

TURFGRASS WEED CONTROL



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EXTENSION

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Weeds in the lawn are one of the more noticeable pests of the landscape. They not only detract from the aesthetic value of the home, but also waste water and fertilizer, harbor insects, and reduce the overall health of the lawn. There are a number of cultural and mechanical practices to reduce weed populations. In severe and difficult cases, herbicides can be used to control some weeds.

CULTURAL CONTROL

A vigorous lawn will out-compete most weeds. Some common cultural practices that reduce weeds and keep the lawn healthy include:

1. **Good Mowing Height.** Mow the lawn 2½ to 3 inches high. Taller grass shades out some weeds, and develops deeper, healthier roots.
2. **Proper Watering.** Most cool season lawns require 1½ to 2 inches of water/week during the peak growing season. (See the Turfgrass Watering fact sheet).
3. **Regular, Proper Fertilizing.** Most lawns need nitrogen fertilizer every six to eight weeks during the growing season. Over or under fertilizing makes a lawn more susceptible to weed infestations. Apply one pound of actual nitrogen/1,000 square feet (See the Turfgrass Fertilizing fact sheet).
4. **Annual Core Aeration.** Over time, soils compact, and lawns may develop a thick thatch layer. Annual core aeration reduces compaction, and minimizes the thatch layer. Aeration promotes water and fertilizer penetration, stimulates root growth, and can reduce some annual weeds.
5. **Maintain Secondary Water System Filters.** Secondary water systems can introduce weeds to a lawn. Regularly clean and maintain filters to prevent some weeds infestations.
6. **Clean Lawn Care Equipment.** Weeds can spread from one lawn to another on mowers, string trimmers, or aerators. Properly clean them between lawns. Take extra precaution when working on weed infested areas or where the weeds have gone to seed.

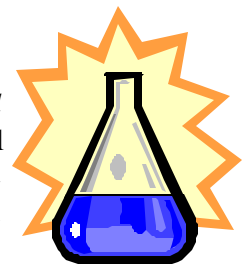
MECHANICAL CONTROL

Correct cultural practices should eliminate most weeds. A few persistent weeds may need to be removed mechanically. This can be done using the following methods:

1. **Pulling Weeds** If there are only a few weeds in the lawn, consider using a hoe, puller, fishtail, spudding, or other tool to remove weeds (roots and all). This is best and easiest to do right after the lawn has been watered. The roots come out easier, and cause less harm to the existing grass.
2. **Plastic (Solar) Treatment of Annual Weeds** Some annual weeds can be killed by placing clear plastic over the weedy area for a day or two. The heat generated burns the annual weeds and the tops of perennial grasses. This destroys many annual weeds, but perennial grasses quickly regrow. This option may be good for a backyard or other less visible area. The grass can take two weeks to fully recover.

CHEMICAL CONTROL

The selective and prudent use of herbicides can help eliminate some weeds in turfgrass. As with all pesticides, *be sure to follow all label direction*, and read the entire label before mixing and applying. (Be especially careful around pets and children.)



Herbicides should be used as a tool with cultural and mechanical methods. They should not be used exclusively as the only method of weed control. Basically two types of herbicides are used to control weeds in turfgrass: pre-emergent and post-emergent.



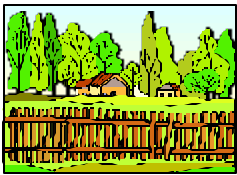
PRE-EMERGENT: These herbicides are applied *before* the weeds emerge. They are generally used to control annual weeds such as crabgrass and spurge. They have little, if any, effect on established perennial or annual weeds. Most have a short residual in the soil, lasting from 30 to 90 days. Pre-emergent herbicides are most effective applied directly to the lawn after mowing. Irrigate the area immediately once the product is applied. In Northern Utah, most pre-emergents need to be applied around the first of April, and again about the first of June.

SELECTED PRE-EMERGENT HERBICIDES

TRADE NAME(S)	CHEMICAL NAME	ANNUAL WEEDS CONTROLLED*	TRADE NAME(S)	CHEMICAL NAME	ANNUAL WEEDS CONTROLLED
Balan	benefin	grass	PRE-M, Weed Grass Control, Halt	pendimethalin	grass & broadleaf
Team	benefin + trifluralin	grass & broadleaf	Tupersan	siduron	grass
Betasan	bensulide	grass	Barricade	proflaminate	grass & broadleaf
Gallery, Galleria	isoxaben	broadleaf	Dimension	dithiopyr	grass & broadleaf

ANNUAL GRASSES*: annual bluegrass, crabgrass, foxtail, sandbur, and witchgrass.

BROADLEAF WEEDS: chickweed, filaree, henbit, knotweed, puncturevine, purslane, spurge, and oxalis. (Partial list of grass and broadleaf weeds controlled.) Read the label for specific recommendations.



POST-EMERGENT: These herbicides are placed directly on the foliage or soil *after* the weeds have begun to grow. They are generally used on perennial broadleaf weeds, but a few are available for specific perennial grass weeds. They are most effective when applied to young, small weeds that are actively growing. Fall may be the most effective time to apply many of the post-emergent herbicides, before the first heavy frost.

SELECTED POST-EMERGENT HERBICIDES

TRADE NAME(S)	CHEMICAL(S)	MAJOR WEEDS CONTROLLED*
Confront	triclopyr + clopyralid	Bindweed, Black medic, Canadian Thistle, Chickweed, Clover, Dandelion, Henbit, Knotweed, Mallow, Oxalis, Plantain, Violet.
Turflon	triclopyr	Bindweed, Black Medic, Chickweed, Clover, Dandelion, Henbit, Knotweed, Mallow, Oxalis, Plantain, Violet
Trimec; Chickweed, Spurge and Oxalis Killer; Lesco Three-way	2,4-D + MCPP + Dicamba	Black Medic, Chickweed, Clover, Dandelion, Henbit, Knotweed, Mallow, Plantain
Super Trimec	2,4-D + 2,4-DP + Dicamba	Black Medic, Chickweed, Clover, Dandelion, Henbit, Knotweed, Mallow, Plantain
Weed-B-Gon; 2 Plus 2 Ortho; Phenomec	2,4-D + MCPP	Black Medic, Chickweed, Clover, Dandelion, Henbit, Knotweed, Mallow, Plantain
Weedone	2,4-D + 2,4-DP	Black Medic, Chickweed, Clover, Dandelion, Henbit, Knotweed, Mallow, Plantain

* This is a partial list of broad leaf weeds controlled or suppressed. Read the label for specific weed recommendations.



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