

Lawn Care Calendar

Zoysiagrass

Dr. John Boyd
Extension Weed Scientist

These suggested maintenance practices will help you care for your lawn throughout the year. Because every site is different due to variations in location, terrain, soil type, condition of lawn, previous lawn care and other factors, adjust these practices and dates to suit your home lawn.

Zoysiagrasses are very low, slow-growing, sod-forming grasses that make a very dense, wear-resistant lawn. Zoysiagrass grows well in full sun or partial shade. It requires less mowing but is tougher to mow and easier to keep out of flowerbeds than bermudagrass. It is very slow to achieve complete ground-cover when plugged (typically two to three years) and slow to recover from injury.

Zoysiagrass is well adapted to all of Arkansas and is usually vegetatively planted. Seeded zoysiagrasses

are available but do not germinate well and lack some of the desirable characteristics of the vegetatively propagated varieties.

Zoysiagrasses perform best when mowed with reel mowers; however, good performance can be achieved using a rotary mower with sharp blades set as low as possible without scalping. Uneven terrain may prevent zoysiagrass from being mowed as short as desired.

Zoysiagrass varieties available within Arkansas include Crowne, Palisades, Meyer, Emerald, El Toro, Cavalier and Empress. Meyer is the most widely available zoysiagrass in Arkansas. Other varieties may require some effort to locate.

Zoysiagrasses are subject to diseases such as rust and large patch, which is sometimes referred to as brown patch.

March Through May

Mowing	Begin mowing when the grass turns green in the spring. Zoysiagrass should be mowed at 1 to 1.5 inches, but higher mowing heights may be needed on rough lawns to avoid scalping. Mow before the grass grows taller than 1 1/2 to 2 inches. It isn't necessary to collect clippings unless they are thick enough to block sunlight. Mowing more frequently to avoid clipping buildup is more efficient than emptying the collection bag.
Fertilization	Apply 1/2 pound of nitrogen per thousand square feet approximately three weeks after the grass turns green. In absence of a soil test, use a complete (N-P-K) turf-grade fertilizer with a 3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio (for example, 12-4-8 or 24-6-12). Submit a soil sample to determine nutrient requirements, if you haven't already. (Contact your county Extension office.) Apply lime if suggested. Do not apply more than 2 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per year. To determine the amount of fertilizer product required to apply 1/2 pound of nitrogen per thousand square feet, divide 50 by the first number in the fertilizer ratio. For example, for a 5-5-15 fertilizer, divide 50 by 5. The result is 10 pounds of product per thousand square feet.

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March Through May (cont.)

Watering	Water to wet the soil to a depth of 4 to 6 inches. Probe with a screwdriver to determine moisture depth. Zoysiagrass needs a weekly application of 1 to 1 1/4 inches of water. On sandy soils, it requires more frequent watering – for example, 1/2 inch of water every third day. It is often necessary to irrigate an area for three to five hours to apply 1 inch of water. (It takes 620 gallons of water to apply 1 inch of water per thousand square feet.) Because clay soils accept water slowly, irrigate these areas until runoff occurs; wait one-half hour until the water has been absorbed, and then continue irrigating until the desired depth or amount is obtained. A dark bluish gray color, foot printing and wilted, folded or curled leaves indicate that it is time to water. Proper irrigation may prevent or reduce pest problems and environmental stress later in the summer.
Disease Control	Watch for brown patch – circular patches of brown grass up to several feet in diameter. Achieving control of brown patch with fungicides is difficult at best. A better approach is to improve drainage and air movement and carefully manage nitrogen fertilization and irrigation. Reduce nitrogen fertilization to a minimum and avoid overwatering.
Weed Control	Apply preemergence herbicides to control crabgrass and other summer annual grasses in late February or early March. Apply postemergence herbicides in May as needed to control summer annual and perennial broadleaf weeds such as knotweed, spurge and lespedeza. Products containing two or three broadleaf herbicides are usually more effective in controlling several different broadleaf weeds in a lawn. Be sure the product is labeled for use on zoysiagrass. Apply only if weeds are present and wait until three weeks after the grass turns green. See FSA 2109, <i>Home Lawn Weed Control</i> , for more weed control information.
Insect Control	Check for white grubs and control if necessary.
Renovation	Replant large bare areas using sod or plugs planted on 6- or 12-inch centers. Applying a preemergence herbicide that does not interfere with root growth after plugging helps prevent weed encroachment. Crabgrass, annual sedges and sandbur can be controlled with MSMA. Two applications 5 to 7 days apart are required for effective control.

June Through August

Mowing	Zoysiagrass should be mowed at 1 to 2 inches every 5 to 7 days. Less frequent mowing will result in reduced turfgrass quality. Zoysiagrass on shaded sites may be mowed slightly higher than a lawn in full sun. It isn't necessary to collect clippings unless they are thick enough to block sunlight. Mowing more frequently to avoid clipping buildup is more efficient than emptying the collection bag.
Fertilization	Apply 1/2 pound of nitrogen per thousand square feet in late June or early July and repeat in mid-August using March-May fertilizer guidelines.
Watering	Water to wet the soil to a depth of 4 to 6 inches. Probe with a screwdriver to determine moisture depth. Zoysiagrass needs a weekly application of 1 to 1 1/4 inches of water. On sandy soils, it requires more frequent watering – for example, 1/2 inch of water every third day. It is often necessary to irrigate an area for three to five hours to apply 1 inch of water. (It takes 620 gallons of water to apply 1 inch of water per thousand square feet.) Because clay soils accept water slowly, irrigate these areas until runoff occurs; wait one-half hour until the water has been absorbed, and then continue irrigating until the desired depth or amount is obtained. A dark bluish gray color, foot printing and wilted, folded or curled leaves indicate that it is time to water. Proper irrigation may prevent or reduce pest problems and environmental stress later in the summer.
Disease Control	Watch for brown patch – circular patches of brown grass up to several feet in diameter. Achieving control of brown patch with fungicides is difficult at best. A better approach is to improve drainage and air movement and carefully manage nitrogen fertilization and irrigation. Reduce nitrogen fertilization to a minimum and avoid overwatering.
Weed Control	Apply postemergence herbicides as needed to control summer annual and perennial broadleaf weeds such as knotweed, spurge and lespedeza. Do not apply postemergence herbicides unless weeds are present, grass is actively growing and the lawn is not suffering from drought stress.
Insect Control	Check for white grubs and control if necessary. August is the best time to control grubs because they are small and close to the soil surface.

September Through November	
Mowing	Zoysiagrass should be mowed at 1 to 2 inches every 5 to 7 days. Less frequent mowing will result in reduced turfgrass quality. Zoysiagrass on shaded sites may be mowed slightly higher than a lawn in full sun. It isn't necessary to collect clippings unless they are thick enough to block sunlight. Mowing more frequently to avoid clipping buildup is more efficient than emptying the collection bag.
Fertilization	Fertilize with 1 pound of potash using 1.6 pounds of muriate of potash (0-0-60) per thousand square feet. To determine amount of product required to apply 1 pound of potash per thousand square feet, divide 100 by the third number in the fertilizer ratio. For example, for a 10-0-40 fertilizer, divide 100 by 40. The result is 10 pounds of product per thousand square feet.
Watering	Follow the March through May irrigation guidelines. Dormant zoysiagrass may still need to be watered periodically when warm, windy weather prevails.
Disease Control	Watch for brown patch – circular patches of brown grass up to several feet in diameter. Achieving control of brown patch with fungicides is difficult at best. A better approach is to improve drainage and air movement and carefully manage nitrogen fertilization and irrigation. Reduce nitrogen fertilization to a minimum and avoid overwatering.
Weed Control	Apply preemergence or postemergence herbicides as needed to control winter annual and perennial broadleaf weeds such as chickweed and henbit. Preemergence herbicides will not control existing perennial weeds. Apply postemergence herbicides only when weeds are present.
December Through February	
Fertilization	Do not fertilize.
Watering	Dormant zoysiagrass may need to be irrigated periodically to prevent desiccation especially when warm, windy weather prevails.
Weed Control	Apply broadleaf herbicides as necessary to control chickweed, henbit and hop clover. Selective herbicides can be applied in November or December to control annual bluegrass (<i>Poa annua</i>) and several annual broadleaf weeds. Apply postemergence herbicides only when weeds are present.

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DR. JOHN BOYD is Extension weed scientist with the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, in Little Rock.

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