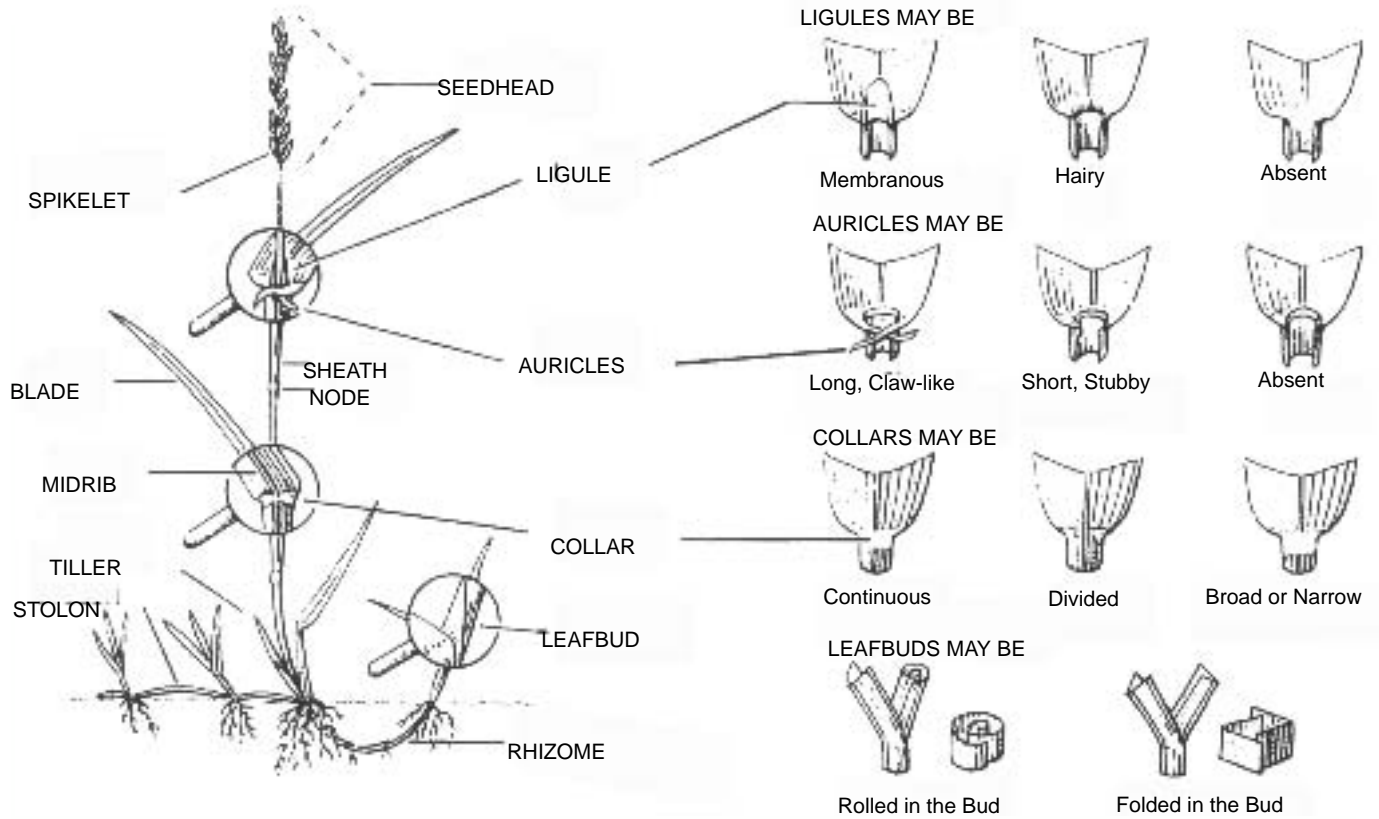




# Turfgrass Identification



STOLONIFEROUS

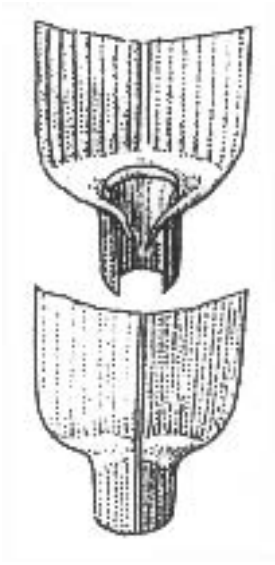
RHIZOMATOUS



BUNCH-TYPE

**T**urfgrass identification is an important, but sometimes difficult, aspect for correct management of the turf. Seedheads are the main feature in identifying grasses, but they are not present in mowed turf, so it is necessary to learn identification by vegetative characteristics.

A 10X or 15X hand lens is helpful when looking for small parts that distinguish various grasses. If uncertain about the identification of a turfgrass, take a sample to the local K-State Research and Extension office, or send it to the state turfgrass specialist at Kansas State University. Fresh samples should be submitted for accurate identification.



**Annual Ryegrass, *Lolium multiflorum***

Leaves rolled in the bud.

Ligule membranous, short.

Collar broad.

\* Auricles narrow, long, and claw-like.

Sheaths not compressed, yellowish-green at the base.

\* Blades long,  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch to  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch wide, tapered, prominent veins above, very glossy below, edges smooth.

\* Bunchgrass.



**Creeping Bentgrass, *Agrostis palustris***

Leaves rolled in the bud.

\* Ligule membranous, tall, rounded.

Collar narrow.

Auricles absent.

Sheaths smooth, not compressed.

\* Blades narrow,  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch wide, flat veined, round along the edges.

\* Stoloniferous.



**Fine Fescue, *Festuca rubra***

Leaves folded in the bud.

\* Ligule membranous, very short.

Collar narrow, indistinct.

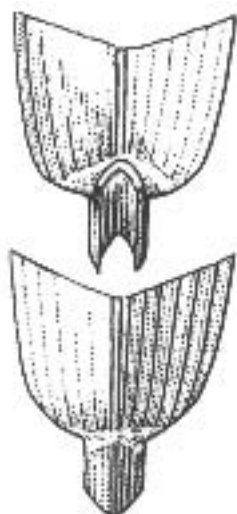
Auricles absent.

\* Sheaths slightly rough, not compressed, wider than the blades, lower sheaths brown.

\* Blades very narrow,  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch wide or less, bristle-like.

\* Rhizomatous.

*An asterisk (\*) indicates key features.*



**Kentucky Bluegrass, *Poa pratensis***

Leaves folded in the bud.

\* Ligule membranous, very short, abrupt.

Collar narrow.

Auricles absent.

Sheaths green, compressed smooth.

\* Blades long, less than 1/8 inch wide, the edges parallel to each other, terminating in a prominent mid-vein, "boat-shaped" tip.

\* Rhizomatous.



**Perennial Ryegrass, *Lolium perenne***

Leaves folded in the bud.

\* Ligule membranous, medium tall, toothed near the tip.

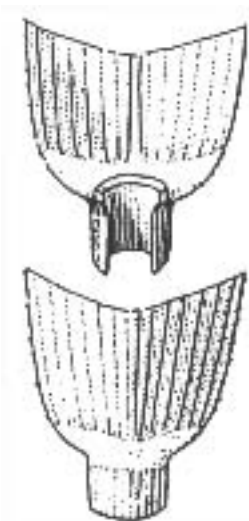
Collar narrow.

\* Auricles short, not clasping the stem.

Sheaths reddish below ground, smooth.

\* Blades from 1/8 inch to 1/4 inch wide, prominently veined above, very glossy, and smooth beneath.

\* Bunchgrass.



**Tall Fescue, *Festuca arundinacea***

\* Leaves rolled in the bud.

\* Ligule membranous, short.

Collar broad, continuous.

Auricles blunt, short, pubescent.

Sheaths not compressed, reddish-pink below ground.

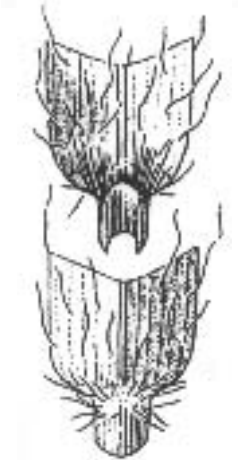
\* Blades flat, 1/8 inch to 1/4 inch wide, strongly veined above, rough along the edges, sharp pointed.

\* Bunchgrass.



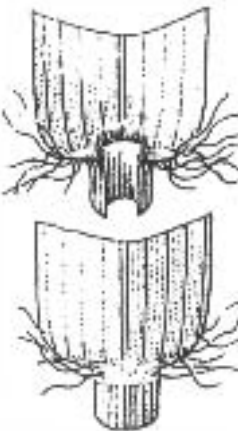
**Bermudagrass, *Cynodon dactylon***

- \* Leaves folded in the bud.
- \* Ligule a fringe of hairs.  
Collar narrow, covered with long hairs.  
Auricles absent.  
Sheaths strongly compressed, sparsely hairy.
- \* Blades short, 1/8 inch wide, rough along the edges, sharp pointed.
- \* Stoloniferous and rhizomatous.



**Buffalograss, *Buchloe dactyloides***

- \* Leaves rolled in the bud.
- \* Ligule a fringe of hairs, short in the center, long at the edges.  
Collar broad, hairy.  
Auricles absent.
- \* Sheaths short, flattened, smooth.
- \* Blades less than 1/8 inch wide, flat, twisted or curled, sparsely hairy.
- \* Stoloniferous.



**Zoysiagrass, *Zoysia japonica***

- \* Leaves rolled in the bud.
- \* Ligule a fringe of hairs.
- \* Collar medium, covered with long hairs.  
Auricles absent.  
Blades short, 1/8 inch wide, sharp pointed sparsely hairy on top side.
- \* Stoloniferous and rhizomatous.

Prepared by Matthew J. Fagerness, Extension Turfgrass Specialist.  
The material in this section was contributed by *Scotts Proturf Guide to the Identification of Grasses* by Jim Converse.

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