

Renfrow Hardware

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Fescue Lawn Care Calendar

The Renfrow month-by-month lawn care instructions will help you have the most highly admired grass in your neighborhood!

Fescue = a cool-season turf grass which performs best in fall, winter and spring; goes into a resting stage during the summer.

Monthly Fescue Lawn Care Calendar	
January	<p>Apply lime - pelletized (dust free & easy to apply) or pulverized (dolomitic) *you must have drop spreader to use pulverized dolomitic lime</p> <p>Stay off frozen turf! Mowing when frozen will leave tire tracks and damage growth</p>
February	<p>Fertilize fescue¹ mid-month</p> <p>Over seed² if necessary, as this is the best time in winter; only 50% as effective as fall over seeding (less root development)</p> <p>Stay off frozen turf! Mowing when frozen will leave tire tracks and damage growth</p>
March	<p>Apply pre-emergent³ (grassy weed preventer)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Dimension</u> & <u>Treflan-Balan</u> - neither are organic; <p><u>Espoma Weed Preventer Corn Gluten</u> is only organic option, but not as effective</p>
April	<p>Spring lawnmower maintenance - sharpen blades; change plug and air filter; change oil</p> <p>*Renfrow's sells all of this repair material & we also sharpen mower blades</p> <p>Use proper mower height⁴</p>
May	<p>Apply Broadleaf weed killer - WeedOut; Weedout with Q (for crabgrass)</p> <p>Apply for selective Bermuda control in Fescue - use Turflon Ester when Bermuda has broken dormancy</p> <p>Brown patch raises its ugly head (becomes active when night temperatures are above 70°F) - treat with F-Stop and/or Fertilome liquid systemic fungicide II</p> <p>If a greener lawn is desired, use Ironite instead of high-nitrogen fertilizer (helps prevent brown patch)</p>
June	<p>Recycle grass clippings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clippings don't cause thatch build-up in fescue. ➤ Don't put grass clippings in garden compost pile if you have used weed killers. <p>Play outside and enjoy your beautiful turf!</p> <p>Apply pre-emergent³ again for season-long crabgrass control (pre-emergents last 90 days)</p>
July	<p>Irrigate or water⁵ before noon to help prevent brown patch in summer heat & humidity</p> <p>Re-sharpen lawnmower blades as a clean cut is better for your grass - prevents brown patch - and is better for your mower</p>
August	<p>Apply Pre-emergent³ for annual bluegrass (early August)</p> <p>Make any necessary preparations for over seeding² in September (kill broadleaf weeds, selectively control Bermudagrass, line up an aerator if needed, etc)</p> <p>Irrigate or water⁵ before noon to help prevent brown patch in summer heat & humidity</p> <p>Watch for mole runs - kill grubs (their food source) and moles will go elsewhere.</p>

August <i>continued</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Grubs really harm grass by eating its roots so are actually far more damaging to the lawn than moles! ➤ Grub treatment – milky spore (organic) & Grub Free Zone (not organic) ➤ These grubs become Japanese beetles and Green June beetles (looks like a massive Japanese beetle), <i>yet another reason to kill the grubs!</i> <p><i>Ask us about how to trap-kill and/or poison moles.</i></p>
September	<p>Fertilize fescue¹ mid-month Over seed³ thin and/or bare patches Seeding Rates for Fescue² – see footnote Nighttime temperatures fall below 70°F in Sept and at those temps there is no seedling blight problem Use our Carolina Blend⁶ (full sun) & Shady Nook⁶ (sun & partial shade) brands</p>
October	<p>Over seed or start new lawn² Fertilize mid-month¹</p>
November	<p>Fertilize mid-month¹ – this is the <u>MOST IMPORTANT</u> time of year to fertilize your lawn Remove leaf debris from newly seeded turf (to prevent smothering)</p>
December	<p>Apply lime – pelletized (dust free & easy to apply) or pulverized (dolomitic) <i>*you must have drop spreader to use pulverized dolomitic lime</i> Stay off of frozen turf! Mowing when frozen will leave tire tracks and damage growth</p>

Footnotes

¹**Fertilizer Types.** *Follow instructions on bag purchased*

- Espoma Organic lawn fertilizer
- **9-13-7 – starter fertilizer;** phosphorous is needed for new lawns as it promotes root growth
 - Excess phosphorous cannot burn your lawn because it is not a salt; too much nitrogen and/or potassium *can* burn because they are salts
- **16-4-8 – maintenance fertilizer;** not for new seed; lots of nitrogen greens up lawn
- **26-0-3 maintenance fertilizer;** no phosphorous because phosphorous moves easily as runoff into lakes and streams and creates aquatic weed problems; lots of nitrogen greens up lawn

²**Seeding Rates**

- New lawn – 5-6 lbs per 1000 square feet
- Fescue over seed – 3 lbs per 1000 square feet

**Too much seed crowds growth and leads to increased brown patch & other disease problems*

³**Do not sow seed at same time as using a pre-emergent** as that will prevent fescue seed from germinating

⁴**Mowing height** – set mower at 3 inches or higher (usually highest setting) – the higher you mow, the deeper roots grow; fewer weeds grow because they're shaded out, more photosynthesis for healthier grass

⁵**Watering Rule of Thumb** – in absence of rain, apply 1 total inch of water per week (clay soil) – ½ inch twice per week

⁶**Carolina and Shady Nook grass seed blends** are based on turf grass trials at NCSU and designed for our local conditions. *Ask other stores in what region their grass seed grows best – most won't know!*

Additional Tips, Facts, and Words of Wisdom

Seed-to-soil contact is imperative when over seeding! Aeration and raking are valid options. Don't just toss the seed out on top of the lawn as you won't get great germination and growth.

"Continue mowing as long as grass is growing" but then stop during slow growth seasons & dormancy.

What about ryegrass? Over seeding your lawn with annual ryegrass is *not* ideal because ryegrass well in spring, crowding out the fescue, and then dies in early summer, leaving fescue in weakened condition just as the heat and rigor of summertime begins

All of our seed comes from Wyatt-Quarles Seed Company, a small family business based in Garner, NC. All seed is pure and weed-free seed with absolutely no noxious weeds. You cannot get that guarantee from most other grass seed companies. It is completely legal to sell grass seed with weed seed contaminants – read the labels!

Warm-season grasses like Bermuda, Zoysia and Centipede have the opposite growing season of fescue so don't care for them based on this calendar – for fescue only!

Have any other questions or problems that aren't covered here? Come see us and we will help you out!

On Saturdays we have our resident Plant Doctor, Ted Caudle, offer Weed Diagnostic Services and lawn treatment plans. *Bring in a small sample of the weed or troubled fescue.*