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## Pre-Sod Preparation

### A GUIDE TO SOD PREPARATION PRIOR TO SOD INSTALLATION

#### Step 1 - Killing & Removing Your Existing Lawn

Prior to the installation of sod, any existing lawn should be chemically killed and removed. Make sure that the existing lawn is well watered and growing vigorously. Apply an herbicide such as Round-Up™, or a similar product, to the entire lawn. Read and follow all label instructions.

A second application about two weeks after the first will catch those areas missed and generally insure a complete kill of turf and weeds. Should the existing lawn contains warm season grasses, chemical control will only be attained from April through mid-October.

When the turf is dry, brown and dead, you can remove the lawn. Renting a sod cutter and cutting the lawn into small sections is advised. Short, thin strips are easier to move.

***Note: A sod cutter is about the size of a lawnmower, so you might want to arrange for help loading and unloading this piece of equipment from your vehicle. If you already have a sprinkler system, use flags to mark the sprinkler heads so you don't hit them! Remember that even though this is the first step in sod preparation, you do not have to destroy an existing sprinkler system.***

Use a wheelbarrow to carry pieces away. Live or dead sod is usually too heavy for a car or truck. Check with local rental yards in advance to have a dumpster available. After removing the old sod, rake over the soil to remove any debris. Water for a few days to see what grows back. You can put down another application of herbicide to kill off any re-growth.

#### Step 2 - Soil Preparation

Rototill the soil and add amendments - Rototill the soil to a depth of four to six inches. This will help eliminate drainage problems and prepare the soil. Spread a layer of soil amendments onto the area. Rototill the amendments into the soil until thoroughly mixed into the soil.

#### Step 3 - Install A Sprinkler System

A sprinkler system is virtually a necessity for the survival of your lawn and a vital step in sod preparation. A good landscape irrigation and supply business is an excellent place to start for sprinkler system design information and help. Remember to design separate systems for the lawn and your garden. Using an automatic timer to control on/off times and length of watering is recommended.



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#### **Step 4 - Grading and Rolling**

Clear the sod surface of all debris, including dirt clods, rocks and root segments turned up. Rake to level the area, making sure that the soil level is about 1" below the level of sidewalks, patios and driveways and tops of sprinkler heads.

Using a water-filled lawn roller, roll the area in two opposite directions to minimize excessive settling that might lower the top of the lawn below the level of driveways or patios. Level any low or high spots and fine-grade the area with a rake and roll again. The soil surface must be level to have a level grass surface! Check once again for low spots and settling. Re-grade if necessary.

If you have installed sprinkler lines, install the sprinkler heads after the final grading is done. Remember to compensate for the thickness of the sod.

**Several days prior to installation** of your new sod, the area should be watered. This is the best time to check your sprinkler system. Water coverage should overlap from sprinkler head to sprinkler head to avoid dry patches and promote even growth. **Making sure your new sod lawn will be properly watered is an element of sod preparation many forget or simply neglect.**



***CONGRATULATIONS! YOUR SOD PREPARATION IS COMPLETE!! NOW ON TO HOW TO INSTALL YOUR NEW SOD.***