

## Zoysia Grass



- **Category:** Lawn
- **Type:** Evergreen
- **Exposure:** Full Sun / Part Shade
- **Foliage:** Dark Green
- **Form:** Medium Texture
- **Zones:** 6 to 11
- **Drought Tolerance:** High
- **Scientific Name:** *Zoysia spp.*
- **Usage:** Groundcover



### Introduction

Zoysia grasses are sod-forming perennial species that possess both stolons and rhizomes. The grasses turn brown after the first hard frost and are among the first warm season grasses to green up in the spring. The species vary from extremely fine textured to coarse textured types and the leaf blades are very stiff to high silica content.

### Use and Management

A highly versatile species, Zoysia grasses make ideal lawn grasses in some situations and can be used on golf courses, parks, and athletic fields. They can grow in all kinds of soils ranging from sands to clays and both acid and alkaline in reaction.

In the southern U.S., the Zoysia grasses grow well in moderately shaded locations. In cooler climates, Zoysia grass does not perform as well under shade as some other species.

Zoysia grass is extremely drought tolerant. Although it does turn straw colored under severe drought conditions, it has the capacity to respond to subsequent irrigation or rainfall. Its water requirements are similar to Bermuda grass. The leaf blades are among the first to roll, under drought conditions, thus tending to conserve moisture more effectively than other species. Zoysia grass also has a deep root system allowing it to more effectively extract water from greater soil depths.

Zoysia grasses are the most tolerant turf grasses. However, their slow rate of growth gives them very poor recuperative potential. Therefore, they perform satisfactorily on lawns, golf course fairways. But, they are not recommended for football or soccer fields where traffic is concentrated in certain areas of the field. If the grass is completely worn in those areas, Zoysia grass is very slow to fill in the damaged areas.

Occasionally, thatch removal by mechanical means is required to prevent serious deterioration of Zoysia turf. Scalping the lawn in early spring to remove accumulated growth will also help prevent thatch accumulation.



# Zoysia Grass Continued

## **Planting**

Zoysia grass can be planted from seed, but the hybrids are sterile; therefore, hybrids must be sodded. To maintain growth, Zoysia requires 1 to 2 inches of water per week during mid-summer, although it can survive on less than 1 inch per week. Water should be applied 2 to 3 times per week depending on temperatures and soil conditions. Sandy soils require more frequent irrigations than heavier clay soils; and as temperature increases, irrigation frequency must increase. During prolonged droughts when it is impractical to water enough to maintain growth, weekly applications of as little as 0.5 inch of water are adequate to keep grass alive.

During dry winter months, Zoysia grass requires occasional irrigation to prevent desiccation and serious loss of stand even though the grass may be dormant.

## **Insects**

White grubs are the major insects attacking Zoysia grass turf. Monitoring the soil underlying the turf during summer and fall is the most effective way of preventing a grub problem. When populations of grubs exceed 4 to 5 per square foot of turf, treatment with insecticides is recommended.

## **Diseases**

Zoysia grasses are relatively free of serious pest problems. Brownpatch, rust and leaf spot diseases can cause problems. Fungicides may be needed to prevent these diseases. In the fall, applications of Banner, Daconil or Bayleton are required to prevent rust on Zoysia lawns.

