Tall Fescue / Kentucky Bluegrass

Recommended maintenance practices for a lawn that consists of a blend of tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass are the same as those for a tall fescue lawn. The following management practices will help you care for your lawn throughout the year. Location, terrain, soil type and condition, age of the lawn, previous lawn care, and other factors affect turf performance, so adjust these management practices and dates to suit your particular lawn.

March through May

Mowing
Mow to 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 inches. Mow often enough so that no more than one-third of the grass height is cut; this may be every 5 to 7 days in late spring. Leave grass clippings on the lawn where they decompose quickly and can provide up to 25 percent of the lawns fertilizer needs. If prolonged rain or other factors prevent mowing and clippings are too plentiful to leave on the lawn, collect them and use them as mulch. DO NOT bag them for trash collection; grass clippings do not belong in landfills.

Fertilization
DO NOT fertilize blends containing tall fescue after March 15.

Insect Control
Check for and control white grubs in April and May. (See White Grubs in Turf, ENT/ORT-67, AG-366).

Weed Control
Apply preemergence herbicides to control crabgrass, goosegrass, and foxtails from late February to mid-March.

Aeration
Delay aeration until fall.

Watering
This turfgrass blend needs 1 to 1 1/4 inches of water every week, ideally all at once. A dark bluish-gray color and wilted, folded, or curled leaves indicate that it is time to water. Water until the soil is wet to a depth of 4 to 6 inches. Use a screwdriver or similar implement to check. Sandy soils require more frequent watering (about 1/2 inch of water every third day). Because clay soils accept water slowly, irrigate just until runoff occurs, wait until the water has been absorbed, and begin watering again. Continue until the desired depth or amount is applied. Proper irrigation may prevent or reduce problems later in the summer. Watering between 2 and 8 a.m. decreases the incidence of certain diseases.
Thatch
It is generally not necessary to remove thatch.

June through August

Mowing
Mow to 3 1/2 inches and mow before the grass gets taller than 5 inches.

Fertilization
DO NOT fertilize at this time.

Insect Control
Check for and control white grubs in July and August.

Disease Control
This turfgrass blend is highly susceptible to Brown (Large) Patch Disease, which appears as irregularly shaped patches of dead or dying turf. Brown Patch likes high humidity and temperatures above 85 F. It becomes extremely severe during prolonged, overcast wet weather with evening air temperatures above 68 F. and daytime temperatures in the mid- to upper 80s. Do not apply nitrogen fertilizer when the disease is active, keep the mowing height above 3 inches, and water between 2 and 8 a.m. Apply fungicide during severe Brown Patch outbreaks. (See Diseases of Cool-Season Grasses, AG-361.)

Weed Control
DO NOT use herbicides at this time.

Aeration
DO NOT aerate at this time.

Watering
Either water as needed to prevent drought stress or allow the lawn to go dormant. Dormant lawns must be watered once every 3 weeks during a drought.

Renovation
Western Region Only! Overseed thin, bare areas as weather cools (August 15 to September 1). Use a blend of "turftype" tall fescue cultivars at 6 pounds of seed per 1,000 square feet. Kentucky bluegrass seed can be added to the tall fescue seed at the rate of 1 to 2 lb per 1,000 square feet. Apply a starter-type (high phosphorous) fertilizer. Keep the seedbed moist with light watering several times per day. Do not let the seedlings dry out.

September through November

Mowing
Mow to 2 1/2 to 3 inches in height.
**Fertilization**
Have your soil tested. Ask your county Cooperative Extension agent about a free soil test. Then apply the nutrient your lawn needs. If you don't test, apply a complete nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium (N-P-K) turf-grade fertilizer with a 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio (that is, 12-4-8 or 16-4-8). Fertilize with 1 pound of actual nitrogen (N) per 1,000 square feet in mid-September and again in November (about the time the grass is green but not actively growing).

You need to apply 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet, so how much fertilizer do you need to buy? Divide 100 by the FIRST number of the fertilizer bag. (The first number always represents nitrogen content.) For example, if you've got a 10-10-10 fertilizer, divide 100 by 10 and you get 10. That means you need to buy 10 pounds of fertilizer for every 1,000 square feet of lawn.

**Aerification**
Core lawns subject to heavy traffic or on clay soils to minimize compaction and improve rooting. Break up plugs.

**Insect Control**
Check for white grubs in September and October; fall is the ideal time to control white grubs. (See [White Grubs in Turf, ENT/ORT-67, AG-366](#).)

**Weed Control**
Apply broadleaf herbicides to control broadleaf weeds like chickweed, henbit, and other weeds as necessary. Caution: Some herbicides may affect newly seeded turf. Follow label directions.

**Watering**
This turfgrass blend needs 1 to 1 1/4 inches of water every week, ideally all at once. A dark bluish-gray color and wilted, folded, or curled leaves indicate that it is time to water. Water until the soil is wet to a depth of 4 to 6 inches. Use a screwdriver or similar implement to check. Sandy soils require more frequent watering (about inch of water every third day). Because clay soils accept water slowly, irrigate just until runoff occurs, wait until the water has been absorbed, and begin watering again. Continue until the desired depth or amount is applied. Proper irrigation may prevent or reduce problems later in the summer. Watering between 2 and 8 a.m. decreases the incidence of certain diseases.

**December through February**

**Mowing**
Mow to 3 inches and remove leaves and other debris.

**Fertilization**
Fertilize with 1 pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet in February.

**Aeration**
Delay aeration until fall.
 Weed Control
Apply broadleaf herbicides as necessary for control of chickweed, henbit, or other weeds.

 Watering
This turfgrass blend needs 1 to 1 1/4 inches of water every week, ideally all at once. A dark bluish-gray color and wilted, folded, or curled leaves indicate that it is time to water. Water until the soil is wet to a depth of 4 to 6 inches. Use a screwdriver or similar implement to check. Sandy soils require more frequent watering (about 1/2 inch of water every third day). Because clay soils accept water slowly, irrigate just until runoff occurs, wait until the water has been absorbed, and begin watering again. Continue until the desired depth or amount is applied. Proper irrigation may prevent or reduce problems later in the summer. Watering between 2 and 8 a.m. decreases the incidence of certain diseases.

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