

# Wildflowers and Lawn

You can transform your lawn or garden - or a portion of it - into such a naturalized setting, chiefly by adding wildflowers. Wildflowers bring colour simplicity, and animal life to your property. They can make a yard or garden truly unique, yet they require little care once established.

There are basically two ways to use wildflowers. You can create a “wild” garden, or you can “naturalize” your lawn with them.

## Wild Garden / Lawn

- A wild garden is defined as “an area of land planted in a naturalistic manner and including both native and exotic (foreign) plants.”
- These are often borders or beds of flowers and grasses that surround a patch of lawn or patio. In a true wildflower garden or patch there should not be any “domestic” plants. These include hybrids with double flowers or variegated foliage.
- A variation of the wildflower garden is to intersperse wildflowers with your “domestics”.

## Naturalized Garden / Lawn

- Naturalizing the yard requires more planning and work to establish. The humus and topsoil should be well mixed, either by hand or by roto-tiller, to a depth of 15 cm, with a lawn fertilizer such as 4-12-8 also added according to directions. Fertilizer added at this time should be lower in the first number, nitrogen, than the latter two numbers, phosphorus and potash. Roll the lawn area with a light roller to find the uneven spots, then rake and level them.
- For seeding large areas, rent a mechanical seeder. Smaller areas can be done by hand. Divide your lawn area in half and your seed into four parts. Sow each half in one direction with a quarter of the seed, then sow the remainder going at right angles to your first seeding. This way you will be able to get the lawn evenly seeded. Rake the soil lightly and then roll with an empty roller, just enough to press the seed into the ground.
- Newly-seeded lawns must be kept moist for three weeks, using a fine mist. Keep all traffic off the newly-seeded lawn for at least eight weeks. A new lawn, either seeded or sodded, should have its first mowing when the grass is 5 cm high. Be sure your lawnmower is sharp so that the new grass seedlings are not pulled out.
- Choosing the proper seed mixture for your lawn is also important. Areas that are shaded for any length of time during the day must have a blended seed mixture with grass species that grow well in shade. This means less Kentucky bluegrass and more fescue grasses and perennial ryegrass. Grass will not grow in totally shaded areas. For those areas, ground covers or mulches must be used. A note of warning about cheap grass mixtures - they are just that; cheaper, poorer-quality grass varieties that will not produce the first-class lawn that most people expect today.

