grow anywhere you want it to.

There is no shortage of salesmen and companies trying to sell you products by getting you to use their "guide". You don't need to buy special tools, subscribe to services, purchase specific chemicals, order 10 tons of dirt or spend weeks of your time laboring over every detail. Remember, you don't need a sales pitch to grow grass, you need sun, water and the seed touching soil to grow grass. That's it.

Don't worry, don't stress. We're talking about grass here. This should be an enjoyable process with a few sore muscles thrown in. As long as you hit the three main points, timing, soil contact and water, you can grow grass! Don't let the flood of information online, on YouTube, Facebook and forums overwhelm you. This is your chance to learn about growing grass and to get to know your property better.

Always remember, to grow grass all you need is the three main ingredients of the recipe: sun, soil and water.

This guide is for homeowners that want "cool-season" grasses in their lawns. Generally, a cool-season grass can be grown in the upper two-thirds of the United States such as New England, Upper Midwest, Northern California, High Plains, Pacific Northwest and the central tier states from the Atlantic Coast west through Kansas.

Tall Fescue, ryegrass and Kentucky bluegrass are the most popular types of "cool-season" grasses and are named such because they can't grow in the year-round heat and humidity of Florida, Arizona, Texas and Southern California. Similarly, "warm-season" grasses like St. Augustine and Bermuda grass can only thrive in warm climates and would easily die-off in the cooler months of New England's spring, fall and winter.

### PLANNING AND TIMING

Planning ahead in lawn care is going to be a constant endeavor. Whenever you do anything to the lawn, you must think about what it will do in the short term and what your plans are next month, next season and even next year. Make sure your products are available, calculate how long it will be to kill the grass, prepare everything, and then put the seed down. Also take into consideration any unforeseen issues like family events, overtime at work or your vacation schedule that might cause a bump in the road.

You will want to plan out the process to avoid two things, excessive heat and excessive cold.

Too much heat will make it difficult to water and keep the seed moist, and it will kill off any newly grown grass. This is why it's so difficult, but not impossible, to renovate a lawn in the spring. Sure, you might be able to grow the grass while being aided by the slew of spring showers, but once those July and August temperatures come by, your seedlings with their small, underdeveloped

roots are going to get fried under the heat of the summer sun.

If it gets too cold your seedlings will turn into green icicles. You have to put your seed down and have the grass become established before any real frost or snow hits your yard. It's necessary to give the grass time to grow, develop roots, and grow big enough to be able to survive the winter.

So there's a sweet spot. You'll want to put the seed down when the temperature isn't expected to go into the 80's for the high and doesn't go into the 30's for the low. You'll need at least 45 days of this range, so think somewhere around the first couple of weeks of September to put your seed down. You may want to search for historical temperatures for your area to better plan. When you plant your seed is usually the point that you plan your renovation around.

From the day you plan on putting the seed down, you will calculate all major steps from that point, including when you will be killing and removing the grass, how long your irrigation period will be, when you can expect your first mowing and even when to order supplies.

For example, if you're going to put down seed the first week of September, that means your first physical action in the lawn needs to be started sometime in mid to late August...getting rid of the old grass.

Lawn renovations are a series of steps. You can't skip ahead, and you can't take a shortcut. It's important to map out your strategy in the early summer and have a calendar of benchmarks that you set for yourself to keep on track.

Let's try to plan for the first part of our renovation with an example. You're going to want to think a few steps ahead and start from when you expect to put the seed down, and then work backwards. For most homeowners with cool season grasses, you will want to get the seed down during the first two weeks of September. This is when the

"sweet spot" mentioned before for temperatures usually start for the season.

In this example the target date for seeding will be September 5. You will need to calculate the amount of time it will take for the grass killer to work, the wait before you can seed after using any chemicals including grass killer, the amount of time to physically remove the old grass and prepare the lawn for seed, and some extra time in case something unexpected comes up.

Most grass killers suggest waiting between 3 and 10 days before planting seed. For this exercise, we will plan on doing two applications of grass killer and will count on the total time as 14 days between the first application and when it is safe to spread the seed. Additionally, we will build in 3 days to scalp, rake and prepare the soil.

When we add the time for preparation of the soil and the period for the grass killer to work and safely replant seed, it will be a combined 17 days. That brings us back to August 19 as the first day to apply grass killer. The second application of grass killer would be 1 week afterwards on August 26. And then right around September 3 would be the start of cutting and preparing the lawn for seed.

This gives us enough time to plan for bad weather and unexpected life events, and to make sure the chemicals have worked their way through the grass. Working further back, you need to have most of your supplies ready by August 19, including your herbicide, sprayer, grass seed and gardening equipment. Your research and all decisions on what to purchase will need to start in July.

But believe it or not, your decision to renovate will have to be made in the spring. The reason is what you put down for chemicals and weed control in the early months of the year can affect what you can do later on. Many products that are combined with fertilizer contain herbicides that can last in your lawn anywhere from 30 to 120 days. These herbicides not only prevent weeds

and crabgrass from growing, but they also prevent new grass from germinating. Planning for your renovation actually starts in the spring by monitoring what products you're using so they don't adversely affect your seeding in the fall. If you want to seed in September, you can't use any products that have lasting herbicides to the time you plan to seed. The label or instructions will tell you how long until you can plant new grass after using the product.

Next, you will want to figure out how large the area you plan to renovate is. This is necessary to determine how many pounds of seed you will need and how much chemical you will apply. The standard in the lawn industry is to measure the area in square feet and you can use two methods to determine the square footage of your yard.

The easiest is to use an online mapping program like Google Earth or Google Maps. There are also similar applications by other companies that will work, as long as it allows you to measure the perimeter of your lawn and calculate the area. Although using online mapping tools isn't the most accurate, it will be close enough to provide you with information to put down the appropriate products.

Another method is to physically walk your property and use either a measuring wheel or a long tape measure. If your yard is shaped as a square or a rectangle, you just need to multiply length times the width to determine square footage. If it is a more complex shape, you may have to split your yard into several rectangles or squares, determine the area for each one and then add the total together. This will give you the total square footage for your planned renovation.

## STEP 1: KILLING THE GRASS

The cheapest, easiest and most effective method to killing off all existing grass and weeds is using products with glyphosate. Yes, glyphosate has been in the news recently as the source of several lawsuits being the main ingredient in products linked to cancer and cancer related health

problems. It is classified as a "herbicide", meaning it's used to kill plants, so by its nature it won't be good for the environment. If you choose this method, make sure to wear your personal protective equipment (long pants and long sleeve shirts, gloves, respirator, etc.) and more importantly use common sense.

The most famous product that has glyphosate in it is Round-Up, but don't reach for that top-shelf bottle just yet. Glyphosate is glyphosate. You can save a lot of money and get the same results by using a generic brand. Many big box stores have their own generic formula. Walmart, Lowe's Home Depot, or Tractor Supply all have their own variations, just look for a bottle that says "Weed and Grass Killer" and then by reading the fine print, get a product that contains 41% glyphosate (usually the "super" concentrate) or 18% glyphosate (just the regular concentrate).



*Make sure to read the complete label and ingredients for any product that you use*

Do not, under any circumstance, use any product on your lawn that has "ground clear", "extreme", "360", "brush" or "extended" on its label. You want regular glyphosate. Anything more is meant for yearlong weed killer and will prevent anything it touches from growing for at least a full year.

Also, don't use any "natural" home solution with vinegar or salt, these will pollute the soil making it impossible for anything to grow where you spray or use the solution for weeks.

If you don't want to use any glyphosate, you do have other options. The first is another product by Spectracide. Instead of glyphosate it uses diquat dibromide. Although a different chemical, you still have to use the same precautions as glyphosate.

The other option is an organic solution that uses AXXE (ammonium nonanoate) as its primary active ingredient. The bright spot about AXXE products, such as the BioSafe brand, is it's a lot safer for the environment and humans. It also works a lot quicker; your grass will become crispy like fried chicken in a matter of hours if applied on a summer day. And because it does not attack the roots, but the foliage, you can reseed a lot sooner. The downside is it is extremely expensive when compared to traditional chemicals. If you plan on doing more than a couple thousand square feet, it is probably going to be cost prohibitive. Also, even though it acts fast, it only attacks the leaves of the plant. This means it doesn't kill the roots making the turf vulnerable to missed spots. If you are looking for as close to 100% kill-off as possible, this isn't the best option. Using AXXE means several applications will be needed over a period of two or three weeks.

Once you select the method of killing your lawn, you will want to thoroughly read the instructions on the bottle. Make sure to follow all manufacturer recommendations and precautions. Generally, you will not want to mow several days before and after the application of any product.

In order to apply the product, I recommend a handheld or backpack pump sprayer. This allows you to control exactly where you apply the chemical to avoid any accidental overspray on the neighbor's lawn or any delicate plants. Hose end sprayers don't provide accurate enough measurements or accuracy. You can also purchase a "marking dye" which can be added to your sprayer that colors areas you have applied the product to.



*7 days after the initial application of glyphosate. Wild violet and clumping fescue are the last to die off.*

Two applications of your grass killer 5 - 7 days apart is recommended. This will allow the product to start working and expose any areas that you may have missed, which will still be green. One application is possible, but be warned that you will have grass and weeds remaining.

## STEP 2: REMOVING THE DEBRIS

You've killed your lawn and waited the amount of time the grass killer says on the label. Now it is time to prepare the soil. Get your lawn mower and mow as low as you can while using the bagging setting. The goal is to scalp your yard, which means to cut the grass as low as possible to the ground. It's important during this step to make sure your lawn mower is on the bagging setting, and not mulching. The mulch setting will return the clippings to the ground making it more difficult to achieve seed to soil contact in the next step. You may have to make several passes with the lawn mower, lowering the height adjustment after each pass until you reach the lowest setting.

After that, you will want to get a good metal rake and give your entire yard a good once over, loosening up anything the lawn mower didn't grab. Rake into piles and bag the remaining debris up as well. The less grass and weeds and more exposed dirt you have the better. The idea is for the seed to contact the ground. This is where your time investment and hard work will pay off later.

If you have the time and resources, renting an aerator and power rake, or dethatcher, will save you time and some sore muscles.

An aerator is a gas-powered machine that uses hollow cylinders to puncture the ground and pull-out plugs, or cores, of dirt. This creates thousands of small holes between 1 and 3 inches deep which helps to loosen the soil, allow moisture and nutrients to penetrate further into the ground and provide a protected bed for seed to grow out of. Most people leave the plugs on the lawn to decompose.

A dethatcher is another type of gas-powered machine that helps to remove thatch, debris and dead grass from the lawn. It uses metal blades, or tines, to spin across the lawn and pull up the dead organic material. This is especially helpful when trying to remove dead grass so the seed has a better chance for contact with the soil.

The end result isn't going to be completely bare dirt. Old grass will actually help to keep the seed from moving around and retain moisture during watering. It also offers protection from birds and the heat of the sun. Don't worry if it's not perfect, the grass seed will work itself down to the ground, and after it sprouts, it will shoot back up past the remaining old, dead grass.



*Ground after scalping, raking and dethatching. Prepared for seeding.*

For most people, this is the most labor-intensive step. Now is also the time to fill in any divots,

smooth any bumps and even out any areas in your yard.

### STEP 3: SPREADING THE SEED

Now the easy part. You want to spread the seed evenly over the lawn. You'll want to use a spreader, either broadcast or drop. Your seed will also come with instructions on the bag as to what number setting to use. Whatever that setting is, lower it by a few. This will make less seed come out. It's better to make more passes with less seed coming out than fewer passes with a volcano of seed erupting from your spreader. This is going to help you regulate how you spread the seed, and to focus on areas that may need a little more and skip over areas that got enough already. For the edges, take a few handfuls and lightly sprinkle alongside each section as you walk.

No, you really can't put too much seed down. You just want a nice, even coating across your entire lawn. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how many pounds to put down per thousand square feet. But don't use it all up! Save some to use in a few weeks to reseed any areas that might not have come in.

After you spread the seed, take the back of a rake and give the area a light raking. This helps the seed work down to contact the soil. Although not necessary, a thin coating of peat moss or good quality compost can help the seed.

Picking the right seed is not only a matter of personal taste and preference for aesthetics, but it also depends on the conditions of your lawn and landscape, your ability to irrigate and your time commitment. There are many helpful resources and guides already available that can point you in the right direction as to what seed to use in your lawn. However, the two tips that I suggest are that you choose a grass type that will be reasonably easy to maintain because you never know what life has in store for you in the future, and that the seed is always easily available for any overseeding and patching that you need to do in upcoming seasons.

Seed is always calculated by pounds per square feet. Since you have already measured your lawn, read the label to determine how much seed you will need for proper coverage. The label should indicate how much you will need for a renovation. Make sure to look for the higher amount and not confuse it with the lower “overseed” number. Overseed is when you add grass seed to an existing lawn to help thicken it, which is why it doesn’t require as much seed as a renovation. But remember, it never hurts to overcalculate a little.

#### STEP 4: WATERING

This is the most important, and difficult step. If you remember nothing else, remember this: If it dries, it dies.

You must keep the seeds damp 24/7 for at least the first 30 days after putting it down. Once you put the seed down, if it dries, it dies. Your goal is to keep the grass seed moist, or damp. The seed doesn’t need to be soaking wet at all times, but it must have moisture.

This is one of the reasons the timing step is so critical. If temperatures reach into the 90’s, you’re going to be watering constantly to fight evaporation and heat. Normal temperatures in the 70’s should allow you to water 3 to 4 times throughout the day to maintain enough moisture in the seeds.

Before you put your seed down, you need to develop and test a watering plan. If you already have in-ground irrigation, now is the time to make sure all your sprinkler heads function, you know how to set your controls and you have appropriate coverage. Those that will be relying on traditional above ground sprinklers have a little more work to do.

There are many factors in developing an above ground watering plan for your new seed. The first is evaluating the size, shape and topography of your property. You will need to have an idea of how many sprinklers to have and what coverage is possible for your square footage.



You then need to evaluate your environment for anything that might affect normal watering patterns or schedules. Evaluate what objects are in the area that shouldn’t get wet, like decking or grills, and determine how you will avoid them. Also consider how much direct sun or shade the area you plan to seed gets throughout the day. Areas with more sun will require more water.

Finally, decide on what type of equipment you need. How many sprinklers will you need and what type? Will they be impact or spray? How do you plan on watering during the day while you are at work? What is the best timer for a faucet? Each yard is different which means each solution will be unique. If you’re away from home long hours invest in a sprinkler timer. If you can’t move the sprinkler, pick up a garden hose splitter for the faucet and buy two sets of hoses.

Watering new seed is different from watering an established lawn. You always hear about deep, infrequent watering schedules for established grass to help the roots grow down. With new seed, it’s just the opposite. There are no roots. All the action is right at the surface so if you’re watering deeply, you’re wasting your money.

There is no correct number of times you have to run your sprinklers every day because each lawn is unique and changes based on the weather. Your goal is to keep it moist. Remember, if it dries, it dies.



However, you should expect to water your newly planted seed at least 4 times each day for the first 30 days, and 2 to 3 times for several weeks afterwards. Expect to water in the morning, the early afternoon, mid-afternoon and early evening.

If you notice it's unusually hot, add an extra round for watering that day. If there's rain in the forecast or cooler temperatures, you might be able to pull it back to three times. Your watering plan will change with the weather, be prepared to adapt as necessary.

### STEP 5: FEEDING THE NEW GRASS

The new seedlings will need energy and nourishment to help get established. After you spread the seed, it's always a good idea to add some fertilizer to assist in the growing process. You can use any fertilizer labeled as "starter", or any available low nitrogen formula. Before you put any fertilizer down, there are two things to check before letting it hit the grass.

The first is to make sure that anything you put down in the next sixty days doesn't have any ingredients that are used to control weeds. This is commonly referred to as "weed n' feed" or "all in one". Avoid anything that advertises that it kills or prevents clover, crabgrass or dandelion growth. These types of fertilizers contain chemicals, or herbicides, that will kill the young grass and prevent new growth.

The second is to understand what fertilizer you are using. As mentioned before, you want to use a low nitrogen fertilizer, generally something around or under twenty percent nitrogen. For this, you will need to know how to read a fertilizer label.

Fertilizers are required to provide consumers with the N-P-K analysis, which details how much nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium is contained in the product. They will generally appear on the outside of the bag and look similar to ratios like 32-0-4, 27-0-2 or 25-24-4. For growing grass, the first two numbers are the most important.

The percentage of nitrogen shouldn't be too high. Unless you purchase a starter fertilizer, try not to get anything with an N value over 20. Nitrogen helps to encourage above ground growth, but too much can damage the young grass. The next number to focus on is P, or phosphorus, which helps to encourage below ground growth and develop the root system. You will often only find high phosphorus in starter fertilizer since most states have banned the use of phosphorus in turf fertilizers unless it is promoted for establishing new growth.

Read the manufacturer's instructions and follow all directions. Spread the fertilizer the same day that you put the seed down.

### STEP 6: WATCHING GRASS GROW

Congratulations, you have put in hours of work, sweat and your lawn looks like a complete disaster. Your neighbors will start to look at you weird, and your spouse may begin contemplating a divorce.

If you've followed the steps and made sure your seed had the basics of sun, soil and water, it's just a matter of time before you see your hard work pay off. Different varieties of seed and environmental factors, like temperature, can cause seed to germinate at different times. In 7 to 10 days, you should start to see small blades starting to sprout.

You will not see instant results. Patience is key. Don't give up. Continue with your watering schedule. Once you start to see a few sprouts, the growth will continue exponentially.

During the growth period, try to limit activities on the seeded areas. Sure, you can walk on it lightly, but try to avoid heavy footsteps, wheelbarrows, bicycles, and other traffic in the area. New grass is resilient, but it does have its limitations.



*Newly germinated grass among old debris.*

## STEP 7: MOWING AND MAINTAINING

You now have something that is starting to resemble a lawn. There isn't much to do until your grass reaches the two-inch mark, which should happen right around thirty days. It will still be thin, with patches missing and dead grass still visible, but this is part of the growth process.

It's time for your first mow. Cutting the grass frequently during this growing period will help to encourage lateral growth, making it fill in and thicken up. But before you start, there's two items to keep in mind.

The first is to make sure your lawn mower is using the bagging function. You don't want to deposit any clippings onto the ground. This could lead to the delicate young grass being smothered and the seed that hasn't germinated yet getting buried. There's a time for mulching, now isn't it.

Secondly, sharpen your mower blades. The easiest is to take them to a local lawn mower

repair shop and have them done for a few dollars. However, you can also do it yourself with an angle grinder, a bench grinder or a hand file. Just make sure you keep the same angle when you grind it down. It doesn't need to cut paper, but you should be able to catch it across your finger.

Using a sharp mower blade will give you a cleaner cut while making your new grass less susceptible to lawn fungus and disease. It's also going to help make it appear greener by reducing frayed edges, which appear brownish in color.

## WEED CONTROL

Whenever you perform a lawn renovation, your goal is to achieve optimal conditions to grow grass. This also means that you have inadvertently provided weeds with the best growing conditions possible. Everything that new grass loves, weeds love as well.

Weeds are, unfortunately, a byproduct of lawn renovations. Newly seeded lawns are delicate and weed issues are usually best addressed after the grass has matured. If you want to maintain a weed-free lawn during the renovation and for the time afterwards, there are few options available to you.

First, if the number of weeds is manageable and the area of the renovation isn't too large, your best option is mechanical removal. Yes, this means good ol' fashioned weed pulling. There are multiple tools on the market that help make weed removal easier, as well as help to preserve your back. But if you only have a few weeds and want to save some money, you can use tools you already have in the garage, like a flat-head screwdriver.

The majority of weed control is done with herbicides that target specific types of weeds. These herbicides are selective and won't harm mature grass. The problem is these chemicals are too toxic to use on newly planted seed or freshly sprouted grass and will damage or kill your lawn renovation. Read the labels of some popular

weed control products and they will advise you not to use their products anywhere from 30 – 120 days before and after planting grass.

However, all hope is not lost. There is one herbicide that is new to the turf industry that will provide some control against weeds while allowing you to seed your lawn and grow grass. Mesotrione, or sold under brand names Tenacity and Collisto, first hit the market in 2001 and offered consumers a method of pre and post-emergent weed control that won't kill new grass.

There's a lot of positives to be had with Mesotrione. The first is the obvious application for weed prevention during a lawn renovation. It also can be used as either a post or pre-emergent, meaning you can use it to prevent weeds from growing, or to kill weeds that have already grown in your lawn. Finally, it's available in a stand-alone liquid that you can apply by itself or combined with granular starter fertilizer as a new "all-in-one".

Although Mesotrione has some awesome things going for it, you do need to watch out for a few negatives that come with using it. First, it doesn't prevent or kill as many types of weeds as other weed killers. Also, it is known to turn certain grass types a temporary lighter shade. When used as a pre-emergent, it has a significantly shorter control period than other common herbicides.

Ultimately you do have options for weed control during a renovation. Your focus during this time shouldn't be on aesthetics, rather it should be on getting the grass healthy and established. If you can wait until the grass is mature, or even the next season to tackle weed control, you will have better, cheaper options available to you and your time will be better spent elsewhere.

### ESTIMATED COSTS

So how much is this going to cost you? Sure, you want a nice lawn, but you also want to pay the mortgage.

For the average sized lawn, it won't cost that much. The great part is most of the expenses are for equipment that you will be able to use more than once.

Actual costs vary by area of the country, time of year, store promotions, quality of the product and if you are willing to bargain hunt. The prices listed below are just used as an example and represent prices from online retailers and big box stores at the beginning of 2021. They're rounded and don't include tax.

This will also be based on the amount of products you would need for a lawn the size of 5,000 square feet.

#### Irrigation:

- (2) 50-foot garden hoses.....\$32
- 2-Zone sprinkler timer.....\$45
- (2) Sprinklers.....\$55

#### Chemicals:

- Grass killer.....\$20
- Starter fertilizer.....\$25

#### Tools:

- Rake.....\$20
- Pump sprayer.....\$10
- Spreader.....\$35

#### Grass Seed:

- Jonathan Green Black Beauty
- Ultra 25 pounds.....\$90

#### Optional:

- Dethatcher/Aerator rental.....\$100

Top dressing.....\$150

Total:.....\$332 - \$582

Finally, the one remaining item that wasn't included in the cost estimate is the most important, your water bill. For those that aren't on municipal or public water and have a private well, this isn't a problem. However, those that must pay a utility bill for their water supply, it's not going to be cheap.

There really isn't any reliable estimate that can be given for expenses for watering. Water costs will depend on what part of the country you live in, what your water rates are, if there are sewer fees attached to your water usage, how much rain you get during the renovation process, and many other unknowns that are specific to each person.

## FINAL THOUGHTS AND TIPS

- Enjoy your time in the lawn. Don't let the avalanche of online information and sales pitches overwhelm you. Just stick to the basics, have fun and everything will turn out just fine.
- Watering is the most important step. Remember, if it dries...it dies.
- Growing grass requires sun, soil and water. Everything else is either a sales pitch or optional.
- Nothing happens fast in lawn care. Everything is planning ahead for next month, next season and even next year. There are no shortcuts or instant results.
- Read the labels. Read the instructions.
- Follow the labels. Follow the instructions.
- Listen to advice from reliable sources, not the comment section from Facebook or YouTube. When in doubt, the best resource for reliable and accurate information is your local

University Extension or Turf Program. Just search online for their website and they will usually provide an extensive library of guides, articles and resources for the general public specific to their geographic region.

- Plan ahead. If there looks like there will be water restrictions in your area due to drought, then it's probably not the best time to undertake this type of project. If you're going on vacation for 3 weeks, not a good idea to start a lawn renovation.
- Store any left-over seed in a cool, dry place in a tight container.
- Did I mention to water? If it dries, it dies.
- Good luck, have fun and stop by [www.TurfAndStem.com](http://www.TurfAndStem.com) to share your results with us!



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