

Step by Step Lawn Care

mowing



- 1 Set mower heights from 2 to 2.5" (5 - 6cm) to promote good root development & minimize weed growth.
- 2 Mow once a week in spring; cutting too much at once is stressful for the grass!
- 3 Never cut more than one third of the height of the grass blade.
- 4 Leaving the clippings on the lawn, especially during dry periods, can help to retain moisture, minimize weed growth & provide some nutrition. If this is too unsightly for you then either mulch with only a small amount & return the rest to the compost or just compost all of the clippings.
- 5 Keep the lawnmower's blades sharp so that you're cutting and not ripping the grass.

watering

- 1 Newly planted lawns need daily watering if our weather isn't providing sufficient moisture.
- 2 Established lawns should be watered deeply (2.5 cm/1") no more than twice a week & should be allowed to partially dry between waterings.
- 3 Water according to the soil type: water drains quickly thru sandy soil whereas clay soils retain water: the same amount of water will either be not enough for the sandy soil or too much for the clay soil.
- 4 The best time to water is in the early morning as this reduces the amount of water lost to evaporation.
- 5 Be sure you are watering according to municipal regulations.
- 6 Lawns will recover from hot dry spells so be conscious of water conservation in summer months & don't worry if it turns 'golden'!

tip... To gauge how much water you're giving the lawn, place a margarine container within the area covered by the sprinkler. When the container is filled with 2.5 cm (1") of water you'll have sufficiently watered the lawn. Time the process to determine how long you need to water!

aerating

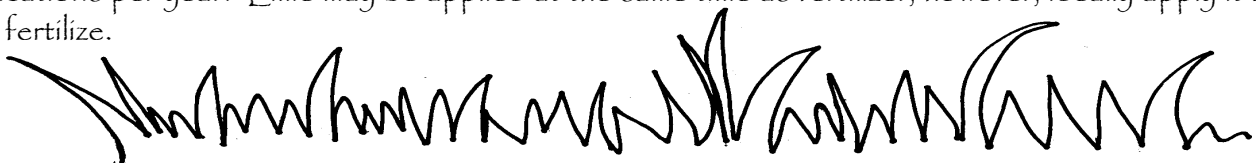
Aerating the lawn removes 3-4" long 'plugs' of soil. You can also use a garden fork pushed 4-6" deep to create holes every 6" apart. These holes relieve compacted soil, improve drainage & stimulate new growth by allowing water, fertilizer & air to penetrate to the roots. You'll find the process easier if the soil is slightly moist beforehand. The soil plugs will gradually work their way back into the lawn, or for a tidier appearance you can pick them up with the mower or remove them to the compost. Follow with a top-dressing mixture of 70% sand & 30% soil & overseed to fill in bare areas. If you choose not to top dress then wait at least a week before overseeding. The best time to aerate the lawn is in early spring & fall.

de-thatching

Thatch, a layer of undecomposed plant matter, builds up in your lawn between the grass & the soil surface as a result of overly vigorous grass growth from excessive fertilization & frequent watering. If less than 1/2 an inch thick, it's useful for reducing evaporation through the summer. If over an inch thick it should be removed as water, air & fertilizer cannot penetrate & diseases can easily develop (removing a plug of soil will show how thick the thatch is). Early spring & September are the best times to tackle this project. To de-thatch you can rent a power-rake or use a heavy-duty steel rake of your own. Rake the lawn fairly aggressively to remove thatch & moss & remove debris to the compost. Follow up by overseeding any bare areas.

lime

We live in an area of high rainfall so our soils tend to be acidic, which is great for rhododendrons & azaleas but not so good for lawns. Lawns require 'sweeter' soil and lime achieves this. Dolopril is a fast-acting lime that goes to work immediately. Dolomite lime takes 2 - 3 months to work. Apply in spring and fall. Lawns with excessive moss may need 2 to 3 applications per year. Lime may be applied at the same time as fertilizer, however, ideally apply it 2 weeks or so before you fertilize.



overseeding

Apply a seed starter fertilizer & grass seed according to package directions. This can be done right after aerating &/or power-raking. Keep seeded area moist for 10 - 14 days (until grass seeds germinate) then water as necessary.

Approximately 1 month later, or when the lawn has been mowed 2 times, apply the appropriate seasonal fertilizer. Overseeding is beneficial not only to establish new growth but also to crowd out unwanted weeds.

fertilizing

Follow up all your hard work with a sound fertilizing program for a strong, healthy lawn. Three applications of a slow-release or natural organic fertilizer can be applied in spring, summer & fall. The fall fertilizing tends to be the most important one. Be sure not to over-fertilize which can lead to thatch build-up, burning & susceptibility to disease.

the N - P - K's...

N = nitrogen: builds thick, green grass.

P = phosphorus: develops strong healthy roots.

K = potassium: disease resistance & winter hardiness.

Ask staff for the recommended lawn fertilizer formula for spring, summer or fall.

weed control

Small weed problems should be tackled regularly as they'll only get worse with time. Hand weeding (the environmentally friendly method!) is easier if the soil is moistened beforehand: try to get as much of the root as possible. There are also weeding tools you can purchase to make the job easier. Heavy infestations may need chemical control and we recommend a 'spot spray' treatment such as KILLEX to reduce herbicide use. There are also weed & feed products that fertilize & attack weeds at the same time.

moss

The following conditions favor moss:

poor drainage,
low fertility,
compacted soil,
high acidity &
heavy shade.



Moss controls provide only temporary control. The best solution is to improve growing conditions for your grass by: aerating, de-thatching, applying lime & fertilizer regularly, improving drainage & reducing shade or else try substituting grass with shade-loving groundcovers.

controlling moss

THE BEST TIME TO TACKLE MOSS IS SPRING & FALL.

- 1 Cut the lawn short: 4-5cm (1.5 to 2").
- 2 If the weather is expected to be dry for at least 48 hours then apply moss control: follow label directions on the package. When the moss turns black (it takes a few days) rake it out by hand or with a power-rake. Liquid products are faster acting than granular ones, taking only 1-2 days to blacken moss.
- 3 To keep the moss from re-occurring, aerate the lawn, apply DOLOPRIL LIME & top-dress with 1-3cm (1/2" to 1") of a sand/soil mix. Applying DOLOPRIL LIME, a faster acting lime, raises soil pH immediately for a healthier lawn (25 lb bag covers 2000 sq. ft.). DOLOPRIL should be applied twice a year for 2 years to raise the soil pH, then once a year regularly thereafter.
- 4 Overseed the bare areas left in your lawn with a quality grass seed appropriate to the situation; before you overseed apply a seed & turf starter fertilizer to the area.
- 5 After the newly seeded areas have been mowed 2 times you can apply a fertilizer to the whole lawn to stimulate thick, lush green growth.

 **maple leaf**
garden centres

1343 lynn valley road north van 604-985-1784
2558 haywood ave west van 604-922-2613