

# Palm Grass (*Setaria Palmifolia*)

## Ornamental Grass

Palm grass (*Setaria palmifolia*) is an evergreen tropical grass with wide, accordion pleated leaves that are 1-3 feet long and 2-5 inches wide that resemble the foliage of young palms. In frost free climates a clump of palm grass can get 4-6 feet tall and easily as wide. It is extremely easy to grow, thriving in everything from sun to shade, damp to fairly dry soil and even does well in containers.

Palm grass prefers moist soils and can be planted at the edge of lakes and ponds where it will thrive (if not actually take over). Amazingly, palm grass is also happy growing in dry shade and established plants are relatively drought tolerant.

Hardy in USDA Zones 8 - 11, this is a tropical grass that dies to the ground when it freezes. If the roots don't freeze, though, it comes back in spring. Palm grass is evergreen in zones 10 and 11 (and in zone 9 if planted under an oak canopy). Propagate palm grass by division and by seed. It will self-seed in warm climates but seedlings are shallow rooted and easy to eliminate.

**Culture:** Prefers fertile soil with moisture, but is very adaptable and can be grown in average, sandy soil equally as well and is actually quite drought tolerant once established.

**Light:** Part Sun to shade. These plants can be grown in damp soil in part sun or fairly dry/average soil in the shade.

**Moisture:** Average to moist. These plants grow quickly with access to abundant moisture but are also perfectly suited to average garden/landscape conditions. Survives dry spells once established.

**Hardiness:** USDA Zones 8-11. Evergreen in zones 10 and 11 (And often in zone 9 if under an oak canopy and protected from frost).

**Planting Instructions:** You should start your new plants in containers to allow them to get over the shock of the transplant and keep **in FULL shade** with **plenty of water for a few days**. You may plant your 'clump' as a 'clump' or you can take each individual plant and separate them, it's up to you. These plants propagate both by seeds and by division. Make sure that the roots are well covered with soil; original soil line is about 1/2 " above the top of the roots. When your plants have recovered (no longer show signs of wilting), you may plant out in the landscape in a partly sunny or shady spot or you may continue to grow on in containers. These plants can get quite large in areas they are hardy, so keep that in mind when planting them in the landscape. As stated above, these can grow in damp or fairly dry conditions, but to give your small plants a good start in the landscape, I suggest watering about 3 times a week until they are established and fertilize during the growing season (spring and summer) with a balanced fertilizer about once a month.