

Identification Key for Common Grasses and Grass-like Weeds 1

	Leaf blade				Ligule Type	Auricles Type	Sheath		New leaf	Seed			Other features
	Length x width mm	Surface	Hairiness	Cross section			Type	Hairiness		Length x width mm	colour	features	
Cereals Barley (<i>Hordeum vulgare</i>)	40-400 x 5-20	Dull	Hairless to slightly hairy. No hairs near collar.	Flat to twisted	Short membrane	Very large, clasping	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless or scattered hairs	Rolled	4-8 x 2-5	Yellow	Straight awn	Leaves twist clockwise
Cereal Rye (<i>Secale cereale</i>)	75-300 x 10-20	Dull, rough to touch	Hairless	Flat to twisted	Short rim < 1 mm	Small	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless	Rolled	5-7 x 2-3	Yellow	No awns.	Prominent veins on sheath
Oat (<i>Avena sativa</i>)	150-700 x 5-12	Dull, rough to touch	Hairless to slightly hairy	Flat to twisted	Short jagged membrane	None	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless to slightly hairy	Rolled	10-15 x 2-5	Yellow	No awns or straight awns	Leave twist anticlockwise
Triticale (<i>Triticum X secale</i>)	30-300 x 10-20	Dull	Hairless to slightly hairy	Flat to twisted	Short.	Medium, maybe with hairs	Rolled	Hairless to slightly hairy	Rolled	8-12 x 2.5-4	Yellow	No awns	Sheath often bluish green at base
Wheat (<i>Triticum aestivum</i>)	30-300 x 10-20	Dull	Hairless or a few hairs near collar.	Flat to twisted	Fringed membrane	Large	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless or a few hairs near collar	Rolled	6-7 x 2-5	Yellow	No awns	Leaves twist clockwise
Annual Poa (Winter Grass <i>Poa annua</i>)	5-140 x 1- 5	Light green	Hairless	Canoe like	Membrane	None	Split??	Hairless	Folded	< 1 mm	Pale.	No awns	Striped sheath
Barley Grass (<i>Hordeum leporinum</i>)	40-200 x 1.5-12	Light green	Hairy on lower leaves.	Twisted	Short membrane	Large, encircle stem.	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless or a few fine hairs.	Rolled	5-10 x 2-4	Pale.	Awned	Strong clockwise twist
Brome Grasses Great Brome (<i>Bromus diandrus</i>)	80-400 x 5-20	Dull	Hairy	Twisted	Membrane >2mm	None	Tubular, often with red/purple stripes near base.	Hairy	Rolled	20-30 x 1-2	Brown	Awned	Seedlings have purple tinge. Collar is lighter green.
Rigid Brome (<i>Bromus rigidus</i>)							Tubular						Not tin Hg
Soft Brome (<i>Bromus hordaceous</i>)	100-300 x 2-10	Dull. Light green	Hairy	Twisted	Membrane, >2mm, ragged	None	Tubular	Hairy	Rolled	3 x 1	Yellow/b rown	Awned	

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Couch (<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>)	10-160 x 1-5	Dull. Grey green.	Hairless or sparsely hairy	Flat or folded	Rim of hairs	None	Split but tubular at base	May have hairs on lower portion	Folded	< 1 mm		No awns.	Perennial with runners.
Fescue (<i>Festuca</i> species)	100-750 x 3-12	Dull. Dark green.	Hairless or a few hairs near the collar	Flat	Short and membrano us.	Large and encircle the stem		Hairless	Rolled	Small.		No awns	Perennial tussock.
Kikuyu (<i>Pennisetum clandestinum</i>)	10-300 x 2.5-7	Bright green.	Hairless or wart based hairs	Flat or folded	Hairy ring.	None	Overlapping	Usually hairy.	Folded	Very small		No awns	Perennial with runners.
Lesser Canary Grass (<i>Phalaris minor</i>)	20-300 x 3-13	Dull	Hairless	Flat	Large, 8-10 mm long.	None but base of blade is winged	Tubular	Hairless.	Rolled	1 mm	Brown	No awns	
Lovegrass (<i>eragrostis curvula</i>)	250-350 x 1-5	Dull dark green to blue green	Hairless or hairy	Flat	Hairy ring	None		Hairless or hairy	Rolled	Small <1 mm	Cream to dark orange brown	Translucent	Perennial tussock.
Onion Grass (Guildford Grass <i>Romulea rosea</i>)	50-400 x 1-2	Shiny	Hairless	Cylindrical, solid		None	None	Hairless	Solid	Small.	Red-brown	Shiny, dimpled and angular	Has bulbs.
Paspalum (<i>Paspalum dilatatum</i>)	60-600 x 3 15	Wavy edges, prominent midrib.	Hairless apart from a few naer the collar	Flat to slightly folded	Large membrane, 2-4 mm long	None	Tubular	Hairless apart from a few naer the collar	Rolled	Small 2-3 mm		Shiny and flattened	Often has a purplish tinge
Phalaris (<i>Phalaris aquatica</i>)	20-500 x 2-14	Dull bluish green, often striped	Hairless	Flat	Large membrane, 3-12 mm	None but base of blade is winged	Split	Hairless	Rolled	Small	Light brown	No awns. Smooth and shiny.	Perennial with runners. Collar often lighter colour

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Ryegrasses Annual Ryegrass (<i>Lolium rigidum</i>)	30-150 x 1-5	Shiny on one side,	Almost hairless	Flat	Small membrane 1.5 mm.	Variable from none to long. Often shrivelled.	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless	Folded	Small, 2-3 mm long.	Pale. Brown to yellow grey	No awns.	Often red/purple base of sheath. Glumes almost as long as the spikelet.
Italian Ryegrass (<i>Lolium multiflorum</i>)	60-220 x 2-10	Shiny on one side,	Hairless	Flat	Jagged membrane, 4 mm long.	Large and narrow.	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless	Rolled	Small, 3-6 mm long.	Pale. Brown to yellow grey	Awned	Often red/purple base of sheath. Glumes less than half the length of the spikelet.
Perennial Ryegrass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>)	30-200 x 2-6	Shiny on one side,	Hairless	Flat	Small membrane 1-2 mm.	Large	Split to base	Hairless	Folded	Medium, 4-8 mm long	Pale. Brown to yellow grey	No awns	Glumes about half the length of the spikelet.
Darnel (<i>Lolium temulentum</i>)	50-400 x 2-15	Shiny on one side,	Hairless	Flat	Small membrane	Narrow	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless	Folded	Small, 3-6 mm long.	Pale. Brown to yellow grey	No awns	Glumes as long or longer than the spikelet.
Silver Grasses Rat tailed Fescue (<i>Vulpia myuros</i>)	20-150 x 0.5-3mm wide	Shiny both sides,	Tiny hairs on top or hairless	Flat or rolled	Membrane, >1 mm	Tiny	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless	Rolled	Small, 1-2 mm long.	Pale.	Awns.	Top leaf sheath cover part of the seed head.
Sand Fescue (<i>Vulpia fasciculata</i>)	10-140 x 0.5-3	Shiny both sides,	Tiny hairs on ribs. May appear hairless	Flat or rolled	Membrane, >1 mm	None	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless	Rolled	Medium , 4-12 mm long	Pale	Awned. Awn twice as long as the seed.	
Squirrel-tailed Fescue (<i>Vulpia bromoides</i>)	10-150 x	Shiny both sides,	Tiny hairs on top or hairless	Flat or rolled	Membrane	None	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless	Rolled	Small, 2-4 mm	Pale	Awned	Seed head held clear of top leaf sheath. Base occasionally reddish.

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Tall Wheat Grass (<i>Thinopyrum elongatum</i>)	30-250 x 5-70	Dull	Hairless or a few hairs	Flat or rolled	Membrane with rim of short hairs.	Small	Tubular		Rolled	Medium, 10-12 mm long.	Pale yellow brown	Awnless	
Toad Rush (<i>Juncus bufonius</i>)	45-140 x 0.2-1.5	Shiny both sides.	Hairless.	Channell ed. Arise from base of stem.	None.	None	None.		From base	Tiny.		No awns	Angular solid stems
Wild Oats Bearded Oat (<i>Avena barbata</i>)	100-300 x 3-6	Dull	Usually hairless but young leaves may have hairs.	Flat or twisted.	Large membrane.	None	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless or hairy.	Rolled	Large, 12-20 mm long	Black or dark brown.	Twisted awns	Leave twist anticlockwise
Wild Oats (<i>Avena fatua</i>)	100-300 x 3-15	Dull	Hairless or hairy	Flat or twisted.	Large membrane.	None	Rolled & overlapping	Hairless or hairy.	Rolled	Large, 12-20 mm long	Black or dark brown.	Twisted awns	Leave twist anticlockwise
Ludo Wild Oat (<i>Avena sterilis</i> ssp. <i>ludoviciana</i>)	100-300 x 3-18	Dull	Hairless or hairy	Flat or twisted.	Membrane.	None	Split		Rolled	Large.	Black or dark brown.	Twisted awns	Leave twist anticlockwise
Yorkshire Fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>)	40-200 x 3-10	Dull	Hairy	Flat	Jagged membrane	None	Rolled & overlapping	Hairy	Rolled	Small	Yellow brown dark tip.	Shiny and hairy.	Sheath often has stripes