



Caring for Ornamental Grasses

PLANTING: Dig a hole slightly wider and deeper than the pot the grass is growing in. Gently break up the root ball of the grass after you take it out of the pot. Plant your ornamental grass at the same level that it's growing in its pot. You can work a little compost into the soil that you'll be using to fill in around the grass. Gently fill in around the root ball, firming the soil/compost mixture as you go, but avoid packing it down. Add a layer of bark mulch around it if you want.

WATERING: *Thoroughly soak* the entire root ball of the grass every day to every two days, especially if the weather is warm. This usually means hand watering it, as most sprinkler systems won't get the job done. Continue to water frequently during the plant's first summer. This applies to drought tolerant grasses as well as ones that require more water.

PRUNING: Cut your grasses down in March or early April. If your grass has grown very tall or very thick, tie it together with bungee cords about 2 feet up. Then use sharp hedge trimmers or even an electric hedge trimmer to cut the stems about 5-6 inches from the ground. If you're using regular garden pruners, it helps facilitate the job if they've been recently sharpened. Cut down these grasses earlier in March: Karl Foerster Reed Grass, Overdam Reed Grass, Eldorado Reed Grass, Avalanche Reed Grass, Korean Feather Reed Grass, Northern Sea Oats, Tufted Hair Grass, and Mexican Feather Grass. These grasses can wait till later in March or early April: Big Blue Stem, Little Blue Stem, Blue Grama, all Maiden Grasses, all Switch Grasses, all Fountain Grasses, Hardy Pampas Grass, and Giant Sacaton. Blue Fescue and Blue Oat Grass can be cut back early in March, or you can gently run your hands through the grass once the new leaves sprout; this will remove the old growth from the previous year.

FERTILIZING: Most ornamental grasses need very little fertilizer. If you've amended the soil with compost, you won't need to fertilize. Grasses will become floppy if over fertilized.



GRASSES FOR FULL SUN (6+ HOURS OF DIRECT SUN EACH DAY):

Big Blue Stem	Variegated Maiden Grass (Japanese Silver)
Blue Grama	Zebra Grass (Porcupine Grass)
'Blonde Ambition' Blue Grama	Yaku Jima Maiden Grass
Karl Foerster Reed Grass	Mexican Feather Grass
Overdam Reed Grass	Shenandoah Switch Grass
Avalanche Reed Grass	Heavy Metal Switch Grass
Eldorado Reed Grass	Dallas Blues Switch Grass
Korean Feather Reed Grass	Northwind Switch Grass
Blue Fescue	Hameln Fountain Grass
Blue Oat Grass	Little Bunny Fountain Grass
Adagio Maiden Grass	Karley Rose Fountain Grass
Gracillimus Maiden Grass	Little Blue Stem Grass
Morning Light Maiden Grass	Hardy Pampas Grass
Purple Flame Maiden Grass	Giant Sacaton Grass

GRASSES FOR PART SUN TO SHADE (LESS THAN 4-6 HOURS A DAY):

Northern Sea Oats	Northern Lights Hair Grass
River Mist Northern Sea Oats	Japanese Forest Grass
Tufted Hair Grass	

*River Mist Northern Sea Oats and Japanese Forest Grass can take dappled shade and full shade.