

PROPER WAY TO PREPARE SOIL FOR SOD INSTALLATION

Once you've decided what type of sod your going to install, determine it's soil requirements. Good soil is very important to having a healthy lawn, as it is the "sponge" that holds the water between rains or physical watering. 2" of soil only holds half the water as 4" of soil, and most experts agree 4" of quality soil is a bare minimum to retain moisture and insulate the roots from our brutal summers.

Just as important as soil depth is soil quality. Proper soil preparation is important for the successful establishment of your new lawn. Central Texas soil, if you have any, is either native black dirt with high clay content or builder loam. Neither have much if any nutritional or organic value, and the soil is comprised of small particles which means no air pore space. Air pore space is needed as this is where water is stored, and oxygen is made available to your roots. So to correct this negative situation, you should add a minimum of 2" organic compost mix to your existing soil. If you really don't have any soil, you may want to bring in a couple inches of chocolate loam prior to bringing in the compost. Roto-till the compost to a depth of 4" so your roots will adapt readily and go deep. It's advisable to get a soil test before you prepare your soil as you probably want to add soil sulphur and possibly some fertilizer to your yard prior to tilling. Test kits are available at the Williamson County Agriculture Office.

Once your soil is prepared, rake it level creating any drainage features you may need so your yard won't have any standing water. Some folks like to lightly water their soil prior to sod installation, just be careful to not get it too wet so you don't make any feet print while laying the new sod.