

CARPETGRASS

DESCRIPTION

Common carpetgrass, also known as Louisianagrass or by the Creole name “petit gazon” (*Axonopus fissifolius* aka *affinis*), is a native perennial graminoid in the Poaceae family. This is a warm-season grass, actively growing from spring to fall. It can grow in a wide range of soils and has a stoloniferous growth habit. Carpetgrass leaves have a light green color that can change

to red at maturity and can grow to 6 inches in length. Carpetgrass is one of the native grasses that could be planted as a lawn. Seeds can be planted after the last frost. To plant, prepare the soil by making a level surface, spread the seed and gently rake to cover. The seeds generally establish within 10 weeks.

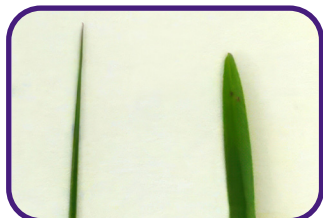


IDENTIFICATION

Carpetgrass is a medium-textured grass. Leaves are flat and blunt and come to a rounded tip. Seed heads are composed of a branching seed stalk with two branches attached to the stalk. This grass does not produce showy flowers, so using it as a ground cover or lawn grass, with frequent mowing, is encouraged. Carpetgrass produces

stolons with adventitious roots. It can be established in the spring from seed with daily watering for the first two weeks, then weekly watering for six to eight weeks. By ten weeks, it should be established. Adding fertilizer can speed up this process.

Photos by Dr. Charles Allen



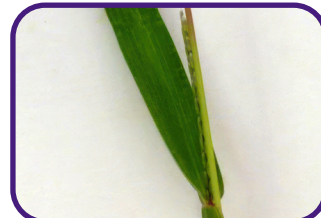
Blade and leaf tip (right) compared to other grass.



Common carpetgrass rames and spikelets.



Common carpetgrass spikelet with immature seed.



Common carpetgrass stem, sheath and immature seed

GROWING CONDITIONS



SOIL TYPE:

Grows in a wide range of soil types, including clays, silts and loams, and can tolerate minor foot traffic, soil compaction, humid conditions and heat.



SOIL PH:

Prefers acidic soil with a pH less than 6. Always follow soil test recommendations to achieve desired soil pH.



LIGHT:

Prefers full sun to partial shade.



GROWTH RATE:

Establishes relatively quickly in about 10 weeks from seed.



TIP: Before amending the soil, consider testing your soil at the [LSU AgCenter Soil Testing and Plant Analysis Laboratory](https://www.lsuagcenter.com/soil-testing) or contact your local extension office for more information.

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MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS



MOWING AND TRAFFIC:

Mow at 1 ½ to 2 inches routinely during the growing season. Mowing at the appropriate height is key in preventing scalping and reducing weed encroachment. Carpetgrass is low maintenance but has poor traffic tolerance, so it is best used in lawns and landscapes that have low recreation.



FERTILIZATION:

Fertilize with up to 2 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per year. Fertilizer should be applied no earlier than two to three weeks after seed germination. Never apply more than 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per application. Follow soil test recommendations for proper fertility.



IRRIGATION:

Naturally occurring rainfall may provide sufficient water for maintaining a lawn in normal years, but irrigation may need to be applied to prevent plant water stress during drought periods.



DETHATCHING AND AERATION:

Carpetgrass should be dethatched if thatch is greater than 1/2 an inch. Compaction can form more quickly on finer texture soils and in areas where there is high traffic. Compaction can limit seed germination and emergence. Aeration can be performed prior to seeding, but aeration should be performed when the carpetgrass is actively growing at least once annually. Aeration will improve water drainage and may increase the water absorption of the carpetgrass.

ESTABLISHMENT METHODS

Establishment of carpetgrass for perennial lawns or temporary groundcover can be achieved through seeding.

Select and purchase your desired seed and follow the manufacturer's labeled directions for the seeding rate per area. Rake seeds into a smooth soil surface and keep watered until germination and throughout establishment.

REFERENCES

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/axonopus-fissifolius/>

[https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/turf/publications/carpetgrass.html#:~:text=Carpetgrass%20\(Axonopus%20affinis\)%20is%20a,branches%2C%20very%20similar%20to%20crabgrass.](https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/turf/publications/carpetgrass.html#:~:text=Carpetgrass%20(Axonopus%20affinis)%20is%20a,branches%2C%20very%20similar%20to%20crabgrass.)

<https://www.seedworldusa.com/products/carpetgrass-seed>

[https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/lawn-care/specific/carpetgrass/carpetgrass-in-lawn-areas.htm#:~:text=Plant%20carpetgrass%20seeds%20after%20the,1%2C000%20square%20feet%20\(1%20kg.](https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/lawn-care/specific/carpetgrass/carpetgrass-in-lawn-areas.htm#:~:text=Plant%20carpetgrass%20seeds%20after%20the,1%2C000%20square%20feet%20(1%20kg.)

<https://thelawnplace.com/carpetgrass-lawns/carpetgrass-aeration-and-de-thatching/>



NATIVE GRASSES FOR THE LANDSCAPE

CARPETGRASS

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