

Creating your healthy new lawn



Step 1: Choosing the right turf

Choosing the right turf is the first step in creating your healthy new lawn. Different types of turf have their own unique features. Use this comparison table to decide which type of lawn is best for you.

- ### The benefits of healthy natural turf:
- ✓ 30°C cooler than synthetic on hot days
 - ✓ Captures 0.5 kg/m² of carbon each year
 - ✓ Can increase property prices by 19%
 - ✓ Less runoff into stormwater drains
 - ✓ Improves mental health and wellbeing

TURF COMPARISON TABLE		LAWN FOR LIGHT USE*			LAWN FOR HEAVY USE**		
Turf type	Unique features	Full sun	Part shade	Heavy shade	Full sun	Part shade	Heavy shade
BUFFALO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptable winter colour with some varieties • Less mowing than kikuyu 	✓	✓	✓	✓		
COUCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine leaf • Some varieties can be grown like a bowling green • Wider range of weed sprays 	✓			✓		
KIKUYU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptable winter colour • Requires very frequent mowing • Relatively cheap 	✓	✓		✓		
ZOYSIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less mowing than buffalo, much less than kikuyu • Varieties available that are fine leafed, low growing and have good winter colour 	✓	✓	✓			

*Only used occasionally and/or on weekends

**Used most days for sports and family activities

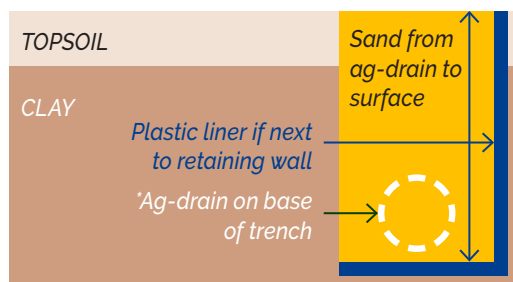
Step 2: Getting your drainage right

Ideally direct surface runoff away from buildings and into drainage pits. Shape the surface to ensure:

- ✓ all areas have a slope more than 1 in 100 (more than 0.6 degrees).
- ✓ there are no low spots or humps where water can pool.

If surface water is likely to collect in an area then install ag-drain* with sand or gravel above it to capture this water. **Do NOT cover ag-drain with soil or water won't get to it.**

Fig. 1: *Typical design for capturing runoff.



Step 3: Preparing your soil

Use the following steps to see if the existing soil can be used. If not, then only import suitable soil:

- a) Dig out a soil layer and crush it into small particles.
- b) Add a small amount of water and mix into the soil for 1 minute. Slowly add more water so soil is wet, but not saturated.
- c) Using Table 1 below, identify your soil type and determine whether it's suitable or needs attention.
- d) To maintain healthy turf the topsoil should have at least 180mm of suitable soil, but 130mm will just suffice in shaded areas.

Table 1: Soil suitability for growing turf:

Note: ignore soil colour



Soil type	Description	Suitability/Amendment
Sand	Sand that can't be molded. Most soils sold by landscaper e.g. 80:20	Too sandy: mix with loam to make loamy sand (more suitable)
Loamy sand	Sand that can be made into cylinders that just hold together	Suitable soil: mix 15% of finely screened garden organics that has been composted to Australian Standard AS 4454 and either lime or gypsum so turf grows well
Loams & light clays	Feels like playdough and can be easily molded	
Heavy clay	Requires a lot of strength to mold	Not suitable: for turf or most trees

Step 4: Laying your turf



- ✓ Prior to laying, ensure surface is smooth and firm, but not compacted.
- ✓ Lay turf so there are no gaps between rolls. Cut turf with Stanley knife. **Do not lay on really hot days.**

Step 5: Watering your new turf

- ✓ Water turf within 30 minutes of laying.

How much do I water each time?

- ✓ Ensure 3mm per water application. Place a rain gauge between sprinklers or in the middle of the newly laid turf area and see how long it takes to apply this volume of water.

How often do I water?

- ✓ Ensure new turf receives 3mm of water (irrigation or rain) according to the watering schedule below:

Once turf can't be pulled up, water for a further 28 days as per the table below, then reduce watering.

Weather	First 3 days	If turf pulls up	If turf won't pull up
25°C	THREE times per day	ONCE a day	Every SECOND day
25°C calm			
25°C windy			
30°C calm		TWICE a day	ONCE a day
30°C windy			
35°C calm		THREE times per day	TWICE a day
35°C windy			