



ST. AUGUSTINE GRASS

St. Augustine grass is one of the more coarse species of grass and its typical use is for lawns. St. Augustine grass is also considered to be a shade tolerant grass and can be grown successfully in most of Texas. This particular species of grass is not as durable in colder climates so the North Texas area tends to be one of the more difficult areas to grow and maintain St. Augustine grass. However, do not let that dissuade you as, although it may be more difficult, it can be done and provides a beautiful finished product.

Here are five general tips for maintaining a healthy St. Augustine lawn.

1. **Get a Soil Test.** Having a soil test done will provide you the information you need to determine what type of fertilizer you need to use as well as whether you need to apply lime to your soil.
2. **Stay Sharp.** No, not you but the blade on your mower. It is absolutely critical to mow your St. Augustine grass with a sharp blade. Mowing your lawn with a dull blade leaves rough edges on the grass and opens it up to potential diseases. Keep the blade sharp and it will go a long way in helping keep your St. Augustine grass healthy.
3. **Don't Bag Those Clippings.** It might make for a nicer appearance but bagging your grass clippings is detrimental to a healthy lawn. The clippings act as an organic fertilizer and help keep the soil healthy.
4. **Height Matters.** Is your St. Augustine grass in a sunny area or a shady area? If it's in a shady area, set your mower blade to approximately 3 ½ inches. If the grass is in a mostly sunny area set the blade closer to 2 ½ inches. "Why," you ask? Well, although it may mean you need to mow your lawn more often, these heights help promote stronger root growth which ultimately leads to a healthier, more beautiful lawn.
5. **Keep the Bugs Away.** A common problem with St. Augustine grass, especially in the hotter summer months is the presence of chinch bugs. Chinch bugs attack the hottest parts of the lawn and leave a yellow, dry-looking grass in their wake. If you suspect you have a chinch bug problem, take action immediately. Chinch bugs are capable of killing large areas of your St. Augustine grass. Your best bet is to call a professional to handle the situation but if you choose to deal with it yourself, you'll want to use a general-purpose turf insecticide to kill them. They can come back so make sure you stay on top of the situation.