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An easy-to-grow, attractive perennial groundcover, mondo grass is a good turf alternative in shade gardens. Hardy in Zones 6-10, its grass-like foliage forms dense tufts that slowly spread over time and require no mowing. In summer, small stalks of flowers appear on top of the crisp foliage. Mondo grass can also make a minimalist statement as a container plant indoors or out. Genus Name: *Ophiopogon* Plant Type: Perennial Light: Part Sun, Shade, Sun Height: 4 to 15 inches Width: 6 to 15 inches Flower Color: Pink, White Foliage Color: Blue/Green, Purple/Burgundy Season Features: Summer Bloom Specialty Features: Good for Containers, Low Maintenance Zones: 6, 7, 8, 9 Propagation: Division, Seed Problem Solvers: Deer Resistant, Groundcover, Slope/Erosion Control In many instances, shade gardens can be tricky to plant, especially when it comes to turf grass. With something as low maintenance as a mondo grass lawn, you can have the look of grass in shady spots. Mondo grass has no problem growing under large tree canopies, even between gnarled roots and rocks. However, if you're planting black foliage varieties of mondo, they'll need some sun, or the plants will be mostly green in full shade. In the densest shade, you might not see many blooms. Typically, mondo grass blooms in the summer; its short spikes of pale pink or white appear just above (or sometimes in) the foliage of the plants. After the blooms fade, you may also see glossy dark purple to almost black berries. Mondo grass is considered invasive in southern states but not in the rest of the country. To keep it from spreading away from where it's planted as a border or in other limited space, dig a 6-12 inch trench and add a barrier. Plant mondo grass in early spring to give the roots time to take hold before the weather gets warm. Place it in an area with filtered sunlight to keep the plants from drying. Amend the soil to improve drainage and add the nutrients mondo grass needs. Weed the area and mix in compost to the top 6 inches of soil. Divide mondo grass into small clumps with eight to ten leaves and many roots. Plant 4 to 12 inches apart. Water the top of the soil until it's moist to around 3 inches deep. Despite what the name might imply, mondo grass isn't an actual grass. It's in the lily family, as the dainty flowers suggest. The plants are very slow-growing and spread by stolons, which are horizontal stems just below the soil surface. When it comes to light exposure, mondo grass is not picky. The most common green varieties can take anything from full sun to shade. Leaf coloring may vary slightly depending on the exposure, including light green to deep emerald. Full sun is essential for the deep black-leaved varieties. The more shade, the more green the black becomes. One of the main drawbacks of mondo grass varieties is that they aren't drought tolerant. After they are established, colonies can take some drying out, but ideally, they need consistent moisture without being in standing water. Newly planted mondo grass should be planted in well-drained soil and watered a few times a week so the plants can establish roots. Mature mondo grass plants should be watered once a week. Mondo grass is winter hardy in Zone 6 and higher. It will grow back after a freeze. It thrives in humid climates, so if your area is dry, mist it with water to give it moisture. The foliage of mondo grass is evergreen in warm climates. In cooler temperatures, the leaves may die back, but they can be sheared in early spring before new growth begins. Fertilizer isn't necessary, but if you like, apply it every three months during spring and summer. Use a balanced 10-10-10 formula, following the manufacturer's instructions. Fertilizer will help maintain the grass's color. In early spring, cut back dead growth to make way for new grass. If needed, add mulch at that time. Mondo grass is an excellent container plant because of its small size and slow growth rate. It is ideally suited for miniature garden projects and pairs well with many other plants. Plant it in a small container filled with potting soil and keep it at room temperature. It is easy to pot (or repot) because it has such a shallow root system, so don't use a deep pot; a shallow one with drain holes is a better choice. Many varieties grow no wider than 6 inches, but some are more than twice that size. The small ones are better for indoor living. Learn the mondo grass's expected size before choosing a container; it should match the plant's anticipated width. Water the plant regularly but lightly, and apply a slow-release balanced fertilizer in spring and midsummer. Mondo grass is such a slow grower that there may never be a need to repot it. If you do repot, give it new potting soil at that time. Pythium root rot causes mondo grass's leaves to take on a burnt look, resulting in yellowing leaves and rotting roots. It's caused by heavy soil with poor drainage. It can be treated with appropriate products. Pests that can damage mondo grass include snails and slugs, which eat through the top of the mounds and destroy the grass. Pick the pests off the grass and drown them in soapy water. Spray with iron phosphate to keep them away. If you live in a southern state, check that mondo grass hasn't been identified as invasive in your state; as it has in others, before you plant. Mondo grass can be propagated via divisions or seed. Divisions is the simpler method for anyone who has (or can buy) a plant. Sowing seeds is a more unreliable method. Mondo grass has tuberous rhizomes in which it stores water and nutrients. They make it easy to divide plants and establish new plantings. In early spring, dig up an established clump of mondo grass and divide it into small sections using your hands or a sharp knife. Each section should have about 10 leaves and a generous amount of roots. Then, replant the clumps where you want them to grow in the garden, spacing them 6 to 15 inches apart, depending on the projected size of the grown plant whether dwarf or standard. Water the planted divisions and continue to water them for a few weeks until they are established. Harvesting seed from an existing plant can be disappointing because hybrid cultivars don't reproduce accurately by seed. It is better to order seed from a garden center. Even in the best case, mondo grass seed has a poor germination rate, and the older the seed is, the worse the rate grows. Sow the seed soon after receiving it in pots filled with sterile potting soil and put them in a cold frame or another cool area. Cool weather results in the best germination rate. Keep the seeds moist at all times and expect germination in two weeks to six months. They won't all germinate at the same time. Credit: Ed Gohlich Ophiopogon japonicus grows to 1 foot tall with linear green leaves. Spikes of pale whitish-lilac flowers nestle among the foliage. This tough plant makes a fine edging. Zones 7-10 Credit: Richard Hirnseisen Ophiopogon planiscapus 'Nigrescens' has tufts of strappy dark purple leaves about 6 inches tall. Spikes of lilac-pink flowers resembling grape hyacinth rise on stiff stems in summer. Zones 6-11 These vigorous growers are beautiful additions to the garden. They vary from tall, stately plants suitable for borders to others that can be planted as creeping groundcovers. Flowers range from tight spikes of 1/2-inch to 1-inch cups carried alone or in whorls. Unfortunately, several sorts may become invasive and need to be corralled. Zones 49 These are not the invasive purple loosestrife, which has been banned in many parts of the United States. Credit: Lynn Karlin Japanese painted ferns are washed with silver and burgundy markings. Lady fern is equally grand, though not quite as showy. Unlike most ferns, they have ample water. Zones 49 Ferns add delicate, feathery texture and tons of green to any garden bed. Like mondo grass, they prefer shady spots. Different types of ferns can vary from small, 8-inch plants to towering 6-foot-tall ones. Credit: Karlis Grants Astilbe brings a graceful, feathery note to moist, shady landscapes. In cooler climates in the northern third or so of the country, it can tolerate full sun, provided it has a constant moisture supply. In drier sites, however, the leaves will scorch in full sun. It will spread slowly over time where well-situated. Zones 48 Credit: Peter Krumhardt Impatiens flowers constantly, adding color without much maintenance to a garden. It works well with mondo grass to add lightness to mondo grass's monochromatic coloring. Zones 10-11 Credit: Lynn Karlin These bright white flowers of snow-in-summer look striking when paired with black mondo grass, and since they're groundcovers, create a lively rug-like look. Zones 3-10 Credit: Illustration by Mavis Augustine Torke Add a bright dose of color to a spot under a canopy of tree leaves. Frequently Asked Questions Most types of mondo grass grow up to 12 inches tall. They can also grow to 15 inches wide. Dwarf mondo grass grows only 4 to 6 inches tall. No, mondo grass doesn't need to be moved. It grows in neat clumps that never grow taller than the plant's stated size. If you are using it for a lawn area, select one of the dwarf mondo grass cultivars. No, mondo grass doesn't pose any danger to cats or dogs, who may want to chew on its long, slim leaves. It's also deer and rabbit resistant. An easy-to-grow, attractive perennial groundcover, mondo grass is a good turf alternative in shade gardens. 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Zones 3-10 Credit: Illustration by Mavis Augustine Torke Add a bright dose of color to a spot under a canopy of tree leaves. Frequently Asked Questions Most types of mondo grass grow up to 12 inches tall. They can also grow to 15 inches wide. Dwarf mondo grass grows only 4 to 6 inches tall. No, mondo grass doesn't need to be moved. It grows in neat clumps that never grow taller than the plant's stated size. If you are using it for a lawn area, select one of the dwarf mondo grass cultivars. No, mondo grass doesn't pose any danger to cats or dogs, who may want to chew on its long, slim leaves. It's also deer and rabbit resistant. Mondo grass, also known as monkey grass (Ophiopogon japonicus), is an evergreen, sod-forming perennial. The scientific name is derived from ophis = snake, and pogon = beard, most probably referring to the flower spike. Description Mondo grass on a steep bank in late winter. Karen Russ, 2007 HGIC, Clemson Extension Plants are tufted, grass-like and 8 to 16 inches high. The inch leaves are dark green and fine to medium in texture. They are erect to arching, smooth and grass-like. The flowers are usually white or white tinged with lilac. Flowering and fruiting occur from July through September. Mondo grass is quite often confused with liriope (Liriope muscari). However, the leaves of mondo grass are more narrow than those of liriope, the smaller flowers are hidden by the leaves, the fruits are blue compared to the black fruits of liriope and mondo grass is less cold hardy. Landscape Use Mondo grass is primarily used as groundcover. It is also attractive as a border along paths, between stepping stones or flowerbed and lawn, or in rock gardens. It grows well along streams and around garden ponds. Mondo grass competes well with the roots of other plants. Under trees or shrubs it makes an excellent shade-tolerant lawn that never needs mowing. Cultivation Mondo grass grows well in ordinary garden soil, requiring minimum attention once established. Plants thrive in filtered sun to full shade and prefer moist soil. The foliage is usually light green when plants are grown in filtered sun. Plants growing in the shade have dark green leaves. Propagate by dividing large clumps. Be sure to include as many roots as possible and eight to 10 leaves on each section for planting. The plants are easily established and require little effort. The plants do not need heavy feeding. Mondo grass looks attractive year-round. However, the leaves may become ragged by late winter. Shear back the shaggy old leaves in early spring before new growth starts. Cultivars The cultivars Aureovariegatus, Variegatus and Vittatus have longitudinally striped leaves with white or yellow and green stripes. The variable variegated foliage usually makes it difficult to distinguish one cultivar from another. The cultivar Caeruleus has dark green leaves like the parent species and violet blue flowers. Kioto or dwarf mondo grass grows only to about 4 inches high. Flowers are small, 2 to 3 millimeters long and light lilac to white. Nippon is very small (2 to 4 inches tall) and has whitish flowers in the summer. Gyoko-ryu is even shorter and more compact than Nippon. A dwarf mondo grass used as a dense groundcover. Karen Russ, 2007 HGIC, Clemson Extension Related Species Black mondo grass (Ophiopogon planiscapus) is an interesting introduction from England. The dark purple leaves appear almost black. The plants are about 6 inches tall. In South Carolina, black mondo grass should be planted in partial shade. Cultivars Nigrescens and Ebony Knight do not differ very much. O. jaburan is closer than O. japonicus, with light purple to white flowers. Plants grow 15 to 18 inches tall but are not as good for planting in shade. Black mondo grass is known by its scientific name Ophiopogon japonicus. It is a member of the Liliaceae family and is often compared with creeping lilyturf. The two plants are similar in appearance, have similar functions in the landscape, and are both very popular in the southeast. Dwarf mondo grass holds up well to foot traffic and only needs to be mowed once each year, making it a popular pick for those who prefer a low-maintenance option. However, it doesn't provide as even of a surface as many turfgrasses. Keep reading to learn what conditions dwarf mondo grass thrives in as well as how to propagate it. Common Name: Dwarf mondo grass Botanical Name: Ophiopogon japonicus 'Nana' Family: Asparagaceae Plant Type: Perennial Mature Size: 4 to 6 inches tall by 8 inches wide Sun Exposure: Full to partial shade Soil Type: Rich, well-drained soil pH: Slightly acidic Bloom Time: Summer Flower Color: White or light lilac Hardiness: Zones 6 to 10 (USA) Native Area: Japan and Korea Here are the main care requirements for growing dwarf mondo grass: Plant in well-draining, humusy soil in a shaded area. Is a slow-spreading plant so patience is key when planting. (To speed up this process, divide the plants and space dwarf mondo grass 4 inches apart.) Needs to be kept consistently moist but not overwatered. Does not require a lot of fertilizer but enjoys compost periodically. Dwarf mondo grass works well as a ground cover in shady conditions. To some degree, its preference for shade can be offset if you are willing to water it whenever its soil dries out or live at the northern end of its hardiness range. It prefers shade, but can tolerate near full sun, as long as it is watered properly. If you live in zone 7 or warmer, or if you can't be bothered with the maintenance involved in keeping it irrigated, it is better to use dwarf mondo grass in one of its other capacities (like as an edging plant) rather than a grass substitute. Dwarf mondo grass wants humusy soil that drains well. As a bonus, it is a salt-tolerant plant, making it a good choice in seaside communities and along roadsides. You need to keep the soil of dwarf mondo grass consistently moist but not soggy. Mixing compost into its soil will help strike just the correct balance between moisture retention and good drainage. Dwarf mondo grass holds up well to the humidity of the southeastern U.S. It is evergreen in zone 6 and warmer and prefers warm but not extremely hot temperatures. Its lack of cold-hardiness keeps northern gardeners (zone 5 and colder) from enjoying it. Dwarf mondo grass requires less fertilizer than most types of turfgrass, but it thrives best in a quality loam enriched periodically with compost. There are various types of mondo grass, offering you different sizes, blade colors, hardiness, etc.. Ophiopogon planiscapus 'Nigrescens' Black mondo grass: 9 to 12 inches tall and wide; zones 6 to 9 likes more sun than do the dwarf cultivars; black leaf blades Ophiopogon japonicus 'Gyoko-ryu': dwarf mondo grass cultivar standing at only 1 to 2 inches tall; zones 7 to 10; dark green leaves Ophiopogon japonicus 'Kioto Super Dwarf': dwarf mondo grass cultivar standing at 2 inches tall; zones 6 to 10; leaf blades are dark green Ophiopogon japonicus 'Puri Gyoku Ryu': 3 inches in height; zones 7 to 10; foliage variegated, with medium green stripes on the margins and a lighter stripe running down the middle if you aren't interested in growing dwarf mondo grass as a turfgrass substitute, you can use it as an edging plant, to create interest under trees (taking advantage of its shade preference) with its dark green leaves, or as an accent plant within rock and pine straw beds. Propagate dwarf mondo grass by dividing the roots in spring. Pry the clumps up from the ground using a garden fork, then, with your hands, tease apart groups of roots, dividing them into sections. Each section should contain a few leaves. Use a sharp knife on roots that are thickly entwined. Remove any dried or diseased portions of roots. Replant the clumps in your garden, 4 inches apart. If you cannot plant them right away, keep them moist until planting. While it is possible to propagate dwarf mondo grass from seed, there are two reasons why this is not the preferred method of propagation: germination is unreliable, and even if germination is successful, the resulting plant may not come true to type. But if you do decide to try growing dwarf mondo grass from seed, here's how to do it: Watch the berries on your plants closely in the fall to look for signs of maturity. The berries are mature when there's no green at all on their skin. Pick the mature berries, bring them indoors, open them up, and remove the seeds. It's best to plant the seeds right away rather than storing them. Soak the seeds in room-temperature water for 2 days. At the end of the first day, change the water so that they have clean water to soak in for the second day. Find a container you can use as a seedling tray. If the bottom is solid, punch drainage holes in it. Pour in a seed-starting medium. Poke 1-inch-deep holes into the medium. Sow a seed into each hole and cover it with the medium. Put the tray in a window where it can get direct sunlight. Mist the medium to keep the soil moist until the seedlings sprout. After sprouting, water regularly to keep the medium moist but not soggy. Transplant outdoors next spring after all danger from frost has passed. Common pests that bother dwarf mondo grass are slugs and snails, while, for plant diseases, the ones that you will have to worry about the most are fungus-related. All three problems (slugs, snails, and fungus) are exacerbated by wet conditions. You will know if your plant is being attacked by slugs and snails if you spot wilting leaves or holes chewed into the leaves. After a rain, check your plant for snails and slugs and, if you find any, pick them off by hand. An example of a fungus-related disease that attacks dwarf mondo grass is root rot. Yellowing leaves are a symptom of root rot. Prevention is preferable to treatment, and two effective modes of prevention are providing your yard with good drainage and avoiding overwatering. If it is too late for prevention, treat root rot by digging up the plant, washing the roots, and removing the diseased parts with a sterilized cutting tool. Replant the plant in a spot that has good drainage. FAQ Dwarf mondo grass only reaches heights of 4 to 6 inches high. The main con to mondo grass is that it is requires constant moisture and is not drought tolerant. To successfully maintain mondo grass, you will need well-draining soil and to regularly check for root rot, as mondo grass cannot sit in standing water for a long period. Aside from their difference in size (mondo grass grows to be twice the size in height as dwarf mondo grass), the leaves of both plants are different. Mondo grass leaves are larger and less dense than dwarf mondo grass leaves. Dwarf varieties also spread more quickly than their larger counterparts. Mondo grass is a shade-tolerant groundcover that is popular in gardens and yards throughout the southern U.S. Its lush green foliage helps provide definition and structure to the landscape, allowing the features of the garden to stand out. Some folks are surprised to learn that mondo grass is not a true grass, but rather a member of the lily family. The plant grows in small clumps, with long blades that grow outward from the center. It is closely related to liriope muscari, however mondo grass blades are softer and floppier and tend to look more like turf grass. Dwarf mondo grass around a tree base Homeowners use mondo grass as a low-maintenance lawn alternative in areas of partial shade. Easy to grow, mondo grass spreads to produce a lush, dark-green lawn. Compared to other lawn grasses, mondo grass is more drought-tolerant and doesn't require as much water. Mondo grass is also resistant to foot traffic, but in areas of heavy foot traffic you will definitely want to consider using stepping stones. Mondo is also frequently utilized as a garden border, between pavers, and in shady spots around the base of trees. It provides texture in rock gardens and can be used around features like garden ponds and statues. Click Here to buy high-quality Mondo Grass at Classy Groundcovers and Get Free Shipping! Why Use Mondo Grass? Since mondo is a lily and not a true grass, it has several advantages over normal grass. First, mondos leaves will remain green throughout the winter months. When normal grass starts to turn brown as the temperatures get cool, mondo grass stays deep green all year round. Secondly, mondo grass can thrive in shady areas where many other types of grasses struggle to grow. Many homeowners have areas of their yards that just don't receive a lot of sunshine. Maybe there's an abundance of trees or a tall structure that blocks out the sun. Mondo grass will do just fine in these shady spots. Another benefit is that mondo is a relatively low-maintenance grass. It typically does not need to be moved, although some folks like to set their mower to a high setting and trim it one a year in early spring. As a drought-tolerant plant, mondo grass does not require watering once it has established itself. It also typically requires no fertilizer. Mondo grass with stepping stones Varieties of Mondo Grass Name Hardiness Zones Mature Height Best Uses Mondo Grass (monkey grass, ophiopogon japonicus) 6-106 to 10 inches borders, edging, ground cover, erosion control Dwarf Mondo Grass (dwarf monkey grass, dwarf lilyturf) 6-102 to 4 inches ground cover, turf grass substitute, edging, under-planting Black Mondo Grass (black mondo grass, dwarf lilyturf) 6-102 to 4 inches ground cover, turf grass substitute, edging, under-planting Rock Gardens Burgundy mondo grass is known by its scientific name Ophiopogon japonicus. This plant grows to about 6-10 inches tall when mature. Small, dark flowers appear in summer, but they are covered by the leaves and not very visible. Bright blue berries appear in the fall, which will attract birds. A closely related variety is called dwarf mondo grass. Dwarf mondo grass is more closely cropped than regular mondo, growing only 2-4 inches in height. This variety has no blooms and prefers a well-drained soil and full shade. It tends to spread more slowly than regular mondo. Super dwarf mondo grass, or kyoto dwarf, is the smallest mondo available. This plant has compact tufts with dark green blades and grows only about one inch tall. Super dwarf mondo is often used in flower beds and bonsai arrangements. Black mondo grass has a distinctive black foliage that provides a dramatic contrast with lighter colored plants. It is similar in size to regular mondo, with a height of 6-10 inches. It is used in rock gardens or as a border or groundcover. The liriope (liriope muscari and liriope spicata) are two related species that are often confused with mondo grass. These plants have thicker roots and are more cold-hardy than mondo. They are also larger plants that can grow up to 18 inches tall. Liriope muscari has a pronounced purple flower spike that blooms in mid to late summer. It is often used as a border or in a flower bed. Liriope spicata is the faster spreading of the two and is frequently used as erosion control on hillsides. The liriope is sometimes referred to as monkey grass. Mondo grass alongside a walkway Where, When and How to Plant Regular and dwarf mondo can grow in USDA Hardiness zones 6-10. These plants are frost hardy but will have trouble with temperatures that dip much below 0 degrees Fahrenheit. Black mondo tends to do slightly better in northern climates, as it is rated for zones 5-10. In cooler climates, mondo grass should be planted in the spring or summer so it can establish itself before winter. In warmer areas, it may be planted year round. Plant mondo grass in a well-draining location with full or partial shade. Till the soil and mix in 2 to 3 inches of compost. If planting bare root plants, prepare planting holes about 3 inches wide and 6 inches deep. Space plants 4 to 12 inches apart. If using dwarf or super dwarf varieties, use a 2 to 4-inch spacing. Spread the roots and work the soil around them, making sure all the roots are well covered. Gently tamp the soil around them to remove air pockets. Mulch around young plants with straw or wood mulch to retain moisture and keep weeds at bay. Water your plants and keep the soil moist for the first 3 to 6 months to allow the plants to establish roots. Once the roots are established, you can cut back to watering only when the soil is dry. Mondo grass plugs Maintenance Mondo grass is quite easy to care for. Light fertilizer applications in the spring will help maintain color and increase growth rate, but they are not required. An annual mowing in early spring can stimulate growth, but take care to set your mower to a high setting because the plants can be damaged if cut back too much. Rake the grass as needed to remove dead leaves. Once the mondo has spread to fill in an area, the plants should be able to choke out most weeds. Weeds can be a problem in the early stages when the plants are still filling in. Hand pull weeds or spot treat them with a post-emergent herbicide. Make sure the herbicide is labeled for mondo grass (Ophiopogon japonicus), as some brands may not be appropriate for this plant. Get Free Shipping on high-quality Mondo Grass at Classy Groundcovers. (Ophiopogon japonicus) This grass is the most commonly available grass. It is popular due to its deep green foliage and its compact growth form. The maximum height reached by this species is from 10-25 cm. (Ophiopogon japonicus var. nanus) Smaller variety of the Common Mondo grass that grows to a height of around 10 cm. (Ophiopogon planiscapus 'Nigrescens') Great variety for contrast in pathways or around bright edges. This variety has deep purple to black leaves and grows to a height of about 10-25 cm. Choose a place in the garden that gets full sun to full shade (depending on variety). Prepare the planting area well by digging in Yates Dynamic Lifter Soil Improver & Plant Fertiliser. Dig the planting hole twice as wide and to the same depth as the root-ball. Remove the plant from the container, gently tease the roots. Position in hole and backfill, gently firming down. Water in well. Feed every 4 weeks with Yates Thrive All Purpose Liquid Plant Food. To keep the plant looking at its best, remove any of the older or damaged leaves. Best results are seen when the grass is planted in part shade or shade, with protection against the afternoon sun. Some varieties of Mondo grass can perform well in full sun conditions. However, in the hotter days and with constant exposure, the leaves can develop burnt tips. Apply Yates Droughtshield which will provide some assistance to the grass with dealing with the stress of the sun and the level of tip burn occurring. This plant can be easily propagated through division most times of the year by carefully removing it from the ground or the pot and dividing into separate clumps with a spade. Great for use in pathways, borders or used around garden edges. Unfortunately no. The best thing to do is remove weeds as soon as you notice by hand, or delicately paint on a non-selective weedkiller such as Yates Zero Weedkiller Super Concentrate. There are many reasons why a Mondo Grass is dying, including underwatering, Root Rot, Sunburn, and Scale.

Will mondo grass grow in the shade. Mondo grass. Does mondo grass grow in shade. Does black mondo grass grow in shade. Mondo grass shade or sun.

