

Full sun: grasses  
for DEER areas









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Plant Name	Height & Spread	Evergreen or Deciduous	Description	Photo
<p><b>Blue Fescue</b> <i>Festuca glauca</i></p> 	<p>6-12 inches tall 6-12 inches wide</p> 	<p>Semi-Evergreen  Hardy to minus 15 degrees</p>	<p>Unique grass with blue blades. Wispy flower spikes are pale yellow to tan.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
<p><b>Velebit Forest Sedge</b> <i>Carex 'Velebit Humilis'</i></p> 	<p>6-12 inches tall 1-2 feet wide</p> 	<p>Evergreen  Hardy to minus 10 degrees</p>	<p>Compact, low-growing grass that resembles a mop head of green hair. Handles some foot traffic.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
<p><b>Japanese Blood Grass</b> <i>Imperata cylindrica</i></p> 	<p>1-2 feet tall 12-18 inches wide</p>	<p>Deciduous  Hardy to 0 degrees</p>	<p>Showy grass that has green blades with bright red tips. Excellent as border, in a container, or in mass planting. Can be invasive and spread freely in wet area.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	



<p><b>Oriental Fountain Grass</b> <i>Pennisetum orientale</i></p> 	<p>1-2 feet tall 1-2 feet wide</p> <p>*Pennisetum 'Karley Rose' grows slightly larger and has pinkish flower spikes</p>	<p>Deciduous</p> <p>Hardy to minus 5 degrees</p>	<p>Clumping grass with green blades. Showy white flower spikes in summer.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
<p><b>Orange Sedge</b> <i>Carex testacea</i></p> 	<p>1-2 feet tall 1-2 feet wide</p> 	<p>Evergreen</p> <p>Hardy to 5 degrees</p>	<p>Forms cascading mound of narrow, arching olive green which turn coppery-brown in summer and have orange tints in winter.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
<p><b>Little Bluestem</b> <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i></p> 	<p>2-3 feet tall 1-2 feet wide</p>	<p>Semi-evergreen</p> <p>Hardy to minus 25 degrees</p>	<p>Upright blue-green grass gets tinged purple in colder weather. Tan-colored seed heads rise 1-2 feet above foliage in fall.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
<p><b>Little Miss Maiden Grass</b> <i>Miscanthus sinensis 'Little Miss'</i></p> 	<p>2-3 feet tall 2-3 feet wide</p>	<p>Deciduous</p> <p>Hardy to 0 degrees</p>	<p>Graceful grass with lush green blades that emerge in spring. Turns brilliant red with purple tones in fall. Showy buff colored seed heads in late summer.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	



<p><b>Pink Muhly Grass</b> <i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i></p> 	<p>2-3 feet tall 2-3 feet wide</p> <p>*there are varieties of this grass that grow taller or bloom white</p>	<p>Semi-Evergreen</p> <p>Hardy to 0 degrees</p>	<p>Attractive green grass. Clouds of pink flowers in fall resemble cotton candy. Low water needs once established.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
<p><b>Karl Foerster Feather Reed Grass</b> <i>Calamagrostis 'Karl Foerster'</i></p> 	<p>4-5 feet tall 2-3 feet wide</p> <p>*Calamagrostis 'Overdam' has similar look, but slightly smaller and is variegated with green and white striped blades</p>	<p>Deciduous</p> <p>Hardy to minus 10 degrees</p>	<p>Tall growing grass with green, flowing blades. Feathery tan plumes in summer.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
<p><b>Chinese Silver Grass</b> <i>Miscanthus sinensis 'Morning Light'</i></p> 	<p>4-6 feet tall 3-4 feet wide</p>	<p>Deciduous</p> <p>Hardy to 0 degrees</p>	<p>Award-winning grass with vase-like shape and fine-textured foliage that sways gracefully in the breeze. Ivory variegation makes it look silver from a distance. Showy pink-red plumes in late summer.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
<p><b>Zebra Grass</b> <i>Miscanthus sinensis 'Zebra'</i></p> 	<p>5-7 feet tall 4-6 feet wide</p> <p>*Miscanthus sinensis 'Little Zebra' has similar look but only grows 3-4 feet tall &amp; wide</p>	<p>Deciduous</p> <p>Hardy to 0 degrees</p>	<p>Distinctive ornamental grass with unusual variegation that resembles zebra stripes! Horizontal yellow rings on arching green blades. Pinkish-copper plumes in late summer.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	

<p><b>Pampas Grass</b> <i>Cortaderia selloana</i></p> 	<p>8-10 feet tall 6-8 feet wide</p> <p>*dwarf variety grows to 5-6 feet tall and wide</p>	<p>Evergreen</p> <p>Hardy to 10 degrees</p>	<p>Clumping green grass grows very large. Graceful, fluffy white plumes begin in summer.</p> <p>This grass is very invasive on the CA coast, but not in our colder climate.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
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→ this symbol indicates plants that can survive drought once established. It typically takes 1-2 years of regular water for a new plant to be established. In general, plants look better with regular water, but drought-tolerant plants can survive times when water is not available.










→ this symbol indicates plants that are considered fire-wise, meaning that they are more resistant to wildfire due to their growth habits. Plants with this symbol were found online in lists of 'fire safe' plants.

Scroll down for California Native ideas!



Plant Name	Height & Spread	Evergreen or Deciduous	Description	Photo
<b>California Meadow Sedge</b> <i>Carex pansa</i> 	6-8 inches tall 2-3 feet wide 	Evergreen  Hardy to 10 degrees	Low, spreading grass with wild meadow look. Best look with low water and no mowing. Slender, cream to golden flowers in spring. Drought-tolerant once established.  <b>Deer rating: 10/10</b>	
<b>Creeping Red Fescue</b> <i>Festuca 'Molate'</i> 	12-18 inches tall 12-18 inches wide 	Evergreen  Hardy to 0 degrees or below	Soft, flowing drifts of blue-grey-green foliage. Buff colored flower spikes rise 2-3 feet high in summer. Can be mowed to 2 inches tall.  <b>Deer rating: 10/10</b>	
<b>Tufted Hair Grass</b> <i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i> 	18-24 inches tall 12-18 inches wide	Semi-evergreen  Hardy to minus 15 degrees	Finely textured, clumping grass. Narrow, dark green blades. Airy, light green florets in summer. Low water needs once established.  <b>Deer rating: 10/10</b>	
<b>Purple Needlegrass</b> <i>Stipa pulchra</i> 	1-3 feet tall 1-2 feet wide 	Deciduous  Hardy to 5 degrees	Bunch grass with blades that are bright green up close, appear grey from a distance. Airy cream flowers with hints of purple in late summer. Drought-tolerant once established.  <b>Deer rating: 10/10</b>	



<p><b>California Gray Rush</b> <i>Juncus patens</i></p> 	<p>2-3 feet tall 2-3 feet wide</p> 	<p>Evergreen</p> <p>Hardy to 0 degrees</p>	<p>Dense clumps of narrow, erect, gray-green to gray-blue, leafless stems. Flowers are small, golden-brown, and tassel-like clusters. Blooms spring and early summer. Can live in water but also tolerates very dry conditions.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
<p><b>Deer Grass</b> <i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i></p> 	<p>2-3 feet tall 2-3 feet wide</p>	<p>Semi-evergreen</p> <p>Hardy to 5 degrees</p>	<p>Dense clump of slender arching green blades. Tan flower spikes above foliage in fall. Plumes can reach 5 feet tall. Drought-tolerant once established.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	
<p><b>California Fescue</b> <i>Festuca californica</i></p> 	<p>3-5 feet tall 2-4 feet wide</p> 	<p>Evergreen</p> <p>Hardy to 0 degrees</p>	<p>Loose clump of blue-green or blue-grey leaves. Graceful, fountain-like habit. Drought-tolerant once established.</p> <p><b>Deer rating: 10/10</b></p>	