

# Tips for growing lawns on sand

Sandy loam soil is an ideal base for lawns and gardens. A once only addition of kaolin clay and silt can transform your sand, permanently cure water repellency and hold onto more water and nutrients in the soil.

## How To Install Your New Lawn

### SOIL IMPROVEMENT

When preparing to lay your new lawn, the soil preparation is the most important stage for your lawn's establishment and long term health and water efficiency. You can water less, need no wetting agents and use less fertiliser if you first convert your sand into a stable loam soil.

Adding kaolin clay and minerals will permanently improve the water holding capacity and a mature compost will provide humus and food for soil organisms. It will establish your lawn for a healthy long term future.

### METHOD

**STEP 1.** Spread 1 bag of Soil Solver Clay Plus for every 2 sqm on the surface of the sandy ground. Mix in well using a rotary hoe. Add plenty of water to rehydrate the clay and leave overnight if possible.

**STEP 2.** Add a fully mature compost, with a high humus and nitrogen content. Compost Plus or Dynamic Lifter provide food for the soil, and if you want a 'softer' surface for young families rough and tumbles add fine coir. Rake into the surface.

**STEP 3.** Level the ground and start laying the lawn. If it is a hot day, water as you go. Stagger the joins in the lawn (like brick work) and make sure the joints are butted tightly up against each other.

**STEP 4.** After laying all turf, water in well and roll with a heavy roller to form a good contact between the turf and the soil. (or lay a plank on the surface and walk on it)

**STEP 5.** Top dress with more sandy loam or mature compost filling in any gaps between joins.

The first two weeks are critical to keep the new lawn well watered to help the roots to establish in the new soil. Then put it on a twice weekly watering schedule and try reducing the water until you find the lowest rate it will grow slowly and stay green and healthy.



## Help... my lawn is going brown!

### Nearly all problems are caused by poor soil

Organic materials like pelletised chicken manure and cheap compost can last as little as six months and your lawn is then struggling on bare and water repellent sand. It will not cope with twice weekly watering, and can start attracting pests and diseases, the lawn may go brown from lawn beetle larvae attacking the roots because they like the dry sandy conditions, or it can get diseases because it is stressed from the dry conditions.

You can use a number of temporary solutions like wetting agents, poison to kill the beetle larvae, anti fungal treatment, and you may spend a great deal of money trying to recover the nice green colour it started with! Lots of people spend time hand watering between retic days. Now, there is another way to try.

### Fix the problems permanently!

You can top dress with kaolin clay, by creating lots of fork holes in your lawn, pouring the clay on the surface and water it in well. Start with about 5kgs per sqm at a time and check that there are no dry spots when you finish. Finally add a thin layer of mature compost and water it in.



### Permanently

- ✓ cures water repellency
- ✓ uses less water
- ✓ saves fertiliser
- ✓ holds moisture
- ✓ adds rock minerals



Photo provided by Lynsey McGrath, who was amazed at the result!