

Common Lawn Blunders and How to Avoid Them

We've covered a few of these, but they're worth repeating.

- Don't mow the grass too short. Follow the 1/3 rule—never remove more than one-third of the blade at a time. It's better to mow more frequently than to cut too much in a single pass.
- Don't water in the evening. Watering at night can promote fungus. Watering at midday is inefficient because much of the water evaporates before it can be absorbed. Watering in the morning is ideal.
- Don't stop watering newly seeded grass too soon. Just because a few seedlings have popped up, don't assume it's safe to stop keeping the soil moist. Earth Carpet® seed mixes contain a variety of seeds chosen for their various attributes. Some are fast growing, but others are desirable for deep green color or hardiness. They may emerge later, so keep watering for at least six weeks.
- Don't apply a major herbicide too soon after seeding. You could kill your new turf before it's well established. Wait at least eight weeks and then follow manufacturer's instructions carefully.
- Don't suffocate, aerate. Loose soil with lots of earthworms may never need aerating. But soil with lots of clay may need aerating once a year. Athletic fields may need it every few months. Aeration lets moisture penetrate the soil.
- Don't let thatch build up. Thick layers of dead stems and roots are an invitation to disease. Use a power rake when needed to remove thatch. You will increase thatch build up by applying more nutrients than your lawn needs. Fertilizer will help with that.
- Don't plant the wrong seeds in the wrong spot. Seeds that require full sun will never flourish in dense shade, no matter how much care you lavish on them. Don't fight nature. Choose the right seeds for the right conditions.
- Don't use an inadequate fertilizer program. For example, Blue Carpet requires a more aggressive fertilizer program. Care-Free requires less care. You'll need more fertilizer for sandy soil than for clay.
- Don't stop watering. Although a well-established lawn doesn't require daily watering under normal conditions, you do need to keep the top 4-6 inches of soil from drying out. Weeds thrive in dry, cracked soil. Watering in the mornings is best.