

# Groundcovers

Groundcovers are used in the landscape for transitions between the lawn area and taller plants, as traffic barriers and visual guides, where grass won't grow, for erosion control on banks or slopes, where tree roots grow close to the surface, and on very wet or very dry locations.

Selection of a suitable plant for groundcover depends on the area in which it will be grown - some thrive in full sun, some prefer moist soil, and others need dry or well-drained soil. Herbaceous groundcovers die back to the ground in winter and if this is not the look you want, select evergreen groundcovers. Also consider the height of the groundcover.

Because groundcovers live for many years in the same spot, it is worth the effort to prepare the soil before you plant them. All weeds should be cleared out before planting. Incorporate a 2-inch layer of organic material, such as Bumper Crop, into the soil. Don't plant too far apart or too closely together, and stagger the rows as you plant. Until the groundcover is fully established, put a 2-inch layer of mulch to help control weeds and to maintain moisture. Fertilize in spring, summer, and fall with an all-purpose fertilizer and water adequately during the growing season.

For plugs, that is ivy, pachysandra, and periwinkle (vinca), we recommend the following:

slow growth - 1 plant per sq. ft.

moderate growth - 2 plants per sq. ft.

fast growth - 3 plants per sq. ft.

Plugs are sold by the tray. There are 50 plants per vinca tray, and 80-100 plants per ivy and pachysandra trays.

To calculate how many trays you would need, multiply the sq. ft. of your planting area by 1, 2, or 3 for slow, moderate, or fast growth. Then divide this number by 50 or 100 depending on number of plugs per tray. For example, for moderate growth in a 10' x 10' planting area (100 sq. ft), you would need 4 trays of vinca or 2 trays of ivy or pachysandra.

$$100 \times 2 = 200 / 50 = 4 \text{ vinca trays}$$

$$100 \times 2 = 200 / 100 = 2 \text{ ivy or pachysandra trays}$$

Johnson's carries a variety of popular groundcovers used in the Washington area:

English Ivy, *Hedera species*

Carpet Bugle, *Ajuga reptans*

Cotoneaster, *Cotoneaster salicifolia*

Dead Nettle, *Lamium maculatum*

Jasmine Winter, *Jasminum nudiflorum*

Juniper, *Juniperus horizontalis*

Lilyturf, *Liriope species*

Mondo Grass, *Ophiopogon japonicus*

Periwinkle, *Vinca minor*

Creeping Phlox, *Phlox subulata*

Japanese Spurge, *Pachysandra species*

St. John's Wort, *Hypericum species*

Sweet Woodruff, *Galium odoratum*

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