



3601 Bee Caves Rd.
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There are a few simple steps to have that lush, jalapeño-green lawn. This guide is designed to help with the timing and types of products and tasks to help achieve this, but is not meant to be a problem-solver. Certain aspects, like proper species-selection for sun, soil and water are assumed (i.e. Bermuda is appropriate for a short-cut, full sun area with well-drained soil, but St. Augustine is not.) Consult BSN staff for more specific instructions and recommendations.

Basic Lawn Care Tips by Month

January: Keep irrigation to a minimum, but not totally off unless there has been rain. 1" every 3-4 weeks is plenty. Too much water invites fungus and rot. If you've had Brown Patch in the past, which is a fungus that typically manifests in circular or rounded patterns, it is a good time to spray **Actinovate®** biological fungicide to protect the lawn, and spreading a dusting of **Peat Moss** is helpful as well in prevention, as it makes a less-hospitable environment for any fungi.

February: This is a great time to topdress with 1/4" compost. **Dillo Dirt, Fine-Screened Cotton Burr Compost**, and/or **Acidified Cotton Burr Compost** are great choices, as they have trace amounts of a wide spectrum of nutrients to feed the soil, and the soil-organisms that suppress diseases that may have developed in cool, moist soil. If you have experienced problems with warm-season weeds in the past, **Corn Gluten** is a natural pre-emergent that will help a great deal if applied **before** the weeds germinate. February is typically ideal. We do not recommend using chemical "weed and feed" type products *at all*.

March: Once the weather has warmed to normal spring temperatures (no risk of freezing), it is time to start irrigation at 1" per week for established lawns. It is important to note that infrequent, deep irrigation fosters healthier grass with deeper root systems. It is also time to apply your first fertilization. Avoid fast-release ("greens quickly..!") fertilizers and opt for something like **Hou-Actinite, Growin' Green**, or **8-2-4**, which are natural, slow-release complete fertilizers, which means they provide micronutrients as well as macronutrients to boost the lawn and set a healthy growing season in motion. Begin a regimen of fertilizing every 6 to 8 weeks, beginning in March. An iron supplement or iron/sulfur supplement will usually deepen the hue of green, and is the "lawn nerd's secret." Iron is typically very beneficial in Central Texas' high pH soils. **Iron Sulfate (aka "Copperas")** is granular product that you can use for that iron/sulfur punch, or you can use a liquid product like **Soil Acidifier Plus Iron** if you prefer using liquids, which usually act faster, but are more fleeting.

A technique to annually invigorate the lawn is to mow *slightly* lower than you will ultimately keep the height of the blades for the first mowing of the growing season only. For example, St. Augustine should typically be kept at 3.5", but for the first mowing, 3" would be a good height to give the lawn a good jump start, and clear out some thatch. That being said, from the second mowing to the last of the growing season, you ought to never remove more than 1/3 of the grass blade's length at a time. If you get behind, it is better to lower the mowing platform incrementally over a week or two to gradually lower the lawn's height than to remove more than 1/3 the length at a time. It is beneficial to leave the clippings from the lawn on the soil surface, rather than bagging them. If, for aesthetic reasons, you



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prefer to remove the clippings, just recognize that you've disrupted the natural cycle, and topdressing with compost and/or natural fertilizers is even more critical.

If you have had a lot of June beetles, or have experienced grub damage in the past, March is an excellent timeframe to apply beneficial nematodes. They will protect the yard – naturally – from a grub infestation, and also kill tick, flea, mole cricket and fire ant populations. Follow the directions on the package.

April, May, June: For basic care, make sure to maintain sharp blades, and mow frequently; every week or every other week is ideal. Also, making sure that 1" of water is applied evenly each week is a good idea in the absence of rain. Make sure to know your watering schedule if restrictions are in place (as they are in Austin). For that extra "cherry on top," apply *Liquid Seaweed w/ Iron* or *Hasta-Gro Lawn* every 2-3 weeks as a foliar solution.

July: As summer wears on, it is a good time to fertilize at half-strength in July, with the above-listed fertilizers (see March) to help nourish the grass through extreme heat. It is a good time to stop using high nitrogen fertilizers (where the first of three numbers on the package is above 10) if you have been using them at all.

August, September: Heat! Often, this is when Take-All Root Rot is most pronounced, particularly with St. Augustine grass. An application of *Actinovate*® biological fungicide is the best product to begin the process of recovery, but sometimes replacement of pieces is necessary if the disease has done significant damage.

October: If you haven't topdressed with compost this year, do it in October, as well as applying *Corn Gluten* for winter weeds (see February for details). This is a great time to **aerate** with a core-aerator if you have compacted soil or thatch build-up. All fertilization for the year ought to conclude by October 's end (unless you're overseeding). If you do want to overseed with winter rye, do not apply corn gluten, as its pre-emergent properties will inhibit the rye's germination. If you do want to give the lawn a proper "winterization," the *Growin' Green* fertilizer is a good choice, as the Nitrogen is organic slow-release, and the percentage of Potassium is adequate to fortify roots for the cold season. Potassium (the third of three macronutrients listed on the package by %) is essential for strong roots in winter.

November, December: If you're going to overseed with winter rye, early to mid-November is a good time to do it. Keep the overseeded area moist until germination is complete, which may require hand-watering. A 90°F day will kill rye, so don't jump the gun if it's still warm! If you're not overseeding, reduce irrigation to an "as-needed" basis, and irrigate only in the absence of rain to achieve 1" every 3-4 weeks.



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Recommended Mowing Height

Buffalograss, Blue Grama, Curly Mesquite	3"
Zoysia japonica ("Palisades," "El Toro," "JaMur") Thick-bladed	2.5-3
Zoysia matrella ("Zeon," "Zorro," "Geo") Thin-bladed	$\frac{3}{4}$ "-3"
Hybrid Bermuda ("Tif 419," "Celebration," "Discovery," "TifGrand")	$\frac{3}{4}$ "-2"
Common Bermuda	2-3"
Perennial Rye	2-3"
Fescue	2.5-3"
St. Augustine	2.5-4"