

## ORNAMENTAL GRASSES SUITABLE FOR THE SYDNEY REGION

Presented by Rob Willis, Woodside Plants & Design at Alpine Nurseries, Dural

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Winter growing grasses – look best in winter, tend to brown off in summer.

Summer growing grasses – look best in summer, brown off in winter. Cut them back to around 30mm in early August. New shoots will start appearing in early spring.

Most grasses require little maintenance other than an enthusiastic, annual prune. The clippings from the prune can even create a perfect mulch around the stubble, saving time and energy on collecting and composting.

*Miscanthus* can usually grow in wet or dry conditions. It is super tough. The species is likely to self seed, so it is better to stick with the sterile cultivars.

Botanical Name	Description	Height (Approx)	Summer or Winter Grass
<i>Miscanthus nepalensis</i>	Gold tassles. Flowers Dec-April/May. Goes brown, not transitional autumnal colours. Prefers well drained soils and a bit of extra water through dry periods.	1.2m	Summer
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Adagio'	Tough. Grows in poor conditions. Prefers full sun. OK on the coast. Cut back when the foliage browns.	1m	Summer
<i>Poa labillardieri</i> 'Suggan Buggan'	More upright, taller and bluer than the species. Tough. Cut back in March/April.	1.5m (less in poor soil)	Winter
<i>Festuca glauca</i> 'Elijah Blue'	Don't water too much, likes to be dry(ish) with low humidity.	300mm	Winter
<i>Festuca mairei</i>	Hardy	800mm	Winter
<i>Miscanthus transmorrisonensis</i>	Evergreen. Slightly thicker leaf than most varieties of <i>Miscanthus</i> . Cut back after 2-3 years	1.5m	Evergreen, can cut in Winter
<i>Panicum amarum</i>	An upright, blue, tough, plant that can grow in shallow soils. OK for planters but may not be so tall.	1.5m	Summer
<i>Panicum virgatum</i> 'Heavy Metal'	Prefers improved conditions with some extra water. There is a rusty variety around, so need to confirm stock as either the blue or rusty variety. Planted at The Springs Golf Club, Peats Ridge, along the entrance.	1m	Summer
<i>Panicum virgatum</i> 'Autumn Glory'	Turns yellow in late summer-autumn. It is tough with low water needs once established.	700mm	Summer
<i>Pennisetum</i> 'Red Buttons'	Turns a red tint-wheaten colour as it ages. Drought tolerant but seems to be ok in soggy soils too.	700mm	Summer
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Gracillimus'	Performs best in good soil. Tough. Graceful, fine foliage.	1.5-1.8m	Summer
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Hiawatha'	Good autumn colours. Performs best in good soil. Tough.	1.5-1.8m	Summer
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Capriccio'	Upright	2m	Summer
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Klein Fontaine'	Some arching	1m	Summer
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i> 'Cabaret'	Variegated, tough, thicker leaves	1.75m	Summer

Note: heights are given including flowers. See <https://woodsideplantsanddesign.com.au>

**Grasses Rob is unsure about their performance in Sydney. They are unlikely to thrive near the coast**

*Calamagrostis* 'Karl Foerster' – only for west of Sydney, unsure if works on the coast, won't look good in Jan/Feb

*Calamagrostis brachytricha* – may not flower and could self seed

*Deschampsia cespitosa* - Prefers some shade

*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Flamingo' - Fluffy with pink tinge in cold, won't colour well in Sydney