

# Spread it and Forget it?

## Great Looking Lawns Start Small

Your lawn looks awesome! From a distance. However, begin walking over it with the lawn mower each week and you'll see and feel imperfections. Dry grass mingled with new green blades; dandelions hugging the earth to avoid the mower blade -- until the next morning when their bright yellow heads cheerfully pop straight up; and lumpy ant hills altering the level of the landscape.

While applying fertilizers, weed-killers and pesticides can address some of the problems, landscapers and lawn care specialists advise the best solution is to better cultivate the grass itself. Experts say dense lawns don't allow room for weeds and bugs. Choosing the right type of grass seed is paramount to a yard the whole neighborhood will envy.

There are four types of lawn grass seed for the notoriously short summer and lengthy cool-weather seasons in Wisconsin: Kentucky Bluegrass, Perennial Ryegrass, Fine Fescues, Tall Fescues. The proper blend generally consists of bluegrass or a mixture of these seeds to keep your lawn healthy well into winter.

### KENTUCKY BLUEGRASS (KB)

- Aggressive spreading growth habit
- Good tolerance to most environmental



Blending Kentucky Bluegrass (left) and Fine Fescue (right) can result in a "low maintenance" lawn.

conditions, except shade

- Ability to withstand a lower mowing height
- Tolerance to drought or disease
- A blend of 3 or 4 different Kentucky Bluegrass maximizes strong traits, minimizes weaker traits.

### PERENNIAL RYEGRASS

- Grows in bunches (Doesn't spread like KB)
- Shorter life cycle, needs reseeding every few years
- Quick establishment in soil
- Resistant to high traffic
- Perfect to mix with KB to control erosion until KB is established

### FINE FESCUES

- Most shade tolerant
- Requires less fertilizer and irrigation
- Less traffic resistant

- Grows in bunches, non-aggressive
- Blends are sometimes labeled as "No-Mow" or "Carefree"
- Should be mowed every several weeks
- Grows to 12-14 inches
- Thins out/dies after a few years, requires reseeding

### TALL FESCUES

- Non-spreading bunch-type grass
- Most varieties may need reseeding to maintain density
- Good through drought
- Traffic resistant and withstands salt
- Heat and Shade tolerant

Proper maintenance is absolutely necessary for a great looking lawn. Preparing the lawn for routine reseeding may require thatching the dry grass out of the lawn to make way for new growth. Mowing regularly will maintain the look and health of your lawn. Watering consistently is mandatory even during a drought because a lawn will go dormant if not watered regularly, and shorten the life cycle of the grass.

Many Wisconsin Landscapers are NARI members. They'll tell you: a great looking patch of land starts with a small seed. 🌱

Article resource: [Outsidepride.com](http://Outsidepride.com)

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