

A young girl with light brown hair and blue eyes is smiling and has her arms raised in the air. She is wearing a light green tank top with the text "Malibu Beach SURF CHAMPIONSHIP E-Girls" printed on it. The background is a lush green lawn with other people in the distance, some of whom also have their arms raised. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

THE TRUTH ABOUT ST. AUGUSTINE GRASS:

**6 Simple Steps To a
Greener, Lusher Lawn**

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6 Steps to a Greener, Healthier Lawn

It is important to understand that a lawn that is easy to care for and gives you the health and beauty you desire is dependant on several steps including those that occur before you make your first application of fertilizer.

St. Augustinegrass (type of grass in most Florida homes) comes in many subtypes called varieties and have different characteristics that make them more or less suited for various conditions like shade tolerance and others. The term lawn or turfgrass as found below will be used interchangeably to refer to St. Augustinegrass.

Turfgrass Establishment:

Successful turfgrass establishment is important because without it lawns perform poorly and become infested with weeds that later can be difficult or impossible to selectively control.

Proper soil preparation followed by the selection of quality sod that is of the appropriate variety (cultivar) for your general shade conditions, combined with properly installed irrigation all contribute to the success of turfgrass establishment. Neglecting any of these important steps can lead to necessary corrective action in order to maintain a healthy desired lawn.

This action can include removing sod from an area that is too shady for grass to grow and replacing it with a more shade tolerant plant material, pruning a tree to allow more sunlight, adding or moving sprinklers, or removing the existing weed infested areas and re-sodding with the appropriate variety following proper soil preparation.

Mowing:

St. Augustine grass should be mowed frequently enough to never remove more than one third of the grass blade and always with a sharp mower blade.

Mowers should be set on the highest setting for all varieties other than semi-dwarf varieties such as *Seville* and *Delmar*, which should be mowed at about two and one half inches high.

When mowing once per week, this practice can be easily followed during the slower growing cooler months but becomes more difficult during the fast growing rainy summer months.

A dull mower blade will split and tear the grass blades that will eventually die from their wounds.

Split and torn grass blades can thin the grass, encourage weed growth, cause an entry point for fungus and detract from the overall appearance of the lawns color by combining dead grass blades with green healthy ones. Grass clippings should be mulched and returned to the grass to be used as an additional source of nutrients.

Irrigation:

Proper irrigation conserves both water and fertilizer and contributes to a healthy lawn by encouraging healthy root growth while discouraging weeds that thrive during constant wet conditions.

Irrigation should be performed as needed by recognizing temporary wilt symptoms and then applying three-quarters of an inch of water. If a regular frequency is desired and you are in the St. Johns Water Management District, you must follow the irrigation requirements that allow watering only two times per week and only on specified days that correspond with your street address.

You should then apply only three-quarters of an inch of water. Ask your Dr. Jack's horticulturist for a free irrigation gauge to help you determine how long you need to water each area (irrigation zone) and set your timer (controller) up accordingly.

Fertilizing:

Fertilizer is a lot like vitamins. There are many different opinions on what fertilizer is the best and what the frequency and rate should be.

Turfgrass experts will all agree that St. Augustinegrass must receive additional fertilizer other than grass clippings in order to be healthy and have a good green appearance. Most turfgrass experts will also tell you that St. Augustinegrass in Central Florida requires 4 to 6 pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet per year.

Most will also agree that nitrogen should be applied at 1 pound per 1000 square feet, and that formulations should contain some slow-release fertilizer. We recommend that as much as 50% of the nitrogen applied should be a slow-release form.

Do not be fooled by the term organic!

Organic can be an expensive slow release synthetic or natural long feeding product, or it can be a cheap quick release synthetic or natural slow feeding product. The important key word again is *slow-release*.

Since our soils in Central Florida usually contain adequate amounts of Phosphorus, and because Phosphorus is detrimental to the health of our lakes, it should be applied in smaller amounts than Nitrogen and Potassium or eliminated from the fertilizer completely. Potassium is important for root growth and should be included at rates close to those of Nitrogen.

Micronutrients such as Iron and Manganese help with turf color but can cause staining if applied to paved surfaces. **Generally, you get what you pay for when it comes to fertilizer.**

The cheaper the fertilizer the more you will need to buy and the shorter time it will last. This will ultimately cost you more than if you buy a more expensive fertilizer that requires you to use less but feeds your turf far longer.

Good quality broadcast spreader types are the easiest to use and achieve the best results. Avoid getting any fertilizer on paved surfaces and if you do, blow or sweep the pellets back into the lawn area to avoid potentially staining paved surfaces.

It is also important to apply fertilizer in a manner that can be utilized by the grass and not wasted or cause pollution to our lakes. Many of our paved surfaces drain into lakes and can carry misapplied fertilizers into our waterways during rainfall.

All fertilizers are harmful to our lakes so you should always follow Florida's Best Management Practices (BMP) when making fertilizer applications. You can learn more about fertilizing and other Best Management Practices by visiting: <http://tinyurl.com/eypua>

In conclusion, you need to determine several things before you apply fertilizer. Have you purchased the desired blend? Are you going to apply the right rate evenly so that you achieve an even, rich color that you desire while avoiding damage to the lawn from applying too much fertilizer? And most importantly, are you avoiding any detrimental environmental impact?

Pest Control:

A certain level of expertise is required to properly identify the different pests that can harm our St. Augustinegrass turf before you decide to use a pesticide.

You can view pests that damage St. Augustinegrass by visiting: <http://www.pestweb.com>

Proper identification of insects, diseases and weeds will help you decide if a pesticide is required and if so which one should be used.

You need to read and understand the label before making any application of pesticides. There are several things you can do to reduce the need for pesticides on your site. These include proper watering, mowing, fertilizing, reducing traffic where possible, and avoiding any other stress to the grass.

If you are unsure about what you are attempting to control, you should consult or hire a professional.

Any pesticides that are unused in an application should be stored safely away from children, always kept in their original container with the label attached, and never disposed improperly by pouring them into a sink drain or body of water.

Change Your View and Perspective:

If you think your lawn doesn't look as good as you think it should, or it is not as green as your neighbors across the street, try walking across the street to view your lawn.

There is no such thing as the perfect lawn and sometimes we see things up close that aren't apparent from further away. You will probably find several things wrong with your neighbor's lawn up close that were not apparent from your home across the street.

Having a residential St. Augustinegrass lawn that looks like a closely mowed Bermudagrass hybrid that you play golf on is an unrealistic goal.

Remember, the grass is always greener on the other side of the street!

FREE DOCTOR'S EXAM Will Tell You What it Takes to Make Your Lawn the Envy of the Neighborhood.

Thank you for taking the time to read our e-book about creating an emerald green lawn that's a safe and healthy place for your family and pets to play.

So many of the people we talk to have questions about their lawn and what it takes to make it look fantastic. That's why we put together this book. But even with the latest and greatest information achieving a trouble, weed and pest free lawn is difficult, expensive and time consuming.

The Solution is Simple

Call us and invite one of our degreed horticulturists to come out and perform a rigorous examination on your lawn. We will check it for over 48 different exam criteria that will give you an accurate picture of your lawns overall health and what it will take for it to become the lush, green oasis that will be the envy of the block.

While we're there, ask us any questions you have about your lawn, landscape plants or soil. We love to talk about our passion, Central Florida Landscape.

When we're finished with our meticulous examination, we will write a custom prescription just for you and your lawn. We do this because we know the challenges, time constraints, and stress that lawn care can impose on you.

We are dedicated to making the lives of Central Florida residents like you, safer and healthier and more fulfilled through time saving, esteem boosting, prestigious lawn care. We've been doing this for over 30 years and we'll be glad to do it for you!

The DOCTOR'S EXAM is FREE and extremely valuable. This exam is not for the casual home owner.

This exam is for homeowners who are serious about taking the necessary steps to having a thick and vibrant St. Augustine lawn that provides a safe and beautiful place for your family and pets.

Call 407-422-3641

Don't hesitate! Get your FREE DOCTOR'S EXAM now. It costs you nothing but could save you hours of frustration, aggravation, stress and headaches not to mention your hard earned cash.

Let me ask you a question? Would you rather have a frog or a doctor in your yard? If you're like most people you'd choose a doctor.

Our people are plant experts not salespeople, so don't ask them about scare tactics or high pressure as they are uneducated in that department. These are professional men of science and do not work on commission.

When you call Dr. Jack's for your FREE DOCTOR'S EXAM, you will be inviting one of Central Florida's finest horticulturists to your home that will be able to answer any questions you have about your lawn related issues. At Dr. Jack's we have *Central Florida Lawns "Down to a Science."*

Call for you FREE DOCTOR'S EXAM now.

Sincerely,

Rick Reinhardt

Rick Reinhardt
President Dr. Jack's
407-422-3641

P.S. Call for your FREE DOCTOR'S EXAM now while it's still fresh in your mind. Get real solutions without the expensive trial and error. These exams book up fast so call immediately to ensure you are not put on a waiting list. Call 407-422-3641 or visit www.greengrassnow.com