

For high-traffic recreation areas and pathways, a mix of durable turfgrass varieties cannot be matched for trample-tolerance and regrowth. Areas with lower foot traffic, however, may be excellent candidates for interplanting other species that can provide wildlife habitat for desired insects, food and wellness for the family, and beauty in the yard.

Establishment Steps

Seeding in spring, **after the last frost** (mid-May in Iowa) is a good general establishment time, but follow packet guidelines for the best seeding time.

1. **Mow the area** so existing grass is 3-4" tall.
2. **Pull tenacious weeds** or use a flat bladed shovel to scrape them away. For extremely weedy areas, consider smothering with cardboard and landscape fabric for 2-3 months; this will require reseeding the grass.
3. **Use a metal rake** and/or a motorized power rake to expose the desired amount of soil; for example, rake out patches of dead or struggling grass. Seed-to-soil contact is important for optimal germination.
4. **Loosen compacted soil** with a pitchfork or broadfork.
5. **Calculate the amount of seed** needed by using the seed packet guidelines and reducing by 50-90% depending upon the lawn density.
6. **Mix the seed with topsoil** and/or compost to ensure even distribution and good germination.
7. **Broadcast the seed mixture.** To help with an even distribution over large areas, consider dividing the mixture into two parts and distributing it over the entire area in two passes.
8. **Lightly tamp it down** by stepping on the area with a large piece of cardboard.
9. **Cover the area with a thin layer of straw** or an erosion control blanket to reduce watering needs. This is especially important on steep slopes to ensure that seeds do not wash away.
10. **Keep the area moist** until germination. This may require watering 1-2 times each day for up to 2 weeks. Once the seed has germinated, watering 3-4 times each week will likely be sufficient until several leaves have appeared. If it can be predicted, spread seeds before a rainfall to save water.



Roman chamomile.



Self-heal.



Creeping thyme.

Indoor Seeding

Chamomile, self-heal, thyme and yarrow are good candidates for starting inside 4-8 weeks before the last frost. If time, space, light and warm conditions are available, growing seedlings and then propagating them into the lawn may lead to higher success.

Top Herbs

These short, durable, mower-tolerant plants grow well when interplanted into a Midwest lawn.

Common Name	Genus / Species	Height	Width	Light	Water	Parts Used	Flowering Time						
							Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Chamomile, Roman	Chamaemelum nobile	3-6"	Indef.	Full Sun	Mesic	Flowers							
Clover, Dutch White	Trifolium repens	4-10"	6-36"	Full Sun - Part Shade	Xeric - Mesic	Flowers							
Clover, Miniclover	Trifolium repens	4"	6-36"	Full Sun - Part Shade	Xeric - Mesic	Flowers							
Crocus	Crocus sp.	6"	6"	Full Sun - Part Shade	Mesic	Not Edible							
Dandelion	Taraxacum officinale	6-12"		Full Sun - Full Shade	Xeric - Hydric	Leaves, Root, Flower							
Ground Ivy	Glechoma hederacea	1-12"	Indef.	Full Sun - Full Shade	Xeric - Hydric	Flowers, Leaves							
Self-Heal	Prunella vulgaris	6-12"	Indef.	Full Sun - Part Shade	Mesic - Hydric	Flowers, Leaves							
Thyme, Creeping	Thymus	4"	Indef.	Full Sun - Part Shade	Xeric - Mesic	Leaves							
Violet	Viola sororia	6-12"	Indef.	Full Sun - Part Shade	Mesic	Flowers, Leaves							
Yarrow	Achillea millefolium	2-3'	Indef.	Full Sun - Part Shade	Xeric	Flowers							

Seed and Plant Sources

Outside Pride: [OutsidePride.com](https://www.OutsidePride.com)
 Mountain Valley Growers: [PlugTrays.com](https://www.PlugTrays.com)
 Stepables: [Stepables.com](https://www.Stepables.com)
 Jeepers Creepers: [JeepersCreepers.com](https://www.JeepersCreepers.com)

Backyard Abundance is a nonprofit that helps build vibrant communities by creating beautiful, resilient landscapes that provide healthy food and habitat.

We envision the growth of ecologically resilient communities that meet everyone's basic needs of survival today and in the future. Yards and public areas grow healthy food and natural materials to nourish our bodies and support our local economy. The land supports healthy ecosystems by providing habitat, supporting healthy water quality, and emulating nature's resiliency. This community focus creates a healthy social fabric, ecological integrity, and a spirit of abundance for all.



How You Can Help

1. **Observe and learn.** Carefully observe what is happening in your landscape to better understand how you can work with nature to improve it.
2. **Improve the environmental health of a landscape.** Knowledgeable friends and online resources can provide ideas for projects of any size and skill level.
3. **Share what you have done.** Alternatives to conventional landscapes must be seen and experienced for the movement to take root. Use Facebook and other social media to learn from others and share your pictures and stories.

We Can Help You...

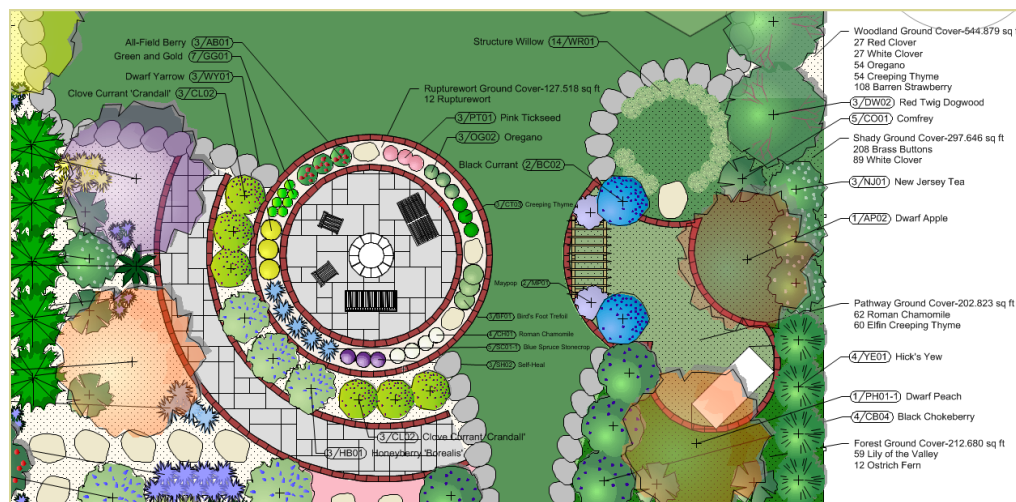
- Lower the maintenance, increase the beauty, attract desired wildlife and enhance the ecological health of your landscape.
- Connect and collaborate with others in your community.
- Find elegant solutions to environmental issues.

Landscape Tours

We host free yard tours feature landscapes designed to benefit our environment. Local experts are available to describe the ecological benefits provided by each yard and explain how residents can implement similar features. Refreshments are provided at each event.

Design and Education

We provide onsite consultations and group-based workshops to help you create a beautiful landscape that saves you time, energy and money while improving the health of our environment. A wide variety of activities create a fun and engaging learning experience for gardeners of any experience level.




More Information

Visit our website to learn about upcoming events, find information, and see pictures of abundant landscapes.

www.BackyardAbundance.org

Facebook

 "Like" us on Facebook to find others and share your ideas.

www.facebook.com/BackyardAbundance