



# Water-wise Checklist for Texas Home Lawns and Other Turfgrass Areas

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Task	Reason	Additional Resources
<b>Mowing</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <b>Mow at the upper end of the appropriate mowing height range for your species of grass</b></li></ul>	<p><i>Taller grass = Deeper Roots.</i> Deeper roots can improve overall infiltration and access to water deeper in the soil.</p>	<p>For more information on appropriate mowing heights for your species, visit the AggieTurf Website. <a href="https://aggieturf.tamu.edu/">https://aggieturf.tamu.edu/</a></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <b>Follow the 1/3 Rule. Mow frequently enough to never remove more than 1/3 of the total grass mowing height at one time.</b></li></ul>	<p><i>Scalped grass is stressed grass.</i> Stressed grass will be less tolerant to heat and drought, and more vulnerable to other pests or fungal pathogens.</p>	
<b>Irrigation</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <b>Water <i>deeply</i> and <i>infrequently</i>. Try to water to a depth of approximately 6" each time you water.</b></li></ul>	<p>Watering this way encourages <i>deeper, denser root growth</i>. Again, this can improve infiltration and access to water deeper in the soil.</p>	

- ❑ **Wait to water until visual wilt is occurring, and do so late at night or early in the morning.**

Watering late at night or early in the morning will reduce evaporative losses, improve water-use efficiency, and reduce length of overall leaf wetness, which reduces disease potential.

- ❑ **Use the Cycle Soak Method.**

Because sprinkler precipitation rates usually exceed soil infiltration rates, cycle soaking improves soil water infiltration and reduces runoff by "pulsing" water onto the lawn in small amounts over several hours.

Check out this video from Dr. Richard White on the Cycle Soak Method.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vmr9YbHTjL0&t=27s>

- ❑ **Monitor your irrigation equipment judiciously.**

*Broken or malfunctioning irrigation equipment can both waste water and create localized dry spots across the lawn.* Replace broken heads, and consider a professional irrigation audit by a licensed irrigator.

Want to check your irrigation efficiency on your own? Check out **AgriLife Water University's** video on the Catch Can Method.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nlwZimn9w&t=2s>

- ❑ **Take advantage of rainwater.**

Rainwater catchment can help you take advantage of natural precipitation and supplement irrigation water.

A number of AgriLife programs offer courses on rainwater catchment. Check out these programs, or contact your County Extension Agent for local resources:

Healthy Lawns, Healthy Waters  
<https://hlhw.tamu.edu/>

Water University  
<https://wateruniversity.tamu.edu/>

## Cultivation

- ❑ **Till new areas before replacing or installing new sod.**

Prepare areas for new sod by tilling the area to a depth of 6" to 12", when possible. *Good site preparation is critical to improving water infiltration and laying the literal groundwork for a healthy stand of turfgrass.*

- ❑ **Look ahead.**

In the spring and fall, consider core aeration and thatch removal to improve overall water infiltration for active growing months.

Not sure what to do here? Contact your local County Extension Agent for additional input.

Want more? Check out the AggieTurf website: <https://aggieturf.tamu.edu/>

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