

Garden & Landscape Design Department

How to Water Your New Sod (by Christina Reeves)

It is important to water your new sod as soon as possible after laying. On large sod jobs, it might even be beneficial to start watering portions of the completed sod areas before the entire area is complete to avoid having the sod dry out.

Sod should be heavily watered for approximately 2 weeks after installation. During this time, sod should be extremely soggy and even 'squishy' to walk on. Because of this, it is a good idea to avoid walking on the new sod surface during the establishment period.

Always water your sod using an irrigation system or an oscillating sprinkler. Avoid hand watering with a hose, as it is hard to get adequate or even coverage. Deep watering encourages deep root growth which is key to sod survival in the hot summer months.

Watering in the morning or afternoon is best. Avoid watering at night, which can encourage fungal diseases.

Aim to apply $\frac{3}{4}$ "-1" of water at time. A easy and cost efficient way to help monitor the amount of water being applied to your lawn is to place an empty tuna fish or cat food can on the sod and water until the can is full.

Watering schedules will be dependent on daytime temperatures and local rainfall. The following schedule can be used if daytime temperatures are in the high 70's and 80's (minimum). Reduce watering times during cooler temperatures. Sod lain in the late fall or winter, will usually only require watering (as possible) during initial installation.

Day 1/Initial Installation

- Water as soon as possible, even during installation as needed.

Day 2-7 after installation

- Water every day.
- Sod should be squishy and you should NOT be able to walk on it.

Day 8-14 after installation

- Water every other day.
- Towards the end of 2 weeks after installation, sod should begin to root into the soil, show top growth and the edges should begin to 'knit' together.

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How to Water Your New Sod (Continued)

Day 15-21 after installation

- Water every third day or cut back watering times every other day.
- Sod should be allowed to dry out enough that it can be walked on and mown.

Day 22-28 after installation

- Water every fourth day or cut back watering times every other day.
- If at any time, edges or sod shows signs of browning, increase watering times.

Day 29-35 after installation

- Water every 5th day
- Watering times may need to be increased during hot or dry spells or if temperatures spike into the 90's.

Day 36 after installation and on

- Water once a week or until weather cools.
- Regular rains may be sufficient, however new sod lawns should be closely monitored during the first full year after installation.

