

FAQS - Pennington Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue

1. Q: What is Pennington Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue grass seed?

A: Pennington Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue is a classic, time-tested cool-season grass seed known for producing dependable, durable lawns. It is a bulk grass seed product manufactured by Pennington and sold in a 40 lb. bag. Kentucky 31 (also called KY-31 or K31) is one of the most widely recognized tall fescue varieties in the United States, valued for its toughness and adaptability across a broad range of conditions.

2. Q: How much area does a bag of Pennington Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue seed cover?

A: The 3 lb. bag of Pennington Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue covers up to 600 square feet, a 7 lb. bag covers up to 1,400 square feet, a 20 lb. bag covers up to 4,000 square feet, and a 40 lb. bag covers up to 8,000 square feet. This makes it a cost-effective bulk option well-suited for establishing or overseeding a variety of lawn sizes.

3. Q: Is Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue a good grass seed for lawns?

A: Yes, Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue is widely considered a reliable and dependable choice for home lawns. It is prized for its drought tolerance, ability to handle daily foot traffic and heavy use, and its adaptability to both sunny and partially shaded areas. Its long track record makes it one of the most trusted tall fescue varieties available for DIY homeowners.

4. Q: What sun conditions does Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue grow best in?

A: Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue grows best in full sun to medium shade. This versatility makes it a practical choice for lawns with mixed light conditions, such as yards that receive direct afternoon sun in some areas but are shaded by trees or structures in others. It is not recommended for deep or dense shade environments.

5. Q: How long does it take for Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue grass seed to germinate?

A: Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue typically germinates within 7 to 14 days under ideal conditions. Germination is fastest when soil temperatures are between 50°F and 65°F, which is why early fall or early spring are considered the best planting windows. Consistent moisture during the germination period is essential for achieving uniform, successful seedling emergence.

6. Q: Will Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue spread on its own?

A: Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue is a bunch-type grass, meaning it grows in clumps and does not spread aggressively through stolons or rhizomes the way some other grass types do. It fills in by producing tillers from the base of existing plants rather than spreading laterally across the lawn. For large bare spots or thin areas, overseeding is the recommended method to achieve fuller coverage.

7. Q: Is Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue drought tolerant?

A: Yes, Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue is known for its strong drought tolerance, making it a dependable choice for lawns in areas that experience dry summer conditions. Its deep root system helps it access moisture from lower soil layers during periods of low rainfall. This characteristic is one of the primary reasons Kentucky 31 has remained a popular lawn grass for decades.

8. Q: Can Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue handle heavy foot traffic?

A: Yes, Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue is well-suited for lawns that receive daily use and heavy foot traffic. Its tough, durable grass blades and resilient growth habit make it a practical choice for family lawns, pet areas, and high-activity outdoor spaces. This durability is one of the key features that distinguishes Kentucky 31 from more ornamental or fine-textured grass varieties.

9. Q: What are the disadvantages of Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue?

A: The primary disadvantage of Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue is that it naturally contains an endophyte fungus that, while making the grass hardy and pest-resistant, can produce alkaloids toxic to grazing animals — particularly horses and cattle. This condition, known as fescue toxicosis, can cause elevated body temperatures and other health issues in livestock. Kentucky 31 is therefore best suited for residential lawns and non-grazing applications rather than pastures where horses or cattle are present.

10. Q: When is the best time to plant Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue grass seed?

A: The best time to plant Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue is in early fall, when soil temperatures cool to between 50°F and 65°F and conditions favor strong germination and root establishment. Early spring is the second-best planting window, though fall seeding is generally preferred because cooler temperatures reduce competition from weeds and heat stress on new seedlings. Avoid planting during the heat of summer, as high soil temperatures significantly reduce germination rates.

11. Q: What type of grass is Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue — warm season or cool season?

A: Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue is a cool-season grass, meaning it grows most vigorously during the cooler temperatures of spring and fall. It performs best in transition zones and cooler climates across the United States where temperatures are moderate rather than consistently hot. While it has good heat and drought tolerance for a cool-season grass, it is not a warm-season variety like Bermuda or Zoysia.

12. Q: Can Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue be grown in Texas?

A: Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue can be grown in parts of Texas, particularly in the cooler, northern regions of the state that fall within the transition zone. In hotter southern areas of Texas, the intense summer heat can stress cool-season grasses like Kentucky 31, making establishment and long-term maintenance more challenging. Homeowners in central or southern Texas may want to consult local extension resources to determine whether Kentucky 31 is appropriate for their specific climate.

13. Q: What fertilizer should I use with Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue?

A: Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue responds well to a balanced lawn fertilizer applied according to a schedule timed around its active cool-season growth periods in fall and spring. A soil test is the most reliable way to determine the specific nutrient needs of your lawn before choosing a fertilizer product. In general, nitrogen-rich fertilizers applied in early fall are particularly beneficial for tall fescue lawns to promote strong root development heading into winter.

14. Q: How do I overseed an existing lawn with Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue seed?

A: To overseed with Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue, mow your existing lawn short, rake to remove thatch and debris, and broadcast the seed evenly using a spreader. The 3 lb. bag of Pennington Kentucky 31 Tall Fescue covers up to 600 square feet, a 7 lb. bag covers up to 1,400 square feet, a 20 lb. bag covers up to 4,000 square feet, and a 40 lb. bag covers up to 8,000 square feet making it practical for overseeding a variety of lawn sizes in a single application. After seeding, lightly rake the seed into the soil surface and keep the area consistently moist until germination is complete, typically within 7 to 14 days.