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### Sowing Grass Seed for Shade or Woodland

The Autumn or Spring are the best times to sow grass - November to February are poor times for sowing seed or laying turf, better to wait until March.

Growing grass under trees is particularly demanding as the trees take the water and the shade prevents the grass growing into the green sward you would like to see in your garden.

There are specific seed mixtures that will provide the best chance of establishing a lawn in the shade and with careful preparation and follow up care you have a better chance of establishing the lawn you desire.

Prepare the site of the lawn - remove any low branches from the trees and remove any fallen leaves, dig over the ground, removing stones and clods of earth, perennial weeds will also need removing and treating to prevent re-growth.

The soil will need to be raked and compacted with your heels and then lightly scratched ready to receive the seed.

The seed recommended for woodland - at 50 g per metres square - would be a mixture of:

- 25% dwarf perennial ryegrass,
- 30% strong creeping red fescue,
- 15% rough stalked meadow grass,
- 15% smooth stalked meadow grass,
- 10% wood meadow grass,
- 3% yorkshire fog
- 2% creeping bent

Or for shady areas at 50 g per metres square:

- 25% Perennial Ryegrass,
- 65% Creeping Red Fescue,
- 5% Rough Stalked Meadow grass
- 5% Smooth Stalked Meadow grass

Or a General mix that may tolerate some shade and be fine in the sun

- 70% mix of Fescue
- 15% Perennial Ryegrass
- 15% Kentucky Bluegrass

The grass should appear 7 - 14 days after sowing, if the weather is dry, water regularly at this stage and when it grows up to 2/5 cm in height, you can mow the lawn but rake up the waste.

When mowing the lawn, the shady areas will benefit from having extra height to increase the ability of the plant to capture and use sunlight, so raise the mowing height of your mower.



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You need to water well during dry periods, limit traffic to reduce stress and ensure leaves are removed from the lawn in the autumn.

If your TLC does not provide the type of lawn you would like to see, consider using alternative methods of landscaping, such as planting ground cover or a permanent mulch around the edges of the shady area.