



We've Got You Covered:
Intro To Groundcovers

What is a groundcover?

A lower growing plant that can cover the soil beneath it.

Grounds Covers are typically 12 inches or less in height.



Benefits of a Groundcover

- *Weed Suppression*
 - *Regulates Soil Temperature*
 - *Prevents Soil Erosion*
 - *Reduce Landscape maintenance*
 - *Can be used in difficult spaces*
 - *Fills in an area quickly*
 - *Attractive Appearance*
 - *Can use less water than lawn*
-





What
Can
You
Do
With
Ground
Covers?



Lawn Alternative

- Creeping Thyme
- Micro Clover/White Clover
- Yarrow
- Blue Star Creeper
- Creeping Speedwell



Groundcover vs. turf grass

Water Use – Low to Medium

Water Use – Medium to High

Fertilizer input – Low

Fertilizer input – High

Mowing – No mowing necessary

Mowing – Mowing necessary

Interest/Texture – More options

Interest/Texture – Not a lot of variety

Walkability – Low to high Foot traffic

Walkability – Medium to high Foot traffic



Cascading Effect



I c e P l a n t



S e d u m

Cascading Effect



Creeping Thyme



Creeping Jenny

Slope Solutions





Pathway Fill in

Attract Pollinators



Add Fragrance





Mix and Match



Types of Groundcover

- Evergreen (*Creeping Juniper*)
- Deciduous (*Bleeding hearts*)
- Carpet Forming (*Snow and Summer*)
- Clump Forming (*blue fescue*)
- Edible (*Strawberries*)
- Sun Loving (*Creeping Potentilla*)
- Shade Loving (*sweet woodruff*)
- Drought tolerant (*Dianthus*)
- Moisture Loving (*moss*)



How to pick Groundcovers

- **Figure out your zone**
 - *Northern Utah Ranges from Zone 5-7*
- **What size is the area?**
 - *Ground covers spread at different rates*
- **How are you using the area?**
 - *Pathway? Garden? Lawn? Dog friendly?*
- **What height do you want?**
 - *Remember some ground covers can be 1 foot or taller, or as small as 1in.*
- **How sunny is the area?**
 - *Full sun? Partial? Full Shade?*



How to pick Groundcovers



- What kind of soil do you have?
 - *Soil tests are available for about \$30 through USU.*
- Consider Microclimates
 - *Get a thermometer and measure temperature differences around your yard*
- What is the moisture level?
 - *Drainage?*
- Evergreen or Deciduous?

Be Aware of Invasive Species

What works in one area could be detrimental to another...

- Some groundcovers may grow too vigorously for our area.
- Before putting a plant into your garden, try to figure out if it will spread past its intended area.
- This spreading could be through underground spreading roots called rhizomes.
- It could also spread via seed dispersal from wind or wildlife.

Bermuda Grass



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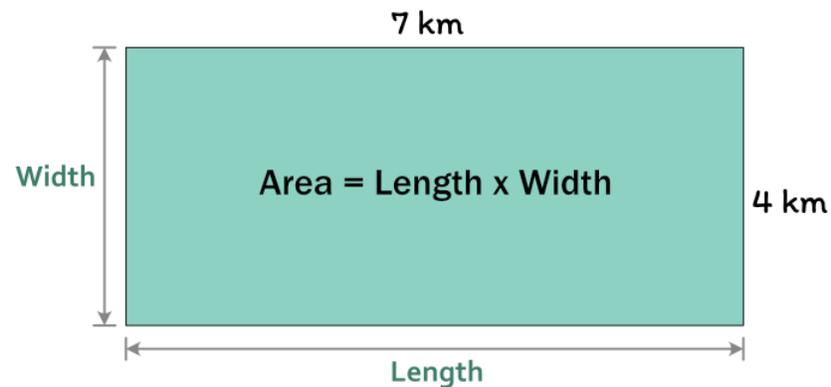
Bishops Weed



How many Groundcovers do I need?

- Figure out the area of the spot you want to fill in.
- Regular Shapes such as Squares and Rectangles are easy

Area of a Rectangle



$$A = LW$$

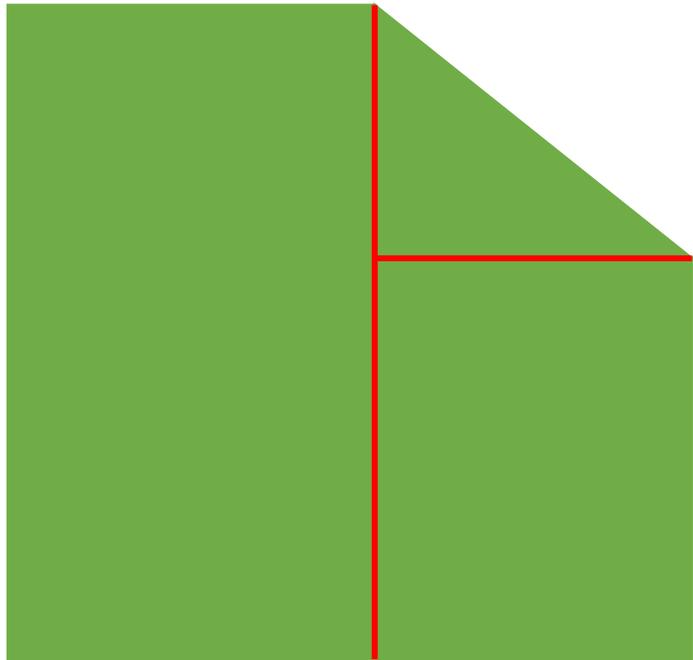
$$A = 7 (4)$$

$$A = 28 \text{ km}^2$$

How many Groundcovers do I need?

○ How to measure an irregular shape

- Break it up into regular shapes such as squares, triangles, and circles/semi-circles.



- Now use the area formulas for a triangle and rectangles.
- When In doubt, round up a little.

How many Groundcovers do I need?

- Find out the mature spread of your chosen groundcover.
- Use the area of the spot you're filling and divide it by the mature spread.
 - Find out the spread rate of your chosen groundcover.
- What size are the plants currently that you want to plant?
 - You may want to plant more if you are feeling impatient.

Irrigation

In ground drip systems

- Water Efficient
- Easy to Install
- Old sprinkler heads can be retrofitted for drip
- Can be used under lawn



Irrigation

Above ground sprinklers

- Not as water efficient
- Can be used for lawn
alternative groundcovers
- Should not be used for
small ground cover areas.



Prepare the site

- o Remove any weeds
- o Prep the soil
 - Till about 2-3 inches deep
- o Till in any amendments



Planting Ground Covers

- Place groundcovers out where they will be planted.
- Dig a hole deep enough to fit the entire root system.
- Fill the hole back in so that the ground cover is level.
- Press but don't over do it.
- Give them a drink of water.



How to maintain groundcovers

- Care depends on the type of groundcover
- Very low growing and evergreen groundcovers may not need any maintenance.



How to maintain groundcovers

- Tall groundcovers will need to be cut back at the end of the season.
- Flowering ground covers may also need their flowers cut back during the growing season.



How to maintain groundcovers

- Every few years, some groundcovers may need to be divided.
- This can help keep the area healthy and able to replace old/dying patches.



Groundcovers!



Phlox



Rock Cress



Veronica/ Creeping
Speedwell



Sweet Woodruff



Ajuga

More Groundcover Varieties - Sun

- Partridge Feather,

Tanacetum densum

Very Low Water



- Basket of Gold,

Perennial Alyssum

Low – Moderate Water



More Groundcover Varieties - Shade

- Orchid Frost Lamium, *Lamium maculatum*

Low Water



- Hardy Plumbago

Ceratogstigma plumbaginoides

Low Water – also grows in sun









Resources

- Soil Testing
 - [Analytical Laboratories | USU](#)
- Center for Water Efficient Landscaping, CWEL:
 - <https://cwel.usu.edu/>
- Public Gardens
 - Jordan Valley Conservation Garden:
 - <https://conservationgardenpark.org/>
- Local nurseries
- Other helpful websites
 - High country gardens
 - Localscapes

Thank you for attending this class!

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Survey



Newsletter

