

What is involved in starting a lawn from sod?

Although laying sod as a way to start a new lawn may sound a bit easier than starting it from new seed, there is still a good deal of work to be done to properly set up the area for the sod and also lay down the sod and make sure it establishes well.

First, you will want to rototill or spade the soil you are using to lay the sod to a depth of 4". Make sure to remove any sticks, stones, roots, and other debris from the area. Take soil samples to have them tested for pH levels, and once you determine if your soil is too acidic, lime as necessary to make the soil appropriately pH-neutral. Next, smooth the soil by raking it, and then smooth it by rolling it with a lawn roller. Be sure to fill in any low spots with new top soil. It is also a good idea at this time to apply a starter fertilizer so that when you lay the sod, their roots will take more quickly.

If you are getting your sod delivered, set up the delivery date to be the same as when you plan to lay it, and when it arrives, begin laying it immediately. Lay the top rolls on the pallet first, as these are the first to dry out on a hot day.



How should I go about laying the sod?

When you begin laying, start at a location where you are laying up against a straight line, such as a driveway or sidewalk. Make sure all the joints are pushed tightly together—do not let the sod overlap, or let any spaces exist between separate pieces. It is a good idea to stagger the joints in each row, like rows of bricks. You can use a large, sharp knife to shape the sod if you have irregular portions of your yard, or need to cut a piece short. Begin to water the sod 20 minutes after you laid the first strip, soaking it with at least 1" of water.

To gauge watering, simply place an empty can about 6" away from your sprinkler. When there is an inch of water in the can, it is time to move the sprinkler to the next area. Reflected heat along buildings dries sod quickly; be sure to water such areas more often.

Is there a certain watering and mowing schedule?

A good watering and mowing schedule is as follows: (♠ = water, ✂ = mow)

First Week	♠	♠	♠		♠		✂
Second Week	♠		♠		♠		✂
Third Week		♠			♠		✂

Your new "living carpet" needs mowing 6-7 days after installation. Your basic mowing rule is never more than 1/3 of the leaf blade during a single mowing. Mow when grass height reaches 2 1/3" to 3", and set your mower at a cutting height of 1 1/2" to 2". For best appearance, be sure to keep your mower blades sharp.

Is it safe to walk on the sod right away?

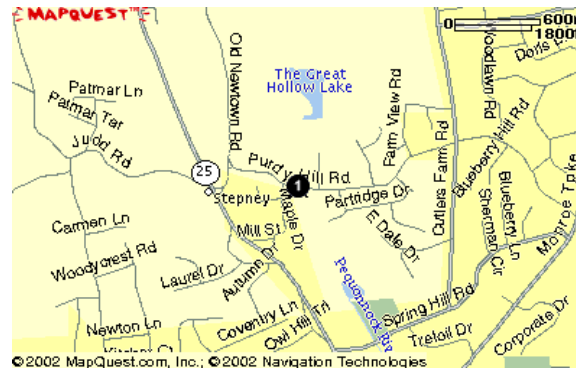
Use your new sodded lawn sparingly until good root establishment has taken place—usually after 2 to 3 weeks. Avoid concentrated play activities, dog traffic, or similar rough usage until four weeks have passed. Of course, there are no restrictions on visually enjoying your lawn.



Notes

Benedict's Tips:

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Starting a New Lawn with Sod



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