

Top tips for laying turf

At Checkatrade, we'd recommend bringing in a trained professional to help carry out the work to a high-quality standard but understand if you're up for having a go yourself.

If this is the case, carefully follow our instructions, take your time and try to avoid costly mistakes.

Add a layer of topsoil which will help the grass grow quicker.

For more information about Checkatrade, please visit: www.checkatrade.com

Check the weather:

- Avoid laying on frosty ground as this can cause serious complications further down the line.
- Turf has a short shelf life in hot weather, during extended periods of hot and dry weather you must be prepared to lay the turf as soon as it's delivered.

Preparation is everything:

- Remove your existing lawn, either with a non-selective weed killer, or a turf cutter.
- Add a layer of topsoil to help form a more solid foundation between the turf and the compost, which in turn, will help the grass grow quicker.
- Walk over the soil once it's been laid to push down any loose elements and create a smoother surface.
- Water the soil for a couple of days before the turf arrives to help further expedite the time it takes to settle.

Laying the turf

- Only a few tools are needed for the task; a wheelbarrow, a rake, a long knife, a spade, some scaffolding planks and a garden hose.
- When you first start laying the turf, ensure it's completed along a straight edge to aid precision, butting turf closely end to end.
- On subsequent rows, stagger the joints brickwork fashion.
- Be careful not to walk on the grass whilst it's being laid, or shortly after it's been laid. Put planks across the new turf and walk across them to ensure the area is not disturbed.

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- To ensure good contact between the turf and soil, it's also advisable to lightly firm down on the grass with the head of a rake, or a piece of wood.
- Never stretch the turf by pulling at it - always push turf into a joint.
- If there are any remaining cracks, simply fill them with light soil and push it down into the crack.

Hydration is key

- Heavily water newly-laid turf for several days after it's initially been laid and until the turf is firmly rooted.
- It's best practice to water the turf either first thing in the morning or late in the evenings as it means that less water is lost to evaporation.
- Once the turf is well-established in the ground, you can reduce the frequency with which you water it.

Know when to mow:

- Mow your new lawn immediately after it's been laid to get the best results.
- Ensure that the lawn has settled and will not become dislodged if mowed upon. If it's fine, look to mow the lawn within three days of it being first laid.
- It's important to not remove more than one-third of the grass blade length as this slows down growth in new lawns.