

# The Georgia Gardener™

[www.walterreeves.com](http://www.walterreeves.com)

## ZOYSIAGRASS CULTIVATION

Zoysiagrass has a beautiful appearance when maintained properly. It grows densely and chokes out weeds under proper management. It spreads and establishes slowly and has poor injury recovery. Zoysiagrass has fair disease tolerance and fair drought resistance.

### Zoysiagrass varieties

‘Emerald’: fine leaf texture, is more shade tolerant but is less cold tolerant than ‘Meyer’

‘Meyer’: medium leaf texture, spreads faster and is more cold tolerant than ‘Emerald’

‘El Toro’: fastest growing and easily tolerates mowing with a rotary mower

‘Empire’: thrives in hot, humid conditions, shows good drought tolerance once established.

‘Empress’: fine, small leaves, soft texture, tight growth habit

‘Palisades’: fast growth, medium-coarse texture, good winter hardiness, good-excellent shade tolerance

‘Zenith’ looks much like ‘Meyer’ but spreads faster. Blade width is similar to centipedegrass but not as wide as tall fescue. It is not as fine bladed as ‘Emerald’ zoysiagrass.

### SOIL PREPARATION - NEW LAWNS

1. Kill all weeds by spraying the area with a non-selective weed killer containing glyphosate (RoundUp, etc.) two weeks before planting.
2. Till the soil thoroughly to a depth of six inches, mixing in lime and fertilizer according to soil test results. Slope the soil away from buildings to prevent water collection in unwanted areas.
3. Rake the area smooth, removing rocks, clumps and grassy debris.
4. Roll the area with a water-filled roller to reveal low spots.
5. Fill low spots with soil.
6. Rake lightly and plant.

### DISEASE CONTROL

Most lawn diseases are caused by poor cultural practices. Overwatering is most often the culprit.

1. Irrigate after midnight and before noon, allowing the grass to dry before nightfall.
2. Correct disease identification is a must before a fungicide is applied. Call your local Extension office (1-800-ASKUGA-1) for assistance and advice.

### INSECT CONTROL

A healthy, vigorously growing lawn can absorb a great deal of insect pressure without lasting harm.

1. Identify insects or grubs before applying an insecticide. Call your local Extension office for advice.
2. Treatment for white grub control is not necessary unless more than 12 per square foot are found in irrigated turf.

### SOIL TESTING (more details at [www.georgiasoiltest.com](http://www.georgiasoiltest.com))

1. Use a clean trowel and plastic bucket. In an area to be tested, take a deep, hearty scoop of soil (a *plug*) from ten randomly selected spots. A plug should be four to six inches deep. Place the plugs in the bucket.
2. Mix the plugs together in the bucket. Remove grass, twigs, stones, etc. This is a representative sample of all of the soil in a particular area.
3. Call your local County Extension office (1-800-ASKUGA-1). They will give you details on how to bring a soil sample to them. There is a nominal charge, in the range of \$4.00 to \$8.00, for each sample.
4. The University of Georgia Soils Laboratory will test your soil and send you a written report on the nutrients it contains. The acidity (pH) of the soil will also be noted. Fertilizer recommendations and schedules are included, along with the amount of lime needed by your soil.