4. Pick the Right Grass Seed

The Chesapeake Bay watershed is in a transition zone between warm-season and cool-season grasses. Accordingly, most of the seed available commercially is made up of native or non-native cultivars that are cultivated specifically for drought resistance and other traits. Recommended Cultivars, Mowing Heights, and Fertilizer (source: University of Maryland Cooperative Extension)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Grass</th>
<th>Mowing Height (inches)</th>
<th>Release Fertilizer*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring/Fall</td>
<td>Fall/Winter</td>
<td>Spring/Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tall Fescue</td>
<td>2.5–3.5</td>
<td>2.5–3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebration</td>
<td>2.5–3–3</td>
<td>2.5–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triumph</td>
<td>2.5–3–3</td>
<td>2.5–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky Bluegrass</td>
<td>2.5–3–3</td>
<td>2.5–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tall Fescue</td>
<td>2.5–3–3</td>
<td>2.5–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid Ryegrass</td>
<td>2.5–3–3</td>
<td>2.5–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bermuda Grass</td>
<td>0.5–1</td>
<td>0.5–1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoysiagrass</td>
<td>0.5–1</td>
<td>0.5–1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Watering Your Lawn

Summer droughts made with high temperatures are not uncommon in the Bay watershed, so consider your lawn as one element in the network. Dormant grass will begin to brown at the top, but will retain healthy roots. Once the rain and cooler temperatures return in the fall, your lawn will regain its green luster.

If you do choose to water:

- **water as needed**: dig 6” down and check moisture levels in the soil;
- **water in the morning to reduce evaporation**: and the soil;
- **water slowly and deeply**: and the soil with their tunnels, so think twice about eradicating moles eat Japanese beetle grubs and other subterranean insects that can damage your lawn. They also eat the soil with their tunnels, so think twice about eradicating insects. If you notice grubs, tamp them down with a hoe or by walking on them.
- **add water gradually**: and usage to fit your needs.
- **monitor water use**: and adjust your equipment and usage to fit your needs.
- **consider using a manual mower or rechargeable lawnmower**: or a lawn tractor?
Testing is one of the most important lawn care steps and one of the most frequently ignored. Soil test kits and supplies can be obtained from your local Cooperative Extension office or state or regional laboratories (go to cef.org/landscaping for more information).

Take soil samples in mid to late spring or in the early fall, if possible.

Ask for organic recommendations.

See national brands (e.g., organically certified) that have reduced fertilizers instead of synthetic, water-soluble fertilizers, if organic is recommended. (Remember the maximum amount of nitrogen is 0.5 lb. nitrogen per 1,000 square feet in any given application.)

Fertilizers and Compost

Small changes in your lawn-care routine will teach you some of the best ways to make about protecting water quality, this brochure huge environmental and public health concern for the Chesapeake Bay (Source: Center for Watershed Protection survey). Half of all lawns are fertilized, mostly with synthetic fertilizers; half of those lawns are overfertilized. Did you know?

(go to cbf.org/landscaping for more information). Check with your local Extension office or one of their recommended laboratories for more information.

Fertilizer overuse is encouraged by lawn care companies and fertilizer manufacturers:

Some frequently used fertilizer terms can usually be corrected by following Steps 1–4.

Disease
Disease issues are often caused by overfeeding, overwatering, water applied too frequently. They can usually be corrected by following Steps 1–4.

Application at the wrong time of year

Applying at the wrong time of year

Applying to a lawn that is not actively growing

Applying with a drop spreader (a drop spreader offers better control)

Applying through the use of an irrigation system

Applying at the wrong time of year

Applying just before heavy rain is forecast

Applying to hard surfaces like sidewalks, driveways, and streets

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