

Name

Lolium perenne

Perennial ryegrass



Habitat/Range Predominantly a grass of improved neutral grassland and of arable leys and hay meadows throughout lowland Britain. It does also occur widely in other habitats, up to 570 m, and is found throughout the UK apart from the most mountainous areas of Scotland. It occurs in calcareous grassland, rush pasture, inundation zones, amenity swards and verges as well as open waste land vegetation. It prefers heavy neutral fertile soils, but tolerates mild acidity and base-richness. It is a native species and widely spread via grass and wildflower seed mixes.

Identification This is a tufted perennial with erect or spreading culms between 10 and 90 cm tall. The sheaths and backs of the leaves are smooth and shiny, giving a characteristic glint to swards dominated by this species. Ligules are up to 2 mm long with clasping auricles at the bases of the bright green leaves. The spikes are straight and stiff and in one plane. Spikelets are spaced alternately along opposite sides of the stem, they lack the awns of Italian ryegrass.



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