



Care Guide: KIKUYU ROLL-OUT TURF



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Kikuyu is a vigorous, warm-season turf grass well suited to many New Zealand climates, particularly coastal and northern regions. With correct establishment and maintenance, it provides a dense, durable, and fast-repairing lawn.



1. Establishment Phase (First 2–3 Weeks)



Watering

Immediately after installation apply a deep, even watering to ensure the turf and underlying soil are fully moistened.

Week 1: Water daily ensuring the turf never dries out.

Week 2–3: Reduce to every 1–2 days, based on heat and wind exposure.

Maintain moisture without oversaturation to support rapid root establishment

Foot Traffic

Minimise activity on the new turf until strong rooting has occurred.

Do not mow until the turf resists lifting when gently checked at the edges.

2. Mowing and Thatch Management

- First mow when the grass height reaches 4–5 cm.
- Maintain Kikuyu at 2.5–4 cm once established.
- Always collect clippings, unless you have used a mulch attachment.
- Never remove more than one-third of the blade length at any one time.
- Frequent mowing encourages density and reduces thatch buildup. Over summer this should be at least 2 times a week, certainly less than once a week.
- Annual dethatching (late spring–early summer) is recommended in lawns showing sponginess.
- Similar methods could be achieved by mowing the grass down to the soil. This can leave you to think the lawn is beyond repair! Trust the system, once you see new growth, apply fertiliser before rain or water in and sit back and wait. Don't water, let it reestablish and mow it.



3. Watering (Long-Term)

Kikuyu is drought-tolerant once mature but still benefits from consistent moisture.

- During establishment, it's important to keep the grass damp. Generally a watering morning and night over summer is essential. Once established apply deep watering, 25mm, once or twice per week over summer. Too often can cool Kikuyu, which can be detrimental to a grass that needs heat.
- Autumn, Winter and Spring should not need watering once established.



4. Fertilising

Kikuyu responds strongly to nitrogen and grows most actively in warm months.

Recommended Schedule

Early Spring: Apply a balanced lawn fertiliser to stimulate new growth.

Early Summer: Apply a nitrogen-rich or balanced fertiliser to support dense coverage.

Late Summer/Early Autumn: Apply a slow-release fertiliser to maintain colour and vigour.

Winter: Granular fertiliser uptake is limited when kikuyu is dormant. To keep it green and healthy liquid fertilisers are recommended. Low in Nitrogen, rich in potassium and iron are recommended.



Fertilise every 10-12 weeks during the active growth season (October–April)

We Recommend

Summer: Nitrophoska or Balance Yaramila Use a spreader for an even application; uneven hand-spreading often leads to striped lawns.

Winter: Seaweed Plant Tonic, MATCHPlay products (MP Vitalise or MP Promote), or Yates Quarterly Hose-On

5. Weed Control

- Avoid herbicides during the first 6–8 weeks after installation.
- Once established, broadleaf weeds can be treated with suitable lawn herbicides. Active ingredients with 2.5D and Dicamba or Triclopyr are effective
- Kikuyu's aggressive growth often suppresses weeds naturally when properly maintained.
- Establishment of clover over winter could mean a nitrogen deficiency in soil.



6. Pest & Disease Monitoring



Pests

- Kikuyu is generally hardy but can be affected by black beetle larvae in some NZ regions.
- Signs include thinning patches or turf lifting easily. Treat with approved grub control products in spring or early summer, if required.

Disease

- Fungal issues are uncommon but may occur in humid weather.
- Maintain good mowing height, avoid evening watering, and ensure adequate drainage.



Rapid Lawn Tip

Give effected areas a little tug. If there is resistance to pulling out, its likely died from the top. If there is no resistance, then its likely died from the root.



7. Repair & Recovery

Kikuyu repairs quickly due to its vigorous growth.

During the growing season, damaged or worn areas can be lightly cultivated and topdressed with soil.

Kikuyu stolons will spread to fill gaps. Additional turf/seed can be added for faster repair.



A well landscaped section will add value and enhance your property!

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