



How to Kill Your Grass

(Step 1 in Preparing Your Water Wise Landscape)

There are several ways to kill your turf grass. All of the following methods are safe if done correctly. **Note: Different types of turf may take different methods to kill properly.

1. **Dig it up:** Let your lawn die and then dig it up. However, there may still be live grass and/or weed seeds in the dead grass which may spread as you dig it up. The organic material excavated should not be placed in your backyard compost bin just in case there is grass or weed seeds inside.
2. **Layering:** This approach is popular among those who want to avoid chemicals, but it takes time. Cover the turf with six or more layers of cardboard or newspaper. On top of that, add 4 to 6 inches of organic mulch (i.e.: chopped bark, leaves) and water. The layers prevent light and growth. Grass will die in two months. Then, you can dig through the mulch and newspaper and plant in the soil.
3. **Solarizing:** This variation on the layering approach uses the sun as executioner. First, mow the lawn super-close. Then water it intensively. Cover it with a clear, plastic tarp to hold in the moisture and let the sun sweat the turf to death. Downside: This process takes about six weeks and can leave the neighbors wondering when you're going to start the painting. This method may not only kill the grass, but also the good microbes in your soil.
4. **Spraying:** Many gardeners prefer not to use herbicides, but Roundup is safe when used correctly. The spray is absorbed by the plant and root system but doesn't leave a soil residual. Spray the grass and water appx. 48 hour after application. Wait 7 to 10 days and re-spray any areas that are still green. Follow the same watering and reapplication guidelines until all the grass is gone. To reduce chemical use and speed up the project, you can also remove the last bits of grass by hand! **Note: Do not let Roundup (or any garden chemicals) get into the storm drains. Read and follow the directions!**

Once all the grass is gone, you can start working on the fun part of your water wise landscape makeover. Below are some of the steps you will need to implement:

1. **Design the Yard:** Attend **FREE** Water Wise Landscaping Workshops (such as the ones taught at CBWCD), talk to designers, look at neighbor's landscapes, study books on landscaping and check out websites.
2. **Update your Irrigation System:** Think about what you're planting and where you're planting it before you decide on overhead sprinklers or drip. Consider upgrading your Irrigation Timer to a new Smart Timer (rebates for timers and nozzles at bewaterwise.com)
3. **Mulch:** Remember to top off your finished landscape with 2" to 3" of mulch. This will help reduce evaporation, keep down the weeds and looks decorative.

For more information, visit CBWCD's website, visit the Water Wise Demonstration Garden, or attend one of their free Water Wise Workshops.



**Chino Basin Water
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