

SUGGESTED MOWING HEIGHTS FOR DESERT TURFGRASSES

ACLP TURFGRASS

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Turfgrass	High Maintenance (low cut)		Intermediate Maintenance		Low Maintenance (high cut)	
	Base	Mow At	Base	Mow At	Base	Mow At
Tifgrass Bermuda (419)	1/4	3/8	---	---	3/8	5/8
Tifway Bermuda (318)	1/2	3/4	3/4	1 1/4	1	1 3/8
Santa Ana Bermuda	3/4	1	1 1/2	1 3/4	2	2 1/2
Midiron Bermuda(EZ Turf)	1	1 3/8	1 1/2	2	2	2 1/2
Common and other seeded lawn type bermudas	1	1 3/8	1 1/2	2	2	2 1/2
Zoysia Japonica	1	1 3/8	1 1/2	2	2	2 1/2
Buffalograss	1 1/2	2	2 1/2	3	3	4
Perennial ryegrass	1/2	3/4	1 1/4	1 3/4	2	2 1/2
Annual ryegrass	1 1/2	1 7/8	1 3/4	2 1/4	3	4
St. Augustine	1	1 3/8	1 3/4	2 1/4	2 1/2	3

- 1) Heights are in inch units.
- 2) Use reel type mowers for heights of 1 1/2" or lower.
- 3) Use rotary mowers for heights greater than 1 1/2".
- 4) Other heights than those shown can be used. Multiply the new base height X 1.4 to determine the maximum height the turf should be before the next mowing.

Mowing height and frequency go hand in hand. The closer you mow, the more often you must mow. This is necessary to avoid excessive leaf removal, which puts the plant in a stress-recovery situation.

Clippings are a hot item! Turfgrass clippings contribute very little to the development of thatch when the 3 rules of mowing are practiced. Excess clippings left on the lawn will weaken the lawn, and perhaps contribute to thatch. But if you mow at the proper frequency and mowing height, clippings left on the turf do not cause thatch build-up.

Clippings should be collected and removed when (1) the clippings are excessive (2) lawn is diseased and (3) if weeks are setting seed.

Mulching mowers may increase decomposition of the clippings, since smaller size clippings allow for faster decomposition.

Mowing equipment and selection. The type of mower is critical to proper turf maintenance. The general rules are as follows.

(1) Use reel-type mowers for heights of 1-1/4 inches or less.

(2) Use rotary mowers for heights of 1-1/2, and higher.

Reel-type mowers are constructed for close clippings, while rotary mowers are not. Failure to use the right mowers often results in scalping, poor mowing and damage to the turf. Always keep the blades sharp and adjusted properly.

Mowing a turf at the low end of the allowable height range has the benefits of: (1) increased shoot density and (2) narrower leaf width (finer texture).

Disadvantages include less food for root growth, rhizome and stolon growth, since mowing itself is a stress.

During periods of summer stress, increase the height of cut when possible. This will allow for more root growth, as well as insulation of the base of the plant where the shoots come from.

If you follow these rules, something else is the cause of poor turf. Excuse me, I see its time to mow!