Show Your Lawn Some Love

Tips for Maintaining a Healthy Lawn

Lawn, that green carpet of living plants, is an important part of any residential landscape. It helps cool the air around it, gives a nice contrast to the textures and colors of our planting beds, and it tolerates foot traffic really well. Keeping the lawn healthy and green takes a little work, but it’s easier than you may think and well worth the effort. Follow these lawn care tips to achieve one of the best-looking lawns in the neighborhood.
1. **Fertilizing**

Your grass needs an occasional boost of nitrogen to maintain that green, healthy look. Applying a high-nitrogen fertilizer in the first part of May will get it going for the summer. Another high-nitrogen fertilizer application should be done at the beginning of September, which is the most important application because it helps the grass recover from the stress of the summer heat. Fertilize again at the beginning of November with ammonium sulfate, urea, or other fertilizer labeled for fall use.

2. **Mowing & Edging**

Mow your lawn at a longer length so that it doesn't dry out as quickly and so less weeds can germinate. Somewhere between 2.5” to 3” is recommended. Avoid cutting more than 1/3 of the grass blade at a time so that the grass doesn't get stressed. Regularly mulch the clippings back into the lawn instead of bagging them.
3. Weeding

Weeds always find their way into lawns, but healthier lawns do better at out-competing the weeds. Apply chemicals sparingly. When using a chemical, be sure it is labeled as safe for lawns, otherwise you will end up killing parts of the grass and having unsightly yellow spots in the lawn. Hand digging is also quite effective and is the best organic method of killing weeds.

4. Aerating

A good way to help relieve compaction is to core aerate. Clay soils are especially susceptible to compaction. Depending on how much use your lawn gets, you may want to aerate once a year or every few years, which can be done in the spring or fall. Aeration helps improve water penetration into clay soils, and raking compost over
5. Watering

Wait as long into the season as possible to begin watering. Depending on the weather, you may not need to turn on the sprinklers until sometime in May. Fixed pop-up sprinklers need to run about 20-25 minutes to put down the right amount of water. Rotary nozzles (pictured above) and impact rotors need to run about 40-45 minutes. Check out the weekly watering guide to see how often to water. Avoid watering during the hottest part of the day or when it's windy. Check sprinklers periodically to make sure they are working properly. Begin cutting back the watering frequency in the fall as temperatures cool.

Lawn Care Schedule

Upcoming Online Classes

Register now and enjoy these classes from home!

Localscapes University

Wednesday,
Container Flower Design
Saturday,
May 9 @ 10:00 am
Details & Registration

Planting Bed Design
Wednesday,
May 13 @ 7:00 pm
Details & Registration

Trees & Shrubs: the Good, the Bad, & the Ugly
Saturday,
May 16 @ 10:00 am
Details & Registration

Plant Highlight
Bloomerang Purple Lilac  
*Syringa x 'Penda'*

Maturing at around 5' tall, this smaller lilac fits well into the modern landscape. Like other lilacs, it's not very appetizing to deer, and it doesn't require a lot of water. Its most unique feature is that it blooms again in the summer, sending out that wonderful aroma more than once a year! It works great as a foundation plant or as a stand-alone specimen.

**Plant Type:**  Deciduous Shrub  
**Mature Size:**  4-5' T x 4-5' W  
**Light Requirements:**  Full Sun  
**Hardiness Zones:**  3-7
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