



OZARKS OUTDOOR SOLUTIONS

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Instructions for Watering Newly Overseeded or Mature Lawn

The best advice for watering new grass seed is both simple and complicated. You only get one chance to germinate seeds correctly:

- Not enough water will kill the sprout.
- Too much water can leave less than ideal results.

The simple solution is to keep it moist all of the time. This does not mean to just throw a ton of water on it. Go easy with the volume of water you put down. For best results, we recommend scheduling a day of the week to water. You will need to apply 1 inch of water per week. This requires approximately 40 minutes of watering in one event until you reach a level of 1 inch of water. If the soil looks like it is drying out before the next scheduled watering event, then it will need to be watered again. We would recommend watering for another 40 minutes to reach that 1 inch of water. If the seed or sprout dries out, it dies out. Your job is to provide adequate moisture at all times. The phase before you see any sprouts poking out is the most critical. You **must** stay committed to watering your new grass seed. This applies to newly seeded lawns, as well as mature lawns.

New lawn areas sowed with grass seed.

In order to properly prepare for a new lawn, the soil will have been tilled to loosen the ground for the new grass plants. This loose soil is prone to holding large amounts of water. **Do not over-water!** Also, some soil types tend to get spongy, so walking on it in this condition will leave serious depressions and cause the soil to compact.

The top inch of soil should stay moist at all times. This may take only 2-3 minutes or 5-6 minutes, or longer, depending on your sprinkler system and the soil type. Use your best judgment. **Moist, but not soggy** is the plan! This should be repeated 2 or even 3 times each day if the weather is hot enough to require it. Watering new grass seed on new lawn areas **does NOT require lengthy watering times**. That simply sends the water deeper than it is needed at this early stage.

Frequent watering is the only way to keep adequate surface moisture.

An existing lawn being over-seeded.

Normally a lawn should be watered deeply but infrequently. This is **NOT** the case when you are watering for new grass seed. Now you must water **everyday**. Set automatic timers for about 5 to 10 minutes, early in the morning, and again at mid-day.

Sprinklers have a broad range of flow in gallons-per-minute and you must use your judgment here. You will need to **observe** the flow of your sprinkler, and then **adjust** the amount of time you water. Watering done by hand or hose-end sprinklers must be consistently and evenly applied. It should provide approximately the same amount of moisture throughout, but less in shady areas.

Watering **twice a day** is essential until the new grass is up, then after one more week, you can reduce to watering once per day. Adjust this pattern according to season and temperature demands.

Bare lawn areas being patched.

If the patched area is of substantial size or you have multiple areas, follow the same instructions as above. For smaller areas, if hand watering is practical, leave the lawn on its normal irrigation schedule for a single cycle each day. Supplement the bare areas once or twice daily, or as needed, to keep the new seed moist.

Problems To Avoid When Watering New Grass Seed

BE CAREFUL AND AVOID:

- **Over-watering that results in puddles** on the surface. At first, this can allow the seed to float around and the grass will not be evenly distributed. Later the new grass may choke if the roots have no oxygen available. *(They drown!)*
- **Run-off and seed movement on sloping ground.** It may be necessary to reduce the watering time and repeat more frequently. A mulch over the seed should help reduce seed movement in addition to reducing evaporation.
- **Over-watering that leaves the soil soggy and spongy.** It can take a long time for some soils to dry out. Clay or adobe soil is the worst. Stay off of them if this happens.
- **Over-watering areas that are shaded** and need less water while sunny areas need more water. *(Usually a problem with automatic sprinkler systems.)* If feasible, consider one cycle of automatic watering on the entire area, and a hand watering later, to cover just the more exposed areas as they dry out.
- **Uneven watering** due to sprinklers that are clogged, not adjusted or inadequately designed. Always check and do necessary corrections to a sprinkler system before the grass seed is sown. *(Few sprinklers, installed or portable, can be trusted to work efficiently without being regularly checked.)*
- **Under-watering** new grass seed, especially not often enough, due to **any and all excuses.**
- **Over-watering shaded areas** may result in the growth of moss or algae. If this is occurring, reduce the frequency and time length of watering.

Remember, one mistake can mean you start all over again.