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A Guide to Growing and Caring for Liriope Muscari, Also Known as Monkey Grass

Add some color and ground cover to your yard with this unique plant.

Have you heard of *Liriope muscari* before? The grass, which our experts say is more accurately described as a perennial ground cover than a grass, makes an excellent border plant in most beds and gardens. Often called simply Liriope, lily turf, or, most commonly, monkey grass, this unique plant is actually part of the asparagus family. Its showy purple or violet flowers make this ornamental grass a versatile plant that will thrive in most gardens.



Fertilizing Your Monkey Grass

Monkey grass is pretty low-maintenance when it comes to fertilization. "In average to rich soils, additional fertilizer isn't necessary," Hancock explains. If your soil is on the poorer side, you may want to add a boost in the spring. A balanced, general-purpose garden fertilizer should be plenty to up its growing potential. Even a good layer of compost will help spruce up your plant according to Popat. "This grass is very low maintenance and looks gorgeous full of life all the time."

Where to Buy Monkey Grass

While it's possible to grow Liriope from seed, it's not that common. "I have not seen seed for sale before," Hancock explains. "It's much more common to purchase this ground cover as a plant from your local garden center, especially if you want to grow a particular variety (some varieties have attractively variegated foliage; some have white flowers instead of purple; etc.)," Monkey grass is an especially versatile plant, and according to Chad Husby, PhD., and chief explorer at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, one of the few types of plants that can be grown in cold temperate areas. It can be grown in USDA hardiness zone six through zone 10. "However, monkey grass looks best in warmer climates of zone eight or above," he says. "In colder areas, it does not look as good during the winter and some types will not tolerate cold."