

## Fall Color

*In fall, many grasses begin to change color, eventually fading to beige in winter. The following have especially stunning colors for fall interest.*

- Andropogon gerardii (Big Bluestem) **D**
  - Orange, scarlet or purple depending on variety
- Calamagrostis acutiflora (Feather Reed Grass) **D**
  - Yellow, variegated on some varieties
- Hakonechloa (Japanese Forest Grass) **D**
  - Orange, red or purple
- Schizachyrium (Little Bluestem) **D**
  - Orange, red, yellow and purplish brown
- Panicum virgatum (Switchgrass) **D**
  - Red, burgundy, purple
- Sporobolus heterolepis (Prairie Dropseed) **D**
  - Golden orange
- Miscanthus sinensis varieties (Maiden Grass) **D**
  - Yellow, orange, purple or red depending on variety

## Pots

*Add some textural contrast to container plantings with these small grasses.*

- Acorus (Sweet Flag) **E**
- Carex varieties (Sedge) **D and E varieties**
- Hakonechloa (Japanese Forest Grass) **D**
- Pennisetum alopecuroides (Fountain Grass) **D**



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# ORNAMENTAL GRASS



Beauty & Function



# WHY ORNAMENTAL GRASSES?

Ornamental grasses are a beautiful and easy care addition to landscapes and borders. Not only do they provide texture, movement, fall color and flowers, they are also a source of food and shelter for wildlife. They are versatile and can be used in many ways, blending and contrasting beautifully with the many different leaf types of other plants.

Grasses generally require little care, making them an ecologically sound choice for gardens and borders. Plant in well drained soil with plenty of organic matter. Fertilizing is not recommended for most; too much nitrogen can cause them to flop.

Leave faded grasses uncut through winter to add textural interest and to create a place for beneficial insects and birds to overwinter. In late winter cut back to 6 inches above ground to make room for new growth. There are evergreen grasses that do not require a hard cutting back, however, cleaning up faded foliage will make them look tidier.

# DESIGNING WITH GRASSES

D = Deciduous    E = Evergreen

## Striking Focal Point

**While many grasses make a nice focal point, the ones listed below are especially suited because of their tall stature, shape and interesting inflorescences.**

- Cortaderia selloana (Pampas Grass) E
- Miscanthus sinensis varieties (Maiden Grass) D
  - "Zebra", "Gold Bar" and "Morning Light"varieties have interesting variegation
- Molinia caerulea (Skyracer Moor Grass) D
- Panicum virgatum (Switchgrass) D
- Stipa gigantea (Giant Feather Grass) D

## Tall & Narrow

**Plant multiples of these to create a privacy screen or wall. Plant singly for a great vertical accent.**

- Calamagrostis (Feather Reed Grass) D
  - 6' tall x 3' wide
- Panicum virgatum (Switchgrass) D
  - varieties range 4-8' tall x 2-3' wide

## Tall & Full

**Large with a rounded shape, these ornamental grasses create a dramatic effect. Use as a barrier or plant among shorter plants to accentuate their size. Make sure to give them plenty of room!**

- Cortaderia selloana (Pampas Grass) E
  - 8-12' tall, 4-8' wide
- Miscanthus sinensis varieties (Maiden Grass) D
  - varieties such as "Gracillimus" grows 6-8' tall, 3-6' wide. "Morning Light" grows 4-6' tall, 3-4' wide.

## Meadows

**Meadows are an environmentally-friendly alternative to lawns. These grasses are suitable for designing a meadow.**

- Andropogon gerardii (Big Bluestem) D
- Bouteloua gracilis (Blue Grama Grass) E
- Carex varieties (Sedge) D and E varieties
- Molinia caerulea (Purple Moor Grass) D
- Nassella tenuissima (Mexican Feather Grass) E
- Panicum virgatum (Switchgrass) D
- Schizachyrium scoparium (Little Bluestem) D
- Sesleria autumnalis (Autumn Moor Grass) E
- Sporobolus heterolepis (Prairie Dropseed) D

## Wet Areas

**These grasses will tolerate soggy soil and wet areas.**

- Acorus calamus (Sweet Flag) E
- Carex (Sedge) D and E varieties
- Chasmanthium latifolium (Northern Sea Oats) E
- Juncus (Rush) E
- Liriope muscari (Lilyturf) E
- Schizachyrium scoparium (Little Bluestem) D

## Water Wise

**These grasses will hold up through the hottest, driest summer. To keep them looking their best, you can provide occasional watering.**

- Calamagrostis acutiflora (Feather Reed Grass) D
- Cortaderia selloana (Pampas Grass) E
- Festuca glauca (Blue Fescue) E
- Helictotrichon sempervirens (Blue Oat Grass) E
- Muhlenbergia capillaris (Muhly Grass) E
- Nassella tenuissima (Mexican Feather Grass) E
- Panicum virgatum (Switchgrass) D
- Sporobolus heterolepis (Prairie Dropseed) D

## Shade Gardens

**Most grasses require full sun, but these grasses do well in areas with part sun to shade.**

- Acorus calamus (Sweet Flag) E
- Calamagrostis acutiflora (Feather Reed Grass) D
  - Good in dry, shady areas. Also likes full sun.
- Carex (Sedge) D and E varieties
- Chasmanthium latifolium (Northern Sea Oats) E
- Deschampsia cespitosa (Tufted Hair Grass)
- Hakonechloa (Japanese Forest Grass) D
- Liriope muscari (Lilyturf) E
  - Good as a groundcover around trees

## Ground Cover

**These low growing grasses are especially beautiful when planted in masses.**

- Acorus calamus (Sweet Flag) E
- Carex (Sedge) D and E varieties
- Deschampsia (Tufted Hair Grass) E
- Hakonechloa (Japanese Forest Grass) D
- Imperata cylindrica (Japanese Blood Grass) D
- Liriope muscari (Lily Turf) E
- Nassella tenuissima (Mexican Feather Grass) E
- Ophiopogon planiscapus (Black Mondo Grass) E
- Pennisetum (Fountain Grass) D
- Sesleria autumnalis (Autumn Moor Grass) E