

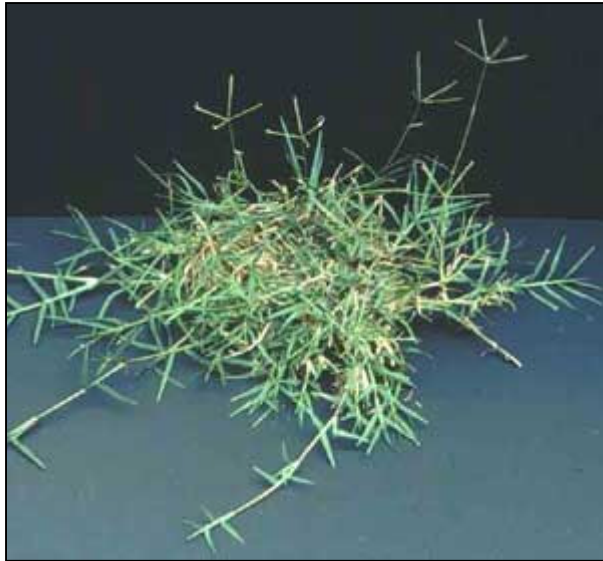


Common Bermuda

6-11



- **Category:** Lawn
- **Type:** Perennial
- **Exposure:** Full Sun / Part Shade
- **Foliage:** Dark Green
- **Form:** Fine Texture
- **Zones:** 6 to 11
- **Drought Tolerance:** High
- **Scientific Name:** *Cynodoncommon*
- **Usage:** Groundcover



Introduction

Bermuda Grass is a major turf species for sports fields, lawns, parks, golf courses, and general utility turfs in Australia, India, South America and the Southern region of the United States. In the United States the distribution of Bermuda grass extends from New Jersey and Maryland southward to Florida and westward to Kansas and Texas. Under irrigation its distribution extends westward to southern New Mexico, Arizona, and to most major valleys of California. It is a highly variable, sod forming perennial that spreads by stolens, rhizomes and seed.

Use and Management

Bermuda grass is a warm season perennial species adapted to tropical and subtropical climates. It grows best under extended periods of high temperatures, mild winters and moderate to high rainfall. Temperature is the main environmental factor that limits its adaptability. In general, temperatures below 30 degrees F kill the leaves and stems of Bermuda grass. It will continue to grow with night temperatures as low as 34 Degrees F if day temperatures are near 70 degrees. However, when average temperatures drop below 50 degrees F growth stops and the grass begins to discolor. After the frost killing frost, leaves and stems remain dormant until average daily temperatures rise above 50 degrees F for several days. The roots and rhizomes continue to grow several weeks after the leaves and stems stop growing. The species makes the best growth where average daily temperatures are between 75 degrees F and 95 degrees F. Soil temperatures above 65 degrees are required for significant growth of rhizomes, roots and stolens. Optimum soil temperature for root growth is around 80 degrees F.

Bermuda grass has a high light requirement and does not grow well under low light (shaded) conditions. The duration of the light period (day length) also influences growth and development. At low intensities (less than 60 % full sunlight) Bermuda grass develops narrow, elongated leaves, thin upright stems, and elongated internodes and weak rhizomes. Consequently, Bermuda grass develops a very sparse turf under shaded conditions.



Common Bermuda Continued

Planting

Common Bermuda grass is the only widely used turf-type Bermuda grass variety that can be established from seed. It should be planted at a rate 2 - 3 pounds of seed per 1,000 sq. ft. Spring and summer plantings should utilize hulled seed for faster germination. Late fall and winter plantings should use unhulled seed to delay germination until more favorable conditions occur in the spring. Unhulled seed might be planted together with annual rye grass in the fall to provide temporary cover protection from soil erosion during winter months.

Sod planting: Sod is harvested by machine to a uniform thickness of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch, plus top growth.

Sod is shipped several ways:

1. Squares - a 2.5 square foot section of sod measuring 15 inches wide by 2 feet long (most common)
2. Slabs - a 5 square foot section of sod measuring 15 inches wide by 4 feet long
3. Mini-roll – a 10 square foot section measuring 2 foot wide by 5 foot long
4. Big Roll – a 275 square foot section of sod measuring 30 inches by 110 feet long

Prior to harvesting, sod is mowed uniformly to a height of approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. It is folded with the grass facing out. Each full pallet contains approximately 500 square feet of sod. Sod is shipped sufficiently dry for transportation and handling, yet moist enough to facilitate installation. It should be installed within 24 hours of delivery. Shipping pallets are the property of the sod company with a refundable deposit fee. They are typically loaded onto our trailers and brought back to the office. Then arrangements should be made for the sod company to pick them up.

The site is typically accepted at $\pm 0.10'$ with little or no additional grading required. A light raking is usually necessary before laying sod. However, if tilling is needed, contact the owner or owner's representative and obtain a field change order before proceeding. Once the site is properly prepared, begin laying the sod at the rear of the project and work your way toward the front, avoiding walking on the newly laid sod. For residential and small commercial projects, sod should be laid perpendicular to the street. Sod should be laid perpendicular the contours on sloped sites.

Approximately three-quarter way through installation, have someone start rolling the sod and either hand-soak or start the irrigation system. Set the controller to water twice a day for two weeks, set rotors for twenty minutes and sprays for ten minutes per cycle. Be sure and instruct Owner to reset the controller after the two-week period.



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