

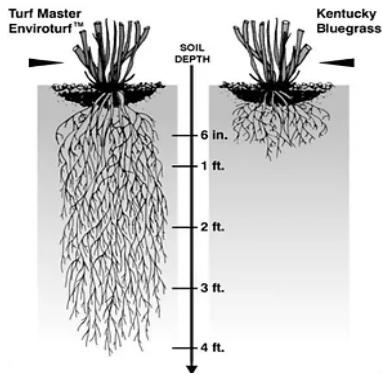


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Amazing Alternatives to Kentucky Bluegrass Lawns

Kentucky Bluegrass is a popular choice for lawns in many regions, but it may not be the best option for Colorado due to its high water requirements and susceptibility to drought. Here are some alternatives that are more suitable for Colorado's climate, offering drought resistance, lower maintenance, and better adaptability to local conditions. **With over 50% of municipal water in Colorado going toward watering lawns, replacing thirsty Kentucky bluegrass with drought-tolerant alternatives is essential as the state faces critical water shortages and a rapidly diminishing water supply.**

1. Enviroturf™



These images are courtesy of Turfmaster LLC

Description: This sod option is an extra durable and mostly drought tolerant turf that helps conserve water while providing a high quality ground cover alternative to Kentucky Bluegrass that requires 30% to 40% less water.

Benefit: Sun or partial shade, Very drought-tolerant and durable, Normal mowing, Suitable for high-traffic areas, Installed as 'sod' so it will look good in your yard space immediately.

2. Dog Tuff™



Courtesy of Plant Select



Courtesy of High Country Gardens



Courtesy of dogtuffgrass.com

Description: A highly durable, drought-tolerant warm-season grass ideal for pet-friendly, low-maintenance lawns in sunny, dry climates (is planted in plugs and needs time to fill in).

Benefits: Full Sun, Extremely drought-tolerant, Minimal to no mowing, Excellent choice for heavy foot traffic and great for dogs.

3. Tahoma 31



Courtesy of Harmony Brands



Courtesy of Sod By Sherry



Courtesy of Tahoma31

Description: A cold-tolerant hybrid Bermudagrass known for its resilience, water efficiency, and suitability for lawns in climates with hot summers and cold winters (is seeded and needs time to fill in).

Benefits: Shade tolerant (4-6 hours of sun needed), Very drought-tolerant, Normal mowing, Handles moderate foot traffic.

4. Buffalograss (*Buchloe dactyloides*)



Courtesy of Burgner Study



Courtesy of Hoffmann Nursery



Courtesy of Robert Perry

Description: A warm season, perennial, native turf grass that thrives in dry, sunny areas (is seeded and needs time to fill in).

Benefits: Full Sun, Extremely drought-tolerant, Minimal mowing, Fine texture, Establishes well in poor soils.

5. Blue Grama Grass (*Bouteloua gracilis*)



Courtesy of Houzz



Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center



Courtesy of SLC Gardens

Description: Another warm season, native grass, known for its distinctive seed heads that resemble eyelashes (is seeded and needs time to fill in, can also be planted in plugs).

Benefits: Full Sun, Drought-tolerant, Mow or don't mow - your choice, Not a great choice for foot traffic, Unique aesthetic and is well-suited for Colorado's climate.

6. Fescue (*Festuca spp.*)



Courtesy of Plantinfo.com



Courtesy of Wilson Bros Nursery



Courtesy of Colorado Native Grass Guide

Types: Tall fescue and fine fescue are common cool season native grass options (is seeded and needs time to fill in).

Benefits: Sun/Shade, Drought-tolerant with a deep root system, Some mowing, Tall fescue is good for foot traffic while Fine fescue varieties (like creeping red fescue) are more shade-tolerant, require less water, less mowing but also less foot traffic.

7. Perennial Ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*)



Courtesy of ASU



Courtesy of CABI Digital Library



Courtesy of Wikipedia

Description: A quick germinating cool season grass that establishes rapidly (is seeded and needs time to fill in).

Benefits: Full Sun, Moderately drought-tolerant, Regular mowing required, Can be used in mixes for quick patches and overseeding, does reasonably well with foot traffic.

8. Micro Clover (*Trifolium repens 'Pipolina'*)



Courtesy of *The Big Little Garden*



Courtesy of Tony Koski



Description: A small-leaved variety of clover that, when mixed with traditional grass, creates a low-maintenance, dense, green lawn that naturally improves soil fertility by fixing nitrogen, reducing the need for fertilizers. Can also be seeded on its own for a full clover lawn - needs time to establish.

Benefits: Full Sun (but can handle lite shade), Drought-tolerant, No mowing necessary but mowing will eliminate the flowers that grow and attract bees, Very resilient to foot traffic.

9. Creeping Thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*)



Courtesy of Etsy



Courtesy of NC Extension Gardener Plant toolbox



Courtesy of A Wandering Botanist

Description: A low-growing ground cover that produces small purple flowers. Spreads 6-12 inches per year (planted in plugs and needs time to spread).

Benefits: Full Sun (but can tolerate some shade), Extremely drought-tolerant, No mowing necessary, Can handle foot traffic and provides a fragrant lawn alternative but it will also attract bees.

10. Sedum (*Sedum spp.*)



Courtesy of Gardeners Path



Courtesy of Fine Gardening



Courtesy of Invasive.org

Description: A succulent ground cover that thrives in dry conditions and is quite aesthetic with hundreds of varieties to choose from (mix and match plugs for a unique and colorful lawn alternative).

Benefits: Full Sun (can tolerate some shade), Extremely drought-tolerant, No mowing, Doesn't do well with foot traffic.

11. Native Wildflower Meadows



Courtesy of Garden Design



Courtesy of Native Meadows



Courtesy of High Country Gardens

Description: A mix of native wildflowers and grasses for a more wild Colorado look that provides habitat for pollinators and offers vibrant seasonal color throughout the year (seeded or planted).

Benefits: Typically Full Sun, Drought-tolerant, No mowing necessary but pruning is recommended, Foot traffic not advised.

****Tips for Establishing Alternatives:***

Soil Preparation: Ensure proper soil preparation to improve drainage and nutrient availability.

Seed Mixes: Consider using seed mixes that combine several of these grasses for a more resilient lawn.

Watering Practices: Implement efficient watering practices, such as deep watering and using mulch, to support establishment and reduce water usage. By choosing these alternatives, you can create a sustainable and attractive lawn that is better suited to Colorado's climate and water availability.

We love ground cover!

Need help deciding which one to use and where?
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