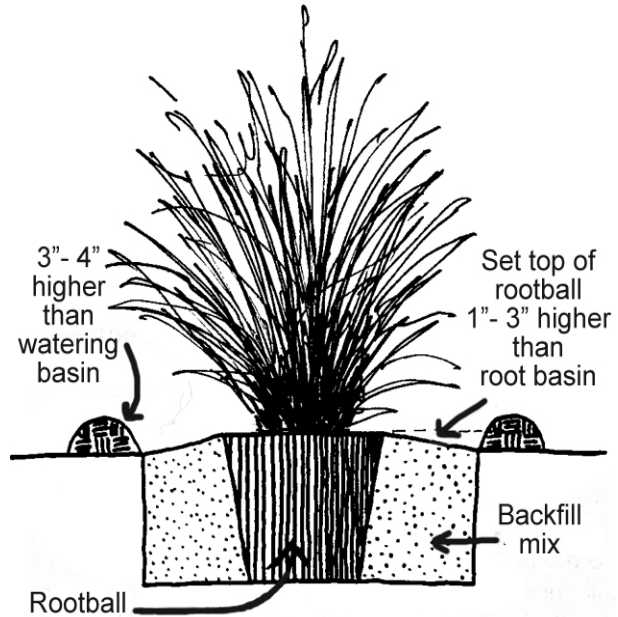




Ornamental Grasses

Selection

Ornamental Grasses are a wonderful addition to the garden. Their fine, graceful form adds texture, motion and grace to the landscape. They soften the landscape and give it a more natural look. Ornamental Grasses can give year-round effect in the garden: from the bright lushness of spring and summer foliage, to the colors some varieties give in the fall, to the distinctive architectural statement their brown outlines give in winter. The way their foliage catches the light makes them a natural eye-catcher, and lends serenity to the garden. There are a multitude of different grasses to choose from. They range in height from a foot tall or less to dramatic, upright forms eight to even ten feet tall. Foliage ranges from soft green to whites and yellows to blue and even purple. There are variegated varieties that contribute interest and color to the landscape.



Planting

Dig a hole twice as wide and only as deep as the root ball of the grass. Be sure to adjust the hole so that the top of the root ball is 1" to 2" above ground level. Next, remove the container. Plastic pots can be removed by turning the plant upside down or laying it on its side and gently tapping at the pot until the grass slides out. Refill the hole with a blended mixture of 1/3 **Soil Pep** or **Sunshine Peat Moss** and 2/3 of your garden soil. Firm the backfill by tamping it gently. Build a watering basin around the plant high enough to hold 3" to 4" of water. Make the basin at least as wide as the hole that was dug. Immediately water the plant deeply by filling the basin with water once, letting it soak in, and filling it up a second time. The use of **Fertilome Root Stimulator** at planting time will greatly reduce transplant shock and encourage your grasses to resume their normal growing habits more quickly.



Feeding

Fertilize Ornamental Grasses are generally not that demanding in their fertilizer requirements. There are a number of fertilizers that you can use, but we've found that **Bookcliff Gardens Choice Professional Turf Food** does a great job. Fertilize them in late April, and then again in mid June. Be sure to water it in well after applying.



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Pruning

Ornamental Grasses should be left to dry naturally in the late fall. Their bare silhouettes lend interest to an otherwise drab and bare winter landscape. They should be cut down to within six inches of the ground early every spring. Don't wait too late in the spring to do this, you want to be sure to cut them before the new sprouts begin to emerge. If they have, and you cut the ends of these new sprouts, you will have unsightly, brown ends on your grass blades. One trick that makes clean up easier is to tie the dry clumps of grass together with twine before cutting them. Large, tough clumps can be easily cut through with a wood crosscut hand saw if the bundle is tied tightly. Once they're cut, you have a neat bundle that's easy to dispose of. It's generally not a good idea to burn the dry clumps of grass down. In the City limits, it's not allowed, but you can sometimes hurt the tender, emerging new shoots as well.

Watering

It is impossible to give a watering schedule that will be right for everyone all of the time. Factors such as the soil type, how big the plant is, how fast the plant is growing, air temperature, humidity, wind and light intensity all will affect how often a particular plant will need watering.

The basic rule of thumb is to water deeply, but infrequently. Get the water down a minimum of 18" at each watering. This encourages the plant to develop a deep, drought tolerant root system. Then give the soil a chance to dry slightly between waterings. It is common for people to kill or unnecessarily stress their plants by watering too frequently. The roots of a plant require oxygen in order to function. If the soil is constantly waterlogged, there is not enough oxygen available to the root system and the roots suffocate and begin to die.

Knowing this, our recommendation is to water deeply by building a basin around plants that are not watered by lawn sprinklers. It should be wide enough to accommodate the root system of the plant (generally out to the drip line of the plant) and high enough to hold three or four inches of water when full. Fill the basin full, let it soak in, and fill it a second time. Then don't water the plant again until the soil in the basin begins to dry. Don't just look at the soil surface; dig down 4" to 6" to see how dry the soil is. The soil should be showing some significant drying down at that depth. One little trick is to scoop up a handful of soil from that depth and squeeze it into a ball. If the ball holds its shape after you let go, the soil is still wet. If the ball falls apart, its time to water. Using this method several times, you will be able to determine your own watering schedule.

For plants that will be watered with lawn sprinklers, water as described above at planting time. Then remove the basin. Most of the plant's day to day water needs will be met by the lawn watering. However, a deep soaking every month or two is recommended in addition to the lawn watering. In addition, during the winter a monthly deep soaking of all newly planted shrubs is a good idea. This should be done for the first two winters after planting.

Our Guarantee

Thanks for buying a plant from Bookcliff Gardens. Our goal is that you be successful with every plant you purchase from us. We'll try to give you as much information and instruction as it takes to make this happen. If you have any questions, please ask! We'll do our best to answer them. However, since this is not a perfect world, and in spite of the best of both of our efforts, plants sometimes die. If this happens within the first year after buying the plant from us, we will replace it; give you an equal amount of credit; or refund the purchase price. **You must have your receipt for the guarantee to be honored.** We limit our guarantee to replacing a plant only once, and the guarantee does **not** apply to annual bedding plants, perennials or house plants. If you're having a problem with a plant, come in and talk to us about it; we'll try to find out what happened so we won't lose another plant. It's in both of our interests that the plants you buy from us grow and thrive. We want you to be successful!