

Notes

BENEDICT'S HOME & GARDEN

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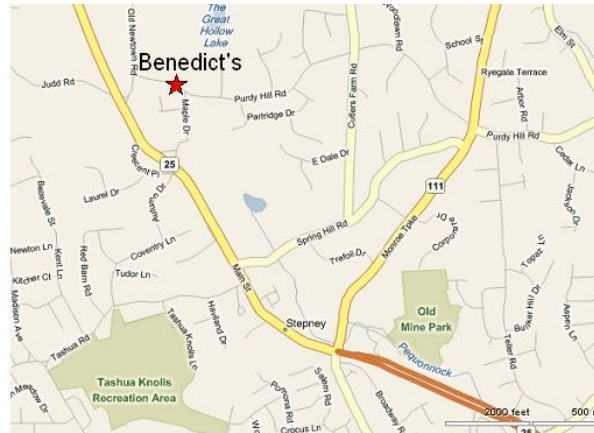
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Starting a New Lawn From Seed



BENEDICT'S
HOME & GARDEN

Brands you trust. People who know.



How do I start a new lawn from grass seed?

Everyone loves the look of a nice, healthy green lawn. There is something simply American about it, and everyone is always proud when they have one. So, starting a new lawn should be done the right way! If you want to start a new lawn that will end up being healthy and green, then you should make sure that you do everything just right.

The first thing you should do is measure the area that you want to seed. Nearly every product you will need to buy covers a certain number of **square feet**. That is, the total length times the total width of the area. Typically people know how many acres are in their property; one acre of land equals approximately 44,000 square feet. However, this is your **entire** property, not just your lawn. Therefore, if you want to know around how many square feet of actual lawn you have, you must subtract the area of your house, driveway, and other walkways, patios, or other non-grass areas. Simply measure the length and the width of these non-grass areas, multiply the two, and subtract each of the numbers from how much total area you have on your property; this number will be how large your actual lawn is.

What tools do I need?

Once you have determined this number, you can begin to plan what you will need to buy. It's important, first of all, to have the proper tools to start your lawn. For starters, you will want to either rake or aerate your soil to loosen it up; this will naturally require a rake or an aerator. After this, it may be possible that you need to fill in some holes where soil is missing; this will, of course, require a shovel. When you are ready to spread the seed, you will need a spreader to make sure that it gets spread evenly. You will also need the spreader to spread the starter fertilizer you will need to give the seed a good head start.

What other products do I need to buy?

In addition to the right tools, you will need the right

products to start your new lawn. If you do need to fill in any holes with more soil, you will need to purchase some good top soil, like the Agway brand screened top soil. This soil is screened to 1" to ensure that there aren't any large pieces of sticks or large rocks in the bags so that you get the most soil for your money. You will also need a good grass seed, determined by the amount of sun the area gets. Benedict's own Sun and Shade mix is an excellent, all-purpose grass seed that contains a mixture of Perennial Ryegrass, Fescue, and Bluegrass to be used in any sunny to lightly shaded area of your lawn. For very densely shaded areas, you will want to use Shady Nooks grass seed by Jonathan Green, which uses Poa Trivialis seed which works very well in dense shade. We also carry many other types of grass seed for temporary lawns, wear-and-tear lawns, and many others, so feel free to stop in and ask about them; our expert employees will be able to give you all the information you need on our excellent selection of grass seeds.

In addition to grass seed, you will want to purchase a starter fertilizer, such as Greenlawn or Scott's. These fertilizers are high in phosphorous, which promotes root development, and allows your grass to start quickly. The starter fertilizer should go down right on top of your grass seed application.

Should I cover the seed and fertilizer with anything?

Finally, once your seed and fertilizer are spread, you will want to put a light layer of hay or straw on top to help the moisture stay in and to prevent the seed from washing away. Since most regular bales of hay contain a lot of weed seeds, you will want to purchase hay or straw specifically designed for planting grass seed, such as Salt Hay or Mulch Master shredded straw. The latter comes in a bag roughly the size of a normal bale of hay, and when spread will never need to be raked up as it mulches into the soil. It is very important when spreading your hay or straw that you can still see your soil through it, as if you cover it completely you will choke the seed by not letting sunlight or water get to it, causing it to not germinate.

How do I care for my seed?

Once all of this is done, be sure to water your lawn enough to keep it growing, but not too much so that you end up doing more damage than good. If you under water your seed, the roots will grow too close to the surface, and when hot weather hits the roots will be scorched. It is best to water your seed for a longer period of time, or deeper, than a shorter period of time with less water. A good way to make sure you are doing this right is to put an empty tuna fish can in the area your sprinkler is running. When the can is full, it is time to move your sprinkler to another section of grass. You can then wait until the next day to water again; if you watered first in the morning, wait until the evening for the next watering.

Now that your planting is completed, you'll want to avoid using any products on your lawn that would stress the grass, such as weed killers. Products such as these can be used again once your grass is mature; typically, your grass will be mature by the time you have done your fourth mowing.

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