

Lawn Care for All Seasons

Gail Buckley

www.PLRContentSource.com

With the right care, you can have a beautiful lawn that will flourish. The number one problem that pops up with lawn care is that a lot of people aren't aware of the fact that lawns have to be treated according to the location of the land.

And taking care of your lawn isn't just something that should be done in the spring when grass begins to come up again. In order to have a beautiful lawn, you have to pay attention to the guidelines for the region that you're in because the temperature and rainfall will affect your lawn's growth.

Each state has different region guidelines for creating a healthy lawn. This will cover the length of the season, the harshness of it and other helpful advice, such as which grass grows best in which area. You want to have the knowledge so that you can take care of your lawn all year long.

Spring Lawn Care

Depending on the area of the world that you live in, how you're supposed to take care of your lawn is going to differ. And knowing what to do can make the difference in a lawn that's full and green and one that's suffering from less than stellar care.

There are twelve zones in all and some states can have an overlap of zones. In the North, the climate can be colder - even in the spring - than it is in the other regions. So you have to base how you treat your lawn on the temperature.

Making sure you care for your lawn in the spring can make a difference for the fall months. If you don't take care of the lawn in the spring, then you'll have damage by the fall.

The first step that you have to take is to remove any lawn debris. You can do this by raking. This gets up any leaves that have fallen to the ground and died, but it also can help keep your lawn free of thatch.

Thatch is made up of the stems and roots that didn't complete a decomposition process. You'll find thatch right around the top of the soil. For people who did a thorough raking job in the fall, the thatch buildup isn't as thick.

If you leave thatch, it can create patchy areas in your lawn because the new grass can't push through this to the surface. If you do live somewhere in the North, your spring lawn care should begin when the snow and ice that your area normally gets has stopped being a weather issue.

If you live in the South, you can usually begin spring lawn care earlier in March than you can in the North. The next step after raking is to aerate the soil. You can buy or rent the equipment to do this with.

You want to aerate your soil to keep it from becoming compacted. Soil compaction happens when there's pressure applied to the surface of the soil. This can be caused by things on the lawn and by people or animals walking across it.

Next, you want to check your soil's pH level. What you're looking for is a pH level of 6.5 to 7. While some items do well with soil that's more acidic, a higher pH level can kill off certain types of grass.

Check the lawn for areas where the grass may have been worn away or is brown and treat these areas. This is where you can over-seed, but seeding is something that you really want to save for the fall.

You'll also need to keep the seed moist. Next, you'll need to fertilize. Use a slow-release fertilizer for best results. Spring is the time of the year where the weeds just seem to flourish regardless of what region you're in.

You'll want to remove the weeds either manually or by using an herbicide. But if you use an herbicide, make sure you see if the item treats weeds before or after they sprout. If you live in the South, you'll want to pay attention to the climate region because the spring temperatures can be noticeably different than that of the North.

Most of the South falls into the warm and humid zone. In this zone, you really have to have a warm season grass if you want your lawn to thrive. The grasses that are best for this zone are St. Augustine, carpet grass or Bermuda.

Some areas of the South fall into the transition zone. This means that certain portions of the state can have cold weather even though they're in a warmer area. For example, some portions of South Carolina have warmer winters and rarely see snow or ice while other portions of South Carolina have both.

The closer to the coast that you are in the South, the warmer the spring lawn care season will be. In the South, you can begin your lawn care for spring about a week before the calendar states that spring has officially arrived.

You'll want to remove any debris such as dead leaves or waste that didn't decompose. Check for areas of the lawn that has portions of soil that may have suffered any damage and repair those.

Aerate the lawn and reseed any damaged areas. Usually weed control is taken care of in the fall. Once the weeds actually push out of the ground, it's too late for preventative care and you have to go with an herbicide that takes care of weeds after they've started growing.

Make sure that you get the soil tested. In the mild weather states, the spring is the time that you must aerate the lawn. The recommended grass height for lawns in this zone is 2 inches.

If you let it get shorter than that, you run the risk of the sun burning the grass. Your lawn will end up looking scalped and make it easier for pests and disease to take over. If you live in one of the mild weather states, spring is the time that you have to work to take care of diseases associated with lawns.

You'll want to treat both your grass as well as any shrubs that you have. These states are known for a higher level of moss growth. In the spring is the time of year when moss can spread rapidly.

If you don't get this growth under control, it can cause damage to your lawn. If you decide that you want to lay turf and you live in this area, this is the time to undertake that project.

In any of these areas, you want to change out the mulch around your landscaping. Pests and disease can make a home in mulch over the winter, so that's what you're looking for.

Some people fertilize the minute that spring official begins, but you want to wait until April or May, depending on your region, before you fertilize. If your lawn is still more brown, than green, you want to wait until it has a higher area of green over brown. Fertilizing helps your grass make it through the winter.

Summer Lawn Care

Summer lawn care is definitely different, depending on where you live. The summer heat can really take a toll on your grass - and it's this time of year that can do a lot of damage.

In the South, your lawnmower deck has to be at the proper height for your grass. Otherwise, your grass could end up too short and not survive the heat. The reason that the heat is so hard on the lawn is that it evaporates the moisture and dries it out much faster than during the other seasons.

So when the grass is too short, it's exposed to damage from both the sun's rays and the heat. Lawn care in the South means watching the amount of water your lawn gets. With too much of it, your grass won't do well - not enough water can kill the lawn.

You may have seen advice to water your lawn every day. You don't need to do this. This can lead to overwatering. Instead, you only need to water your lawn about twice a week.

But *how* you water it is important. You need to divide the lawn up into areas and each area needs to be watered for about half an hour at the very minimum. Always make sure that you water your lawn in the morning versus in the evening.

When you water in the evening, it can cause the grass to hold onto more moisture than it needs. How you should mow the lawn depends on the type of grass that you have. Some types of grasses can handle shorter lengths better than other types of grass.

Zoysia grass is one that can handle a height of 2 inches or slightly less. But other grasses, such as St. Augustine, need to be allowed to grow over 2 inches. Northern areas that experience a dry spell during the summer months need to cut back on the mowing schedule.

If you normally mow once a week, only mow once every 10 days. The grass should be kept between 2 ½ to 3 inches in height. What this longer length does is give shade to your lawn's foundation and roots, protecting it from the summer heat.

You'll want to fertilize during the cooler summer months, so when the hottest days of summer are done, yet it's still considered to be summer, that's when you need to fertilize.

Mild temperature states are the states that can produce greater looking lawns if they're cared for properly. That's because the grass in states that don't have higher swings between summer and winter tend to do better than in areas with extremely hot summers or places that have bitterly cold winters.

Summer lawn care for mild areas means you need to keep an eye on the root system. These areas tend to get a good bit of rainfall and the grass root system can be impacted by this.

More moisture means a shallower root system. This then leads to brown patches. But what happens when people see these brown patches, is they assume it's caused by a lack of moisture.

So they water the lawn, which then compounds the problem. While brown patches can mean not enough moisture, it can also mean there's too much, so you'll have to check to make sure.

Fall Lawn Care

Many people feel that fall is the time to let the mowing go and not have to worry about the lawn. But fall is the time of year when your lawn needs a lot of TLC. This is the time of year that your lawn needs to regroup from the stress and burdens it faced during the summer season.

You want to make sure that you fertilize the lawn, because this is what will protect it and help it get through the winter. The fertilizer will contain nitrogen, phosphate and potash or potassium.

The potassium is especially important because this is what helps your grass survive not having enough moisture, compaction stress and diseases that might normally kill the grass.

You won't need to mow as often, but you'll still need to mow some. You can mow for the final time toward the last few weeks of fall. If you live in the South, you'll want to make sure that you rake up the thatch.

Go first in one direction and then in the opposite to make sure you go deep enough. Put on a top dressing, because this helps the soil drain properly. It also allows it to hold on to nutrients as well as enabling it to fight the growth of thatch.

Make sure that you aerate after putting on a top dressing. After that, you'll want to look for and repair any bare patches of the lawn. For the North, the fall care is a little different.

Your grass has to be at about 2 ½ inches through the season. If you allow it to get any longer or shorter than that, it can lead to problems like snow mold. Snow mold is a fungus and the damage that it can cause will be seen after the snow is gone.

You'll notice large bare patches without any grass all over your lawn. You have to rake the leaves and any other type of yard debris, because if you don't, it can cause a build-up of nitrates, which can lead to grass damage.

Even though it can be tempting to back off watering the lawn when the weather turns colder, your lawn still needs the moisture. Treat for perennial weeds. In states where the weather is mild, you're more than likely to have a grass such as St. Augustine or Bermuda.

You don't want to fertilize this grass in the fall. Instead, dethatch and aerate. Test the pH level and then over seed if needed.

Winter Lawn Care

While it can be fun to go sledding in the snow or build a snowman, the extreme cold temperatures can wreak havoc on a lawn. In the winter, if you live in the North, your lawn can freeze.

When this happens, if you walk across the grass, especially if you do it on a regularly basis, you will kill the grass in spots. Then when the grass thaws and it's time for spring, you'll have areas of dead grass.

You'll need to be especially careful with any lawn debris during the winter if you live in the North. Any debris on the ground will kill your grass plus, can be a cause of snow mold to develop.

You don't want to give this fungus any growing space. Remember that if your grass wasn't cut short enough before the cold temperatures hit, it can cause the tops of the grass to freeze and die as well as being a foothold for disease to start.

You also want to be careful about salting walkways, since this can impact the health of your grass. Choose something like kitty litter or sand instead. Or, be very careful about not letting the salt get onto your grass.

In the South, you might think that the best time to fertilize your lawn for the winter is at the same time as cooler weather states. But in the warmer temperature regions, lawns should not be fertilized for any reason after September.

You need to make sure that you give your lawn moisture very early in the mornings. Warm weather grasses are more apt to develop a fungus problem than cool weather grass.

Though warm weather grass has a higher tolerance for heat, it can get brown patch easier than cool weather grass. Make sure that you over seed and irrigate. Winter lawn care in mild weather states means you'll handle your lawn care a little differently.

First, make sure that before the temperatures dip, you fertilize your lawn. This step should be done in September or even in October - but never after. Even though the grass might look dead, the roots are still very much alive.

If you chose to over seed your lawn, remember that you still have to water it. If you did over seed, don't water it more often than every 7 days or so. Lawns that weren't over seeded also need to be watered during winter in a milder weather state.

But you should only water them about every 26-31 days. If you don't water the grass at all during the winter, your lawn will die. Make sure that you get up any debris that falls onto your lawn because debris keeps the sunlight from being able to get to your lawn in the areas where the debris is.

Many homeowners feel overwhelmed learning the ins and outs of lawn care. But the reality is, there's a pretty specific formula for your lawn if you get to know your region and the specific tips for your chosen grass, and this makes it much easier to grow and maintain a lawn you and your family can be proud of!



PLR CONTENT SOURCE

Your Source For High Quality, Private Label Rights
Content That You Can Actually Afford and Profit From

www.PLRContentSource.com