

THE BACKYARD VERDICT SYSTEM

The Complete Guide to Natural Lawn Care

Everything you need to know — every product, every weed, every region, every grass type, every recipe, every mistake, and every fix. Six chapters, drawn from the questions you asked in the comments.

Six Chapters • The Complete Reference

Contents

1. The Complete Shopping Guide	3
2. The Weed Identification Guide	9
3. The Regional Guide	15
4. The Grass Type Guide	20
5. Every Recipe, Every Measurement, Every Month	26
6. Troubleshooting	32

CHAPTER 1

The Complete Shopping Guide

Where to Buy Everything, What to Look For, and What to Avoid

Welcome to the Backyard Verdict System. If you're listening to this, you've watched my videos. You've seen what baking soda, ferrous sulfate, corn gluten meal, Epsom salt, and dish soap can do for your lawn. And now you want to do it yourself.

This chapter is your complete shopping list. Every product. Every brand. Every store. Every price. No guesswork. No searching. No standing in the aisle wondering if you're buying the right thing.

I'm going to go product by product, in the order you'll need them throughout the season. For each one, I'll tell you the exact name to look for, where to find it, what it should cost, and most importantly, what NOT to buy. Because some of these products have lookalikes that won't work or could damage your lawn.

Let's start.

Product number one. Baking soda. Sodium bicarbonate.

This is the product from video one. The pH corrector. The two-dollar kitchen powder that unlocks nutrients in acidic soil.

Where to buy it. Literally anywhere. Any grocery store. Walmart. Target. Dollar stores. It's in the baking aisle. You're looking for a box or bag that says baking soda or sodium bicarbonate. The most common brand is Arm and Hammer. The orange box. You've seen it a thousand times.

What to buy. Plain baking soda. Nothing added. No aluminum-free labels needed, that's a baking myth that doesn't apply here. No special lawn-grade version. The cheapest box on the shelf works perfectly.

What NOT to buy. Do not buy baking powder. Baking powder and baking soda are NOT the same thing. Baking powder contains baking soda plus an acid, usually cream of tartar. If you use baking powder on your lawn, the acid component will counteract the pH-raising effect. You need pure baking soda. Sodium bicarbonate. Nothing else.

Also do not buy washing soda, which is sodium carbonate. Different chemical. Much more alkaline. Can burn grass at the same dilution that baking soda is safe at. The names sound similar but they're different products.

How much to buy. A four-pound box costs about three to four dollars and will last most homeowners an entire season. If you have a large property, buy two boxes. At one tablespoon per gallon of water, a four-pound box makes roughly sixty gallons of solution.

Product number two. Ferrous sulfate. Iron sulfate. Iron two sulfate.

This is the product from video two. The selective weed killer that kills broadleaf weeds but feeds grass.

Where to buy it. This is where people have the most trouble. Several of you commented that you went to Amazon and couldn't find anything about killing weeds. Here's why. Ferrous sulfate is not marketed as a weed killer. It's marketed as a soil amendment or lawn iron supplement. You need to know what to search for.

At home improvement stores like Home Depot and Lowe's, look for products labeled iron sulfate, lawn iron, or ferrous sulfate granules in the fertilizer aisle. Not the weed killer aisle. The fertilizer aisle.

Specific brands to look for. Ironite is the most commonly available brand. It's sold in a blue bag at Home Depot and Lowe's. However, Ironite is a blend, not pure ferrous sulfate. It contains iron along with other minerals. It works, but you'll need to use more of it because the iron concentration is lower.

For pure ferrous sulfate, search online for ferrous sulfate heptahydrate powder or ferrous sulfate granular. Suppliers include Southern Ag, Bonide, and various garden supply companies on Amazon. A five-pound bag of pure ferrous sulfate costs eight to fifteen dollars and will last two or more seasons.

For those of you in Canada, one of you asked specifically about where to buy in Canada. Canadian Tire carries iron sulfate products in their garden section. You can also order from Amazon Canada. Search ferrous sulfate lawn. Home Hardware stores also carry it seasonally.

What NOT to buy. Do not buy ferric sulfate. Ferric with a C. That's iron three sulfate, a different compound used in water treatment. It won't work the same way. You want ferrous sulfate. Ferrous with an O-U-S.

Also, do not buy chelated iron products like EDDHA iron or DTPA iron. These are designed for foliar feeding, not weed control. They deliver iron to plants but not at the concentration needed to kill broadleaf weeds. They're also much more expensive.

Important application note that several of you asked about. One cup of ferrous sulfate per gallon of water. That's the ratio from the video. Mix thoroughly. Spray across the entire lawn with a pump sprayer. Do NOT use a hose-end sprayer because you can't control the concentration accurately enough.