

Retail Sodding Information

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Measuring

It is probably a good idea to start a sodding project by drawing or sketching your new lawn area using actual measurements. Measure the area, and multiply the length times the width to determine the square footage needed. Use any of the following formulas to estimate the amount of sod you will need. It is always a good idea to add a little extra (5%, for example) to your order to compensate for any irregular areas or mistakes in estimating.

Soil Preparation

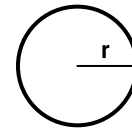
Proper soil preparation is probably the most overlooked step in the installation process, but it is by far the most important. Begin by removing the existing lawn or any debris, such as weeds, rocks, construction trash, etc. Work the soil to a minimum depth of 4 to 6 inches, using a rototiller, tractor, spade or another device to break up any compaction. If your soil type is either sandy or a heavy clay, add a soil amendment to enhance the soil capacity to hold moisture and nutrients. It is also beneficial to have your soil tested to determine if it has any deficiencies (pH or nutrient) that must be corrected. Level the area 3/4"-1" below sidewalks, existing turf, etc., to accommodate the new sod. After leveling, roll the area to firm the soil and relevel as needed. Watering the soil thoroughly several days prior to installing the new sod will allow you to determine if any further depressions are apparent. **Always have the site fully prepared before attempting to lay your new sod lawn. Sod is perishable!**

Installation

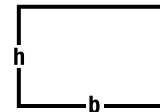
Before laying your sod, apply a preplant fertilizer that contains a high phosphorous content and lower amounts of nitrogen and potassium. The nutrient values on a bag of fertilizer are expressed in percentages, such as 12-12-12, with the first number representing nitrogen, the second, phosphorous, and the third, potassium. The values are expressed in lbs/1000 sq. ft. This preplant application will further ensure that the sod puts down roots as quickly as possible.

Begin laying the sod using a straight edge, such as a sidewalk or driveway. You can also use a chalk line to establish a good starting point. Lay the sod in a brick-like pattern so that the seams are staggered. It is generally best to lay all the full, uncut pieces first to minimize waste. To cut the irregular pieces of sod, use any type of knife; for example, a linoleum knife works quite well. Avoid as many small pieces of sod on the edges of your lawn to minimize the problem of dryout. If you are laying sod on a slope, always lay the sod perpendicular to the slope as opposed to up and down.

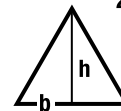
Circle:
 $A=3.14 \times r^2$



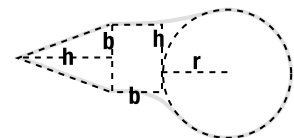
Square or Rectangle:
 $A=Base \times Height$



Triangle:
 $A=\frac{Base \times Height}{2}$



Free Form: Breakdown to Forms



Break the free form area down to squares, rectangles and circles. Then calculate each form and add them together for the total.

On warm windy days, begin watering before you have laid the entire lawn. Once you have laid a sufficient area, begin watering lightly to prevent dry-out. Start watering within 1 hour of initially laying the sod. After installing the sod in the entire area, water the area to moisten the sod, and then roll it lightly (roller 1/3 full of water) to take out any depressions and also to force the sod into contact with the soil. Within 4 hours, thoroughly water the entire lawn so that the sod and the soil underneath are completely wet.

PostInstallation

The most important consideration is to keep the sod wet during the establishment period. During hot, dry weather, watering 2 or more times a day may be necessary. Check the sod daily by picking up the corners of the sod to see that there is sufficient moisture. Keep a close eye on the outside areas such as edges and areas that are hard to reach with the water supply. One way to determine if the sod is drying out is to step lightly on the turf and if your footprint remains on the grass for more than a short interval, then the sod needs to be watered. After about 10 days, decrease the frequency of watering and increase the length of the water application. This promotes a deeper-rooted turf, which can sustain periods of drought with less long-term damage than shallower root systems. Different soil types have a great deal of input into determining how often to water (sandy soils will require more frequent irrigations than a heavy clay soil).

Your new sod lawn is usually in need of a mowing after 10 days to 2 weeks. At that time, make sure the lawn is not too wet to avoid rutting with the mower. The general rule is to never remove more than 1/3 of the leaf surface at any one mowing. Bluegrass should be mowed no lower than at a height of 2". It is best **not** to collect the clippings after mowing. Leaving the short clippings on the lawn allows the nutrients from the leaves of the grass to return to the soil. If you have an excessive amount of clippings, you may have to remove them and then mow the lawn on a regular basis to avoid this problem in the future.

Fertilization

Fertilizer and chemical applications will vary with soil type, climate, etc. For recommendations in your particular area, consult with your local garden center or extension agent.

To Order Sod
Call: (800)762-7442

