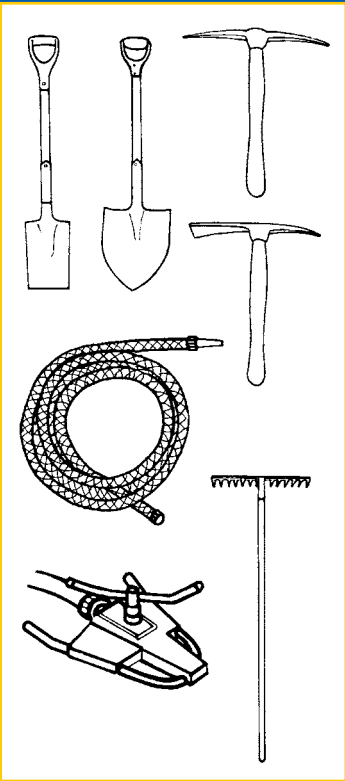


Tools for the job



Mattock or Pick
Spade and/or Shovel
Metal Garden Rake
Garden Hose
Soft Spray or Mist Sprinkler
Hired Rotary Hoe



All the help you need

✓ Your Materials Checklist		
		PRICE
	pH Soil Test Kit	
	Lime and/or Gypsum	
	Lawn Fertiliser	
	Starter Fertiliser	
	Grass Seed	
	Weed Killer (such as Zero or Round-Up)	
	Heavy Timber Board	
	Scrap piece of timber	

Verbal quotes are indicative only. Written quotes on materials are available upon request from your Mitre 10 store.

Step 7: Keeping your lawn green

Feeding: Apply a solid or liquid fertiliser at least 2-3 times a year. Follow directions carefully and water in well to totally dissolve the fertiliser, or you could end up with brown patches or, worse, kill the grass completely.

Watering: One deep, uniform soaking per week is usually all a lawn needs, even in hot dry seasons.

Weed & Disease Control: Most weeds can be controlled with a selective weed killer. Some, like Yates 'Weed 'n' Feed', also fertilise at the same time. Hormone weed killers, such as 'Zero' and 'Round-Up' should not be used on lawns less than two months old.

Mowing: Generally, aim to cut no lower than 2-3cm. Cutting at almost ground level is a sure way to kill your lawn and encourage weeds.

Acidity: Use your pH Soil Test Kit to test for acidity each year. If the pH reading is 6.0 or lower, apply garden lime.

Aerating: This helps to improve fertiliser and water penetration. Use a hollow tined lawn corer or jab a garden fork into the soil as far as the tines will go (Fig. 8). If you do this in spring, less frequent and more effective watering is possible during summer.



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10/10 handy hints to make the job easier.

■ Cultivating to a depth over 15cm just isn't worth the effort – that's about the depth of the average grass root.

■ After applying gypsum to clay soils, top dress with about 5cm of sandy loam to give seeds a better chance of germinating.

■ After cultivating and levelling the site, let it stand a week or two to settle. This gives any weed seeds a chance to germinate (and be removed) before you sow your grass seeds.

■ To level the site, drag a heavy board over the surface to even out bumps and hollows.

■ Before sowing, be careful not to compact the soil too much – grass roots have a tough enough time without trying to grow through very hard soil.

■ Mix your grass seed with fine soil or sand before scattering it – you'll get better and more even coverage.

■ Keep newly sown lawns moist but not too wet – water twice a day especially on windy or sunny days.

■ Wait until there's about 6cm of growth before mowing and then only trim off the top 2cms.

MITREPLAN



Grow the perfect lawn

IMPORTANT: This project planner has been produced to provide basic information and our experienced staff are available to answer any questions you may have. However, this information is provided for use on the understanding that Mitre 10 is not liable for any claim, cost, expense, loss or damage which is suffered or incurred (including but not limited to indirect or consequential loss), for any personal injury or damage to property suffered or sustained as a result of or arising out of or in any way connected with using the information contained in this MitrePlan Project Planner. Mitre 10 advises you to call in a qualified tradesperson, such as an electrician or plumber, where expert services are required, and to independently assess any safety precautions that will need to be followed prior to using the information in this MitrePlan Project Planner.

WARNING: There may be by laws or regulations of councils or other statutory bodies that you must comply with when following this MitrePlan Project Planner.



Your local MITRE 10 Store is:

MITRE 10
All the help you need

MITREPLAN

Grow the perfect lawn



MITRE 10 All the help you need

GARDEN PLANNER

An easy-to-follow guide to achieving a 10/10 result.

Outlines all the tools you will need for the job.

Including materials checklist.

PLEASE NOTE: Before starting this project or buying any materials, it is well worth your time to read through all steps first to be sure you understand what is required.

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No. 17

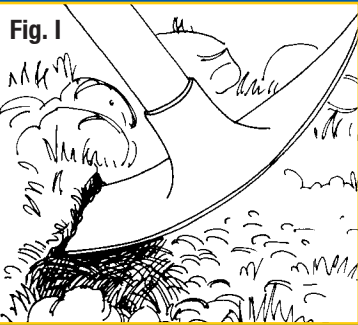
www.mitre10.com.au

It's easy to grow a 10/10 lawn – with a little help from Mitre 10.

A lush green carpet of lawn surrounding even a modest suburban home makes it seem more attractive, more impressive. But a good quality lawn can not only add to the appearance of your home, it can also increase its value, prevent soil erosion and help to absorb heat and noise to keep your environment cooler and quieter.

A beautiful lawn requires only a little more effort to prepare and maintain than a bad one, but the results are well worth the extra time. And in this Mitre 10 Project Planner, we show you step-by-step how to go about it. It's a job you can tackle with confidence and it will give you great satisfaction.

And when you plant your new lawn, why not install a permanent pop-up watering system? They're easy to install and can save you time, effort and water.



Step 1: Planning

When shaping a new lawn, avoid corners or peaks too narrow for mowing – use groundcovers or bark mulches instead. Plan an expanse of lawn rather than cutting up the area with little garden beds which make mowing difficult. Your lawn will also need to come up to path levels and other established points like gates, fences, pool, etc.

If possible, avoid very shaded positions – most grass species do not take kindly to shade under trees or beside buildings and fences. Use such areas for paving or bark-chips instead. For banks, consider planting ground covers which hold the soil better than grass and require little maintenance.

Also plan to plant in the periods that will give the best chance of success. Generally, this is in the spring or autumn, as summer and winter are usually too extreme for successful germination. Autumn is probably your safest time. Young grass planted in spring requires more water through summer and may not survive extreme heat.

Step 2: What type of lawn?

It's important to choose a grass variety that is suitable for the climate and your soil type. It also must suit your lifestyle. Is it to be just ornamental? Or will it need to stand up to children's play and other outdoor living activities?

There's a variety of brands and grass seed mixtures on the market, from hardy mixes that love direct sunlight to shade loving blends for under trees and in quiet corners. So you'll be able to find a mixture to suit any situation. Many also contain slow release nitrogen granules to progressively fertilise and assist early growth. Some also blend in clovers to help improve soil fertility.

You might even consider a non-grass lawn, such as Dichondra (kidney weed) which gives a smooth, green lawn that needs no mowing and is suitable for sun or light shade. If you have any trouble deciding, ask at Mitre 10. We're happy to assist you.

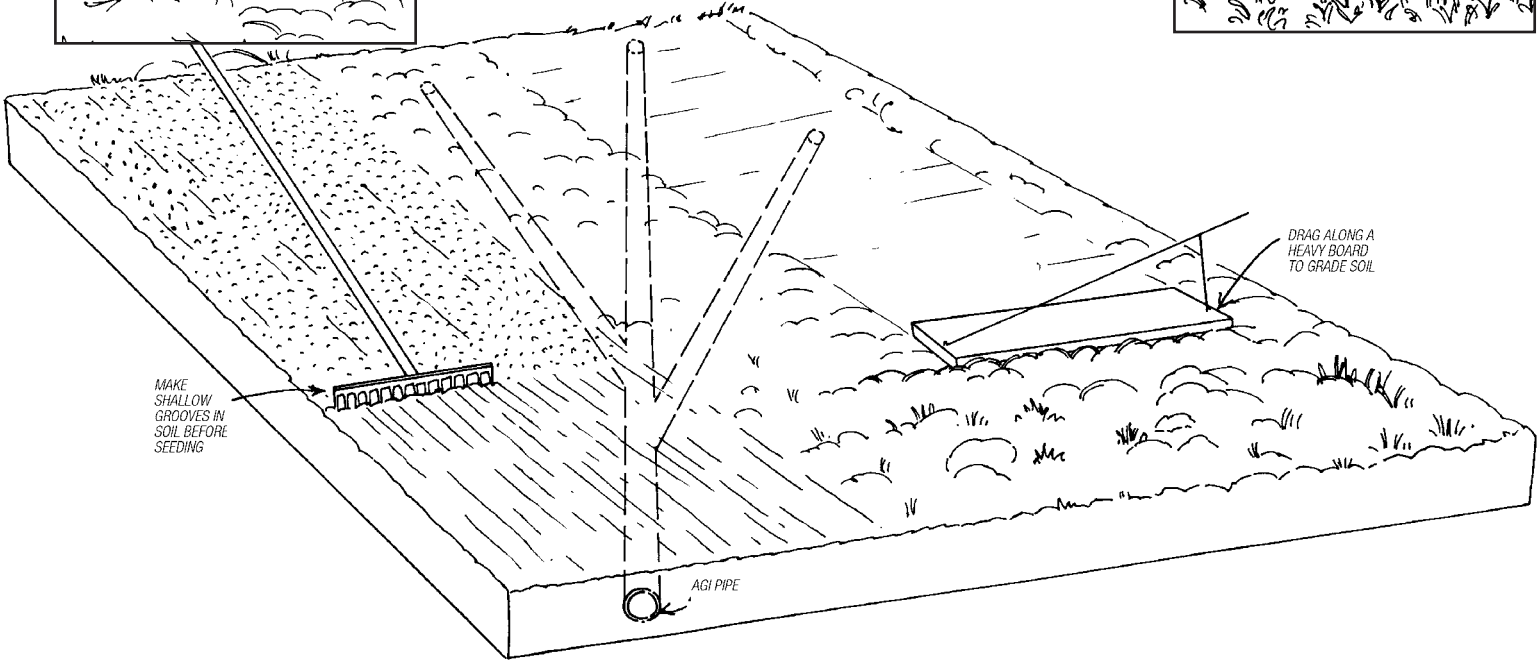
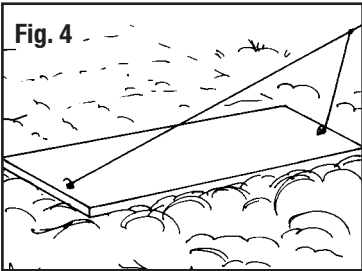
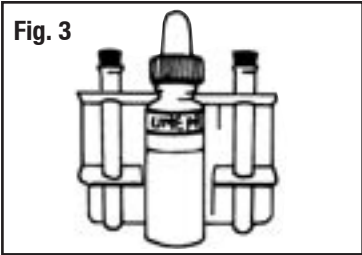
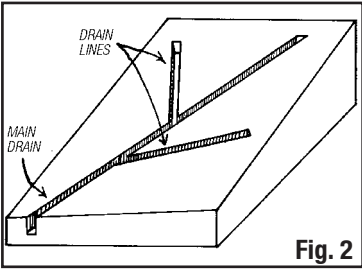
Step 3: Site Preparation

The success of your lawn depends very much on proper preparation. This includes cultivation, drainage, soil improvement and grading or levelling. The objective is to have a firm, granular, well-drained, weed-free soil that is neutral or slightly acid.

Cultivation

Use your mattock or pick to first remove all stones, rocks, big lumps of clay and other rubble (Fig. 1). Cultivation (digging and turning the soil over) will destroy most annual weeds, and 'Zero' or 'Round-Up' can be used to kill more persistent varieties. Dig the soil to spade depth – about 15cm.

If it's a large area or clay soil, you'd be better off hiring a rotary hoe. It will also help if you water the area the day before you dig or rotary hoe. Water the newly dug soil well and leave it for a few weeks.



This will allow weeds to come up so you can kill them before sowing your lawn seed.

Drainage

Look to see if water is draining away satisfactorily next time it rains, or if it lies about. If drainage is poor, lay in some Agi Pipe or Slotted Drain Pipe now. Poorly drained lawns develop problems with mosses and other water-loving weeds which will give you years of trouble. For a small site, only one drain running across the middle and following the natural fall of the land is needed.

For larger areas, set feeder drains at an angle of about 40 deg (Fig. 2). Set drain lines about 22cm deep and fill to near the surface with 6mm gravel or crushed rock, then sand.

Soil Improvement

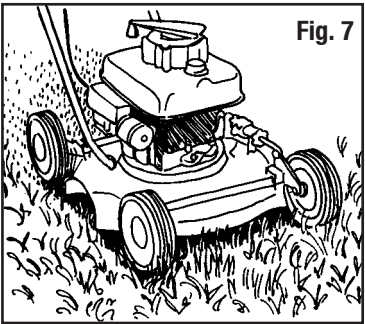
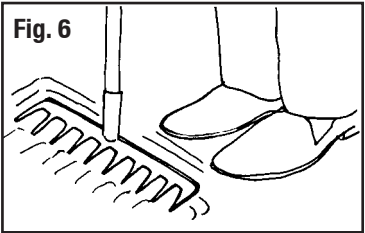
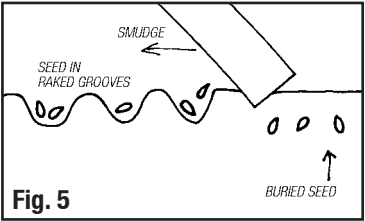
If you have heavy clay soil, now's the time to improve soil structure and water penetration by applying gypsum at 1 or 2kg per sq. metre. Top dress this with about 5cm of sandy loam and cultivate to about 10cm deep.

Use your pH Soil Test Kit to check the soil acidity (Fig. 3). Many soils are too acid (sour) for good growth and an acidity reading below 6.0 means the soil should be treated with garden lime to correct it. Apply the lime at about 200g per sq. metre.

Also add a complete lawn fertiliser to stimulate weed growth that otherwise may not appear until after sowing.

Grading

Level off high spots and fill hollows either by using your garden rake or by attaching a rope to a heavy board and dragging it over the site



(Fig. 4). If a heavy board isn't handy, fasten several lighter ones together. Your drag rope must be attached about 7 or 8cm back from the front edge. If it's too far back, the front edge will bite too deeply. If it's too far forward, the board will just skim the surface without scraping off the bumps. Make sure the soil is not too compacted though. If it feels spongy underfoot, dampen it and give it a good rolling or systematically tread the soft spots to consolidate them.

Step 4: Sow your seed

To begin, use a starter-type fertiliser even if your seed mixture contains a small amount of release fertiliser. Follow the instructions on the pack and rake into the surface.

Seed should be placed at a fairly shallow depth, generally about 5 to 10mm below the surface. Use your metal rake to make shallow grooves in the soil, then scatter seed evenly over the area. Sow half your seed in an east-west direction, and the remaining half in a north-south direction. This will ensure a more even coverage. Lightly smudge across the surface with a piece of timber to bury the seed in the grooves (Fig. 5) and firm down the surface with your rake head (Fig 6). Don't worry if the seed is not all covered.

To ensure even sowing, try mixing your seed with dry white sand if your soil is dark, or a black sandy loam for light coloured soils. Mix about one part seed with three parts of the bulk material. The different coloured materials make it easier to see where you have been and where you have missed and help to prevent too much seed being dropped in one place.

Step 5: Watering

After sowing, it's essential that the soil surface is kept continually moist using the finest of sprinklers – heavy watering may cause run-off and wash away some of the seed resulting in patchy growth. Water twice a day to ensure that the soil does not dry out.

Some grasses – particularly 'Ryegrass' – germinate within a week under good conditions. Others can take two-three weeks. As the grass grows, reduce watering – in the second week you should water once a day, in the third week, every second day. Twice a week should be ample by the end of the first month. After three months, give your lawn a weekly soaking, except in very hot and drying weather on very light sandy soils.

Step 6: Mowing

Do not begin mowing until your new grass is about 6cm high. Mower blades should be sharp and you should remove no more than 1/3 of the grass length at one time, or use a blade length no lower than 4cm (Fig. 7). On future cuts, you can gradually lower the blades, but remember – longer lawns give healthier growth and look more luxurious.