

Grasses for Bexar County & Central/South Texas

David Rodriguez, Bexar County Horticulture Agent

(Special Thanks to Drs. Tom Harris and Jerry Parsons, local gardening experts with help on this informative chart.)

Condition	Type of Grass							
	Common Bermuda	Hybrid Bermuda	Emerald Zoysia	El Toro & Jamur Zoysia	Floritam St. Augustine	Raleigh* St. Augustine	Stampede Buffalo	609 Buffalo
Shade Tolerance	No Full sun is best	No Full sun is best	Yes Fair shade tolerance	Yes Fair shade tolerance	Yes Grows best in full sun, tolerates dappled sun	Yes Grows best in full sun, tolerates dappled sun	No Poor shade tolerance. Good for sunny locations.	No Poor shade tolerance. Good for sunny locations
Traffic	Yes Tolerates traffic well	Yes Tolerates traffic well	Yes Fair traffic tolerance	Yes Fair traffic tolerance. Recovers slowly	Yes Moderate tolerance	No Does not tolerate traffic	No Does <u>NOT</u> tolerate traffic.	No Does <u>NOT</u> tolerate traffic
Water ** Requirements	½ inch or less per week to stay green	½ inch or less per week to stay green	Needs ¾ inch per week to stay green, ½ inch will sustain	¾ inch per week to stay green	Most drought tolerant. ¾" per week for growth, ½" per 2-3 weeks if dormant	Needs ¾ inch per week for growth, ½" per 2-3 weeks if dormant	Needs 1" per month to stay green. Almost no water if dormant.	Needs 1" per month to stay green. Almost no water if dormant
Drought Tolerant	Yes Almost no water if dormant	Yes Almost no water if dormant	Yes Goes dormant; comes back with rain	Yes Goes dormant; comes back with rain	Yes Goes dormant after several hard frosts. Not very cold tolerant.	Yes Goes dormant after several hard frosts. Best cold tolerance.	Yes Native grass. Goes dormant in early fall or in drought.	Yes Native grass. Goes dormant in early fall or in drought
Low Mowing/ Maintenance	Gets thicker with frequent mowing	Gets thicker with frequent mowing	Highly weed resistant. May get rust in fall.	Best with reel-type mower—can tolerate rotary if weekly	Mow at 3" increasing to 4" in summer. Mow every 5-6 days.	Mow at 3" increasing to 4" in summer. Mow every 5-6 days.	Looks best at 4-5 inches. Tolerates heavy soil.	Looks best at 4-5 inches. Tolerates heavy soil.

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	Common Bermuda	Hybrid Bermuda	Emerald Zoysia	El Toro & Jamur Zoysia	Floritam St. Augustine	Raleigh* St. Augustine	Stampede Buffalo	609 Buffalo
Low Initial Cost	Yes Seed or sod. Creeping growth habit.	Yes Sod. Creeping growth habit	No Expensive sod. Slow growing	No Sod. El Toro fairly fast growing, Jamur is slow growing.	Yes Sod or plugs. Grows quickly by stolons.	Yes Sod or plugs. Grows quickly by stolons.	No Sods or plugs. Moderately expensive. Thin sods but spreads quickly.	No Sod or plugs. Moderately expensive. Thin sod but spreads quickly.
“Carpet” Turf Appearance	Yes Medium-textured turfgrass	Yes Slightly wider blade than common	Yes Dark green color	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes/No Thin turf	Yes/No Tufted or lumpy
Pest and disease-resistant	Yes	Yes Well suited for lawns	Yes, once established, may see rust in fall.	Yes May see rust in fall. All similar in appearance.	Yes Resistant to St. Augustine Decline, brown patch, chinch bugs.	No Susceptible to brown patch chinch bugs	Yes Goes dormant in early fall. Likes heavy soil. Weeds can invade.	Yes Goes dormant in early fall.. Likes heavy soil. Weeds can invade.
Mower Setting	1 ½ inches Gets thicker with mowing. Reel mower is best.	1 inch Gets thicker with mowing.	2 inches Do NOT use rotary mower, reel only.	2 inches Reel-type mower is best, rotary tolerated	3 inches increasing to 4 inches in hot summer	3 inches increasing to 4 inches in hot summer	Looks best at 4-5 inches	Looks best at 4-5 inches
Mow when at or before this height	2 ¼ inches	1 ½ inches	3 inches	3 inches	4 ½ inches	4 ½ inches	6 inches	6 inches

*Raleigh is the most common one used in our area.

**All dormant grass needs 1 inch of water every 2 weeks in lieu of rain.

David Rodriguez is the County Extension Agent-Horticulture for Bexar County. He represents Texas Cooperative Extension with the Texas A&M University System. For any landscape or gardening information, call the Bexar County Master Gardeners Hotline at (210) 467-6575, e-mail questions to: mg-bexar@tamu.edu, or visit our County Extension website at <http://bexar-tx.tamu.edu> and click under Horticulture and Gardening.