There's nothing quite like a lush green lawn to enhance the look of your garden and value of your property. Lawns are the pride and joy of many New Zealand gardeners so if your lawn is not as it should be follow these steps to have the best-looking lawn on the block.

New Lawns

Preparation: The best advice is to do it right the first time. Your time and effort will be rewarded with a healthy lawn that will be a delight to the eye for many years to come.

Spray: You will need to start by using a spray such as 'RoundUp' or 'Zero Weedkiller', to kill off the existing lawn. Then wait two to three weeks for the lawn to completely die off.

Soil: As the area starts to die you will need to cultivate the soil to eight centimeters or scrape away the dead grass. The best option is to incorporate the dead grass with a rotary hoe or garden fork, adding fresh, screened topsoil as you go.

Level: Level out the cultivated soil with a rake. Find any soft spots by 'heeling in' (taking small steps on your heel), or use a roller to compress the soil. When you are satisfied that the area is level and all holes are filled, rake the soil surface so the grass seed can set root.

Sow: Select a seed according to the situation; if you are unsure which seed to use, your Oderings staff will be able to advise you. Most grass seed is coated with bird repellent and fungicide. Coated seed protects from fungal disease and bird theft during establishment. Sow seed at the rate of 30 grams per square metre. Add Yates Lawn Fertiliser For New Lawns when sowing. Keep the seed moist, but not wet, until it has germinated. Yates Lawn Seed Sealer is a great option for sloped or particularly dry areas as it makes the lawn seed stay put and adds water retention properties to the soil.

After Care: Do not mow a new lawn until it is 7–10cm tall, then remove the top one-third of the grass, gradually lowering the blades on your mower over the next few months until the grass is 2.5cm. Water for half an hour every day until established. Deep watering is important as shallow watering produces shallow roots and invites weeds to invade the area. Do not spray weeds in new lawns for the first two months; thereafter use a weaker dilution of Yates Turfix or KiwiCare Turfclean. After the lawn is six months old you can use full-strength solutions.

Fertiliser: With new lawns that are less than six months old, fertilise using Tui Lawn Force New Lawns, as this will not burn the seed or young grass. Premium brands such as Yates Twice A Year Lawn Fertiliser or Oderings Lawn Replenish can be used after the lawn is six months old. These fertilisers release slowly over three months and do not require watering in. Other cheaper brands of fertiliser can also be used after the first six months. These do not have a controlled released of fertiliser and can burn your lawn; therefore, it is always advisable to water your lawn after applying these fertilisers. Fertilising should be done in spring, summer and autumn. Always follow the recommended application rate to ensure you don't burn your lawn.

Lawn Renovation

Spraying: Start by spraying the existing lawn with a selective weed killer. This will kill broadleaf weeds but not the grass. If you have weeds that look like grass you will need to use a non-selective weed killer. Because this spray will kill everything, including lawn grass, you will need to spot spray it onto the grass weeds. The sprays then need to dry for at least one day before rain falls or watering is done.

Removal: When the weeds are dead mow the lawn to 2–3cm (making sure you use your lawn clipping catcher, or rake up the debris by hand, but do not use the poisoned clippings for compost or mulch). The next step is often omitted, but in renewing a lawn it is, in my opinion, one of the most important. You need to hire a de-thatcher. This is an amazing mower-like machine that puts teeth into the ground and removes the layer of organic matter on the soil surface and all the old, dead blades of grass. This is important because the soil must be exposed for new seed to grow. You should work in two different directions with this machine. For example, work down the length of the lawn and then work from side to side across it. If this sounds like too much work you can always use Kiwicare LawnPro D-Thatch.

Level: Fill up any major dips or holes where puddles tend to form, and compress the new soil with the heels of your feet.

Seed: Spread seed over the entire lawn, and sow at the same amount as a new lawn – 30 grams per square metre. Follow with a light raking to work the seed into the soil. Adding topsoil or sand after seeding is not recommended.

Weeds and moss thrive in lawns that are poorly maintained.

To reduce this problem:

- Mow regularly, removing only one third of the lawn's growth each time.
- By leaving the grass taller you will prevent weeds from becoming established.
- Reduce shade and aerate lawn annually to aid drainage and reduce moss.

Yates®

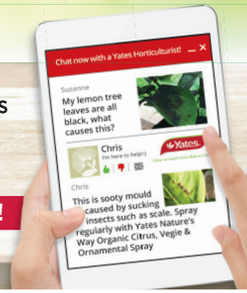
Get lawn envy

For established lawns an easy way to feed the lawn is with a liquid hose on product. **Yates® Weed'n'Feed™** actually controls the weeds at the same time. Within a few weeks weeds like dandelions and lawn daisies will be gone.

Yates® Weed'n'Feed™ Mosskiller & Fertiliser quickly and effectively kills moss in grass lawns. It also feeds the lawn, encouraging strong grass which helps prevent moss regrowth.

For more advice on growing lawns talk to Yates on **0800 693 297**, or via **Live Chat** on **yates.co.nz**

WHERE YOU CAN SEND PICS FOR QUICK PROBLEM SOLVING!



ODERINGS
GARDEN CENTRES

www.oderings.co.nz

Lawns

ODERINGS GARDENING *guide*