

# TYPES OF GRASSES

## **Warm Season Lawn Grasses Turf Grass**

**Common Name: Bermuda**  
**Scientific Name: *Cynodon dactylon***



Source: [www.bamertseed.com](http://www.bamertseed.com)

Common Bermuda loves full sun and has excellent traffic tolerance. Their peak growing time is mid-summer when the temperatures are the hottest. Drought tolerant warm season grasses have the ability to survive on little water during these peak growing times. It responds quickly to watering after drought and requires frequent mowing.

### **Blackjack**



Blackjack Bermuda is perfect for the home lawn, parks or sports fields. This vigorous, fine-bladed cultivar adds color and density to any warm-season blend. Blackjack lawn seed produces a sun-loving turf that performs throughout the hottest summer months, and in addition, Blackjack shows remarkable shade and cold tolerance even in cold winter areas.

**Common Name: Buffalo grass**  
**Scientific Name: *Bouteloua dactyloides***



Source: [www.bamertseed.com](http://www.bamertseed.com)

If you're looking for low-maintenance turfgrass for your lawn, Buffalo grass should be considered. The need for irrigation is less than the typical Bermuda grass and Buffalo grass will establish and thrive with little irrigation applications. The amount of water needed for a Buffalo grass seed to thrive is significantly less than the amount needed by bluegrass or tall fescue seeds. Excessive water applications can lead to the potential of weed pressure or root rot.

Although growing in popularity for use in low traffic areas and as a substitute for Bermuda grass and other non-native warm season grass types, Buffalo grass is primarily used for range grazing, is an essential component of the shortgrass and mixed grass prairies, and can be used for all kinds of livestock. However, if it's newly established, grazing is not encouraged during the first season. Once the stand is established though, rotational grazing can be done to ensure proper plant recovery.

This type of grass is ideal for erosion control as well since Buffalo grass sod is dense. The plants develop numerous tough roots that dig four to six feet into the soil, allowing it to hold the ground in place.

**Grass Family (Poaceae : Cynodonteae)**

**Latin Name : *Bouteloua dactyloides***

**Longevity : Perennial**

**Season : Warm**

**Origin : Native**

**Value :**

**Wildlife – fair**

**Livestock – good**

**Remarks:** This shortgrass has both rhizomes and stolons. Leaves are sparsely hairy while the stem and nodes are without hair. Male and female plants grow separately. Female plants bear seed in bur-like clusters among the leaves. The species is highly drought resistant and is a dominant grass of the Great Plains. Adapted to dry prairies on medium to fine textured soils; occasionally used as a lawn grass, and commonly mixed with Blue Grama grass.

Source: USDA-NRCS

## Cool season grasses (Temporary)

**Common Name: Tall Fescue Grass**  
**Scientific Name: *Festuca arundinacea***



Source: [www.bamertseed.com](http://www.bamertseed.com)

**Grass Family : ( Poaceae : Poae )**

**Latin Name : Festuca arundinacea (synonym : Lolium arundinaceum)**

**Longevity : Perennial**

**Season : Cool**

**Origin : Introduced**

**Value :**

**Wildlife – fair**

**Livestock – good (fungus in seedhead toxic)**

**Remarks :** This grass has tall, erect stems coming from mostly basal leaves. A very common introduced grass in the Texas Panhandle. Found primarily in moist areas such as ditches, along creeks, and near ponds or lakes. It is a desirable forage for cattle, but is also known to cause decreased animal performance and even the loss of tails and ears. If large quantities are consumed, can cause pregnant mares to abort.

Source: USDA-NRCS

**Common Name: Canadian Wildrye Grass**

**Scientific Name: *Elymus canadensis***



Source: [www.bamertseed.com](http://www.bamertseed.com)

**Grass Family ( Poaceae : Triticeae )**

**Latin Name : *Elymus canadensis***

**Longevity : Perennial**

**Season : Cool**

**Origin : Native**

**Value :**

**Wildlife – fair**

**Livestock – good**

**Remarks:** Canada Wildrye is often confused with Virginia Wildrye (*Elymus virginicus*). The base of the glumes on Canada Wildrye is "V" shaped and longer awns (3/8-1 1/4 in) whereas Virginia Wildrye will have glumes that are "U" shaped and shorter awns (3/16 -3/4 in). Canada Wildrye grows abundantly on prairie sites, but is also found in shaded areas on bottomland sites. It is best adapted to medium textured soils, but grows on most all types of prairie soils. It is found in abundance along roadsides and protected areas, which indicates that it is a decreaser on prairie sites. It is very palatable and is readily eaten by all classes of livestock.

Source: USDA-NRCS

**Common Name: Western Wheat Grass**

**Scientific Name: Agropyron smithii**



Source: [www.bamertseed.com](http://www.bamertseed.com)

This strongly rhizomatous grass is stiffly erect. The leaf blades are rough textured. The seeds on the spike-type seedhead overlaps the next by one-half their length. Western wheatgrass appears blue-green in color, growing in colonies. Produces new growth from axillary buds at the basal nodes of the stems and at the rhizomes. Becomes dormant during the hot summer months; greens up in the fall if moisture is available. Reproduces from seed and from rhizomes. This grass is a valuable forage for livestock and wildlife. It cures well on the stem, making it valuable winter forage. Grows best on clay loam soils. Also adapted to well-drained bottomland soils and tolerates alkaline and saline conditions.

**Grass Family ( Poaceae : Triticeae )**

**Latin Name : Agropyron smithii**

**Longevity : Perennial**

**Season : Cool**

**Origin : Native**

**Value :**

**Wildlife – fair**

**Livestock –good**

Source: USDA-NRCS

**Common Name: Wild Oat**  
**Scientific Name: *Avena fatua***



Source: [www.bamertseed.com](http://www.bamertseed.com)

**Grass Family : ( Poaceae : Aveneae )**

**Latin Name : *Avena fatua* var. *fatua***

**Longevity : Annual**

**Season: Cool**

**Origin : Introduced**

**Value :**

**Wildlife – poor**

**Livestock – poor**

**Remarks:** This short-lived cool season grass is considered a weedy-type plant of moist areas alongside roadways and other disturbed areas. Of little value to livestock and wildlife.

Source: USDA-NRCS

## Native Texas Grasses

**Common Name: Buffalo**

***Buchloe dactyloides***



Source: [www.bamertseed.com](http://www.bamertseed.com)

If you're looking for low-maintenance turfgrass for your lawn, Buffalograss should be considered. The need for irrigation is less than the typical Bermudagrass and Buffalograss will establish and thrive with little irrigation applications. The amount of water needed for a Buffalograss seed to thrive is significantly less than the amount needed by bluegrass or tall fescue seeds. Excessive water applications can lead to the potential of weed pressure or root rot.

Although growing in popularity for use in low traffic areas and as a substitute for bermudagrass and other non-native warm season grass types, Buffalograss is primarily used for range grazing, is an essential component of the shortgrass and mixed grass prairies, and can be used for all kinds of livestock. However, if it's newly established, grazing is not encouraged during the first season. Once the stand is established though, rotational grazing can be done to ensure proper plant recovery.

This type of grass is ideal for erosion control as well since Buffalograss sod is dense. The plants develop numerous tough roots that dig four to six feet into the soil, allowing it to hold the ground in place.

**Grass Family (Poaceae : Cynodonteae)**

**Latin Name : *Bouteloua dactyloides***

**Longevity : Perennial**

**Season : Warm**

**Origin : Native**

**Value :**

**Wildlife – fair**

**Livestock – good**

**Remarks:** This shortgrass has both rhizomes and stolons. Leaves are sparsely hairy while the stem and nodes are without hair. Male and female plants grow separately. Female plants bear seed in bur-like clusters among the leaves. The species is highly drought resistant and is a dominant grass of the Great Plains. Adapted to dry prairies on medium to fine textured soils; occasionally used as a lawn grass, and commonly mixed with Blue Grama grass.

Source: USDA-NRCS

**Common Name: Blue Grama**  
**Scientific Name: *Bouteloua gracilis***



Source: [www.bamertseed.com](http://www.bamertseed.com)

Native to the Great Plains, Blue Grama grass rates as one of the most important forage species for all classes of livestock and wildlife all year round, along with Buffalograss. The plant is drought-resistant and tolerates soil conditions with fair salinity and moderate alkalinity. This makes it highly adaptable to drier areas of its range of habitat.

The plant grows to about 10 to 20 inches. The low growth makes it less suitable as a hay crop, but under the best moisture conditions, it can produce enough for harvest. Blue Grama grass grows during the warmest part of summer when precipitation is adequate, maturing in as short as 60 to 70 days. The plant also has a high nutritional value, with leaves that are low in fiber and high in protein; as much as 50 percent of its nutritive value is retained after curing. The species forms dense, shallow root systems that hold on to soil and keep it from being blown away by winds, making it an excellent plant for controlling soil erosion. And with its low-maintenance requirements and attractive seedheads, it can also be used as an ornamental plant or turfgrass in dry, arid climates. A Blue Grama grass lawn can easily be established from seed or short rhizomes. Excessive irrigation and fertilization, however, can invite weeds and cool-season plants to grow.

**Grass Family (Poaceae : Chlorideae)**

**Latin Name : *Bouteloua gracilis***

**Longevity : Perennial**

**Season : Warm**

**Origin : Native**

**Value :**

**Wildlife – good**

**Livestock – good**

**Remarks :** The plant base on Blue Grama is curved. It is more tolerant to grazing than Black Grama and is considered good grazing for all classes of livestock and wildlife. Quality is highest when grass is green. It retains much of its grazing value when dry and does provide good fall and winter forage. This short grass is one of the major dominant grass species of the Great Plains. Adapted to open plains, foothills, mesas, and woodlands, it is found on all soil textures, but most abundant in clay loam or sandy loam soils. Blue Grama is unsuited to wet, poorly drained soils.

Source: USDA-NRCS