

## Plant Stepables

Are the paths through your yard boring? Tired of pulling weeds between your pavers? Need to dress up the edge of your pond? Fed up with fighting weeds in your lawn? Then you need to learn more about stepables – tough, low maintenance, low-growing plants that endure foot traffic. Stepables are perfect for pathways, patios, ponds, lawn substitution, and children's play areas. There are dozens to choose from for any situation.

The most important criteria to keep in mind when choosing your stepables are whether they will be in sun or shade and the level of foot traffic. Most stepables are designated for full sun, part sun (at least a half day and afternoon sun is best), part shade (half day sun preferably in the morning), and shade (filtered sun only).

Determine how much foot traffic will occur in the area you are considering for your stepables. Plants designated for heavy use can take foot traffic three or more times per day, moderates can take foot traffic once or twice per day, and the lightweights can take foot traffic once or twice per week.

Stepables are low maintenance plants. Like most plants, they require good drainage for optimum health. You can apply a liquid 20–20–20 fertilizer to promote growth and bloom time. If necessary, your stepables can be mowed or kept in bounds with an edger. Some stepables are more aggressive growers than others. This can be great if you are trying to fill an area quickly. However, if you don't want to fight the plants continually, a more moderate grower may be best.

Look around your yard and see where you can experiment with stepables. Think beyond blue star creeper – there are over 100 varieties to choose from! Visit the [Stepables](#) website for more information and a nursery near you.

### Ajuga 'Chocolate Chip'

Chocolate-colored foliage forms a carpet with blue flower spikes in spring and autumn. Use under trees and shrubs. Moderate foot traffic, sun or shade, fast grower.

### Arabis 'Mountain Rockcress'

Deep-green star-shaped foliage makes a tight mat as it spreads. Use in dry areas or along a path. Moderate foot traffic, sun or part sun, fast grower.



### Armeria 'Victor Reiter'

Tiny mounds of compact gray-green tufts with small light pink flowers. Use in pocket areas, rock gardens, pond edges. Light foot traffic, sun or part sun, moderate grower.

## Artemesia 'Tiny Green'

Pale green foliage has nice aroma. Tiny pale-cream buds open in late spring. Good in tough areas since it takes neglect. Light foot traffic, sun or part sun, moderate grower.

## Dianthus 'Tiny Rubies'

Tight mounds of blue-green foliage with dark pink flowers in late spring. Plant around roses or as a cover in the perennial bed. Light foot traffic, sun, fast grower.



## Erysimum 'Dwarf Yellow Wallflower'

Light-green jagged leaves with yellow flowers that bloom at the same time as spring crocus and forsythia. Use in rock gardens, crevices, and borders. Light foot traffic, sun or part sun, fast grower.

## Gypsophila 'Clumping Baby's Breath'

Gray-green foliage creeps to form a solid mat with white flowers in late spring. This plant needs very good drainage. Light foot traffic, sun or part sun, fast grower.



## Leptinella 'New Zealand Brass Buttons'

Gray-green fernlike foliage turns bronze in autumn. Small yellow button flowers. Use between pavers, under conifers, or as a lawn substitute. Moderate foot traffic, shade or part shade, moderate grower.



## Mazus 'Alba'

Brilliant-green mat covered with tiny white flowers for months. Use as lawn substitute, between stepping stones, in crevices. Moderate foot traffic, sun or part shade, fast grower.

## Ophiopogon 'Dwarf Mondo Grass'

Dwarf ornamental grass resembles small heads of hair. Use as lawn substitute, between pavers, or beside stairs. Moderate foot traffic, shade or part shade, slow grower.





### Pratia 'Little Star Creeper'

Very tiny green creeper that will grow just about anywhere. Use between pavers or as a path. Heavy foot traffic, sun or part shade, fast grower.

### Raoulia 'Scabwort'

Tiny gray leaves form a dense mat. Lots of yellow flowers in summer. Prefers dry conditions. Use in dry paths or neglected areas. Heavy foot traffic, sun or part sun, fast grower.



### Sedum 'White Diamond'

Blue rosettes form a surprisingly plush carpet. Tips are serrated and catch tiny drops of water that sparkle like diamonds. Small star-shaped white flowers in summer. Use in rock gardens or borders. Moderate foot traffic, sun or part sun, moderate

### Thyme 'Doone Valley'

Gold and green variegated foliage with lemon scent. Lilac flowers in summer. Use where scent can be enjoyed such as around patios, entranceway, or path to herb garden. Moderate foot traffic, sun or part sun, moderate grower.



### Veronica 'Alpine Speedwell'

Green foliage forms a tight mat. Light-blue small spikes of flowers bloom in early summer for a great show. Use in rock gardens or around shrubs. Moderate foot traffic, sun or part sun, moderate grower.

### Veronica 'Sunshine'

Brilliant gold leaves make a big splash in the shade garden. Use between pavers, or as an understory to rhododendrons. Moderate foot traffic, shade or part shade, moderate grower.



These are just a few of the options available. Go ahead, take your shoes off, and think about what you could be stepping on.

## References

"Good for your Sole." Retrieved 5/24/05 from [Stepables](#).