

Choosing Your Grasses

Grasses For Cut Flowers

Calamagrostis (Reed Grass)
Deschampsia (Tufted Hair Grass)
Miscanthus (Maiden Grass, Jap. Silver Gr.)
Panicum (Switch Grass)

Drought Tolerant Grasses

Andropogon (Bluestem)
Calamagrostis (Reed Grass)
Festuca (Fescue Grass)
Helictotrichon (Blue Oat Grass)
Miscanthus (Jap. Silver Grass)
Panicum (Switch Grass)
Sporobolus (Prairie Dropseed)

Moisture Tolerant Grasses

Calamagrostis (Reed Grass)
Carex (Sedge)
Deschampsia (Tufted Hair Grass)
Miscanthus (Jap. Silver Grass)
Panicum (Switch Grass)

Grasses For Fall Color

Miscanthus (Jap. Silver Grass)
Panicum (Switch Grass)
Prairie Grasses

Screening Grasses

Calamagrostis (Reed Grass)
Miscanthus (Jap. Silver Grass)
Panicum (Switch Grass)

Shade Tolerant Grasses (part - full shade)

Calamagrostis (Reed Grass)
Carex (Sedge)
Deschampsia (Tufted Hair Grass)
Hakonechloa (Jap. Forest Grass)

Cool Season and Warm Season Grasses

Cool season grasses will start to grow early in the season and seem to have better foliage quality when the temperatures are cool or if given sufficient water during periods of drought. They bloom early.

Cool season grasses include: Fescues, Helictotrichon (Blue Oat Grass), Calamagrostis (Reed Grass) and Deschampsia (Tufted Hair Grass).

Warm season grasses will do better during warmer times of the year and remain good looking even when temperatures are high and moisture is limited. Warm season grasses do not begin to show growth until the weather becomes stable and the soils warm. Warm season grasses usually do not require as frequent division as cool season grasses. Warm season grasses include: Miscanthus (Japanese Silver Grass), Andropogon (Bluestem), Panicum (Switch Grass) and Sporobolus (Prairie Dropseed).

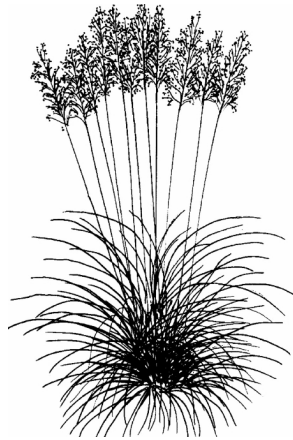
Ornamental Grasses



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Prairie Dropseed

The History of Grasses

Grasses have a long and interesting history. Since the beginning of time, grain, rice and corn have served as a basic food staple for humans as well as livestock.

To use Grasses as an ornamental plant in the garden is a fairly modern addition to its many uses. Grasses are some of the first plants to settle in an environment. They are sort of the pioneers preparing the way for other plants. Most Grasses are fairly hardy and very adaptable, growing well in places where other plants struggle.

To watch and listen to the wind play with the tall grasses, making them bend and sway in the wind, is a real joy. It makes the experience of gardening so much richer and it evokes feelings of wild and untouched nature.

We encourage you to make room in your garden for these great plants. Hopefully this brochure will help you choose the Grasses that fit your garden design the best.

Planting Grasses

Ornamental grasses are low feeders. Before planting Grasses, improve your soil by adding composted manure or other compost. A 4 foot tall grass needs approximately 2 to 3 feet of spacing. Larger plants require more spacing, whereas shorter plants can be spaced about 1 foot apart.

Designing with Grasses

In mass plantings

Use Fescues, Carex, Pennisetum or Miscanthus Grasses.

In the perennial border

Grasses look nice with Daylilies, Russian Sages, Sedums, Rudbeckias, Asters and Coneflowers.

As a garden sculpture

Many of the Miscanthus, Panicums, Calamagrostis, Pennisetum or Spartina.

With trees and shrubs

Plant among Dwarf Junipers, Daphne, Buddleias and Heathers.

In theme gardens

Such as Rock gardens, Bog beds and Japanese gardens.

Used as a screen

Planted close together they work great as a hedge or they can soften sharp corners of a house.

Edging

Plant along a path or as a low border in front of a bed.

Transition plant

Between different sections of the garden.

With other foliage plants

Carex, Hakonechloa and Golden Millet work well with Hostas and Ferns in the shade.

Alternative to lawns

Use Grasses like Miscanthus, Pennisetum, Calamagrostis and Fescue to create island beds in the lawn by replacing green lawn with these more Ornamental Grasses.

Maintenance of Grasses

Spring is the time to do the few chores that your grasses require. Ornamental Grasses should be cut back to about 6" and it should be done before the new growth emerges, usually some time during May.

Every few years, in mid to late spring, lift up and divide the clump. Many Perennial Grasses grow in clump form and will begin to die out in the center when they need to be divided.

Pests & Diseases

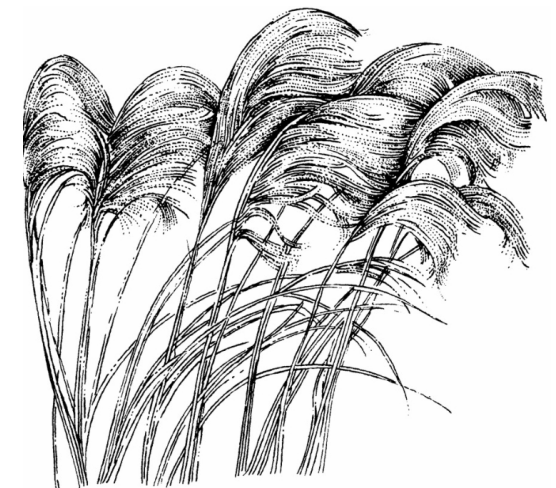
Ornamental Grasses are tough plants. They are generally resistant to damage from insects, rodents and diseases. Even deer seem to find them unappetizing.

Through The Season

With a variety of different Grasses one can enjoy the blooms or textures through the entire year. Many Grasses remain standing during the winter and can greatly enhance the winter landscape when they are covered in snow or frost.

Drying Ornamental Grasses

Grasses should be cut in the afternoon on a dry sunny day. Try to pick stems that have not completely opened as most will continue to open for at least a day or two. Tie bunches together so that air can circulate among the flower heads. Hang them upside down in a room that is cool, dry, dark and airy. Coolness keeps the sap from drying too quickly and forcing flower heads to go to seed. The dry air prevents the formation of mold and mildew. Darkness prevents premature fading.



Japanese Silver Grass