

YOUR LAWN



Fall Into Good Habits for a Beautiful Lawn

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(NAPSA)—Even though the

weather is getting cooler, it's important not to neglect your yard this time of year. By practicing good habits now, you increase your chances of a successful lawn throughout the year. Follow these guidelines to keep your yard looking beautiful all year long:

- Keep fallen leaves off your lawn. They block the sun, and sunlight is essential to the growth and development of your lawn's root system. During the cooler months, your lawn is making food to store in the root system so that it can continue to grow underground in the dormant season. That means it needs more food than normal and all the sunlight it can get. So rake those leaves.

- If raking leaves has become a hassle, simply convert your leaves to mulch by attaching a materials collection system to your mower, or use new mower deck systems that mulch the leaves and blow them right back into the turf. New mower technology means that you can leave your rake in the garage and avoid bagging leaves. Even better, the mulched leaves provide a nutrient-rich boost to the soil.

- After months of children playing in the yard, your soil can become compacted, causing your grass to lose its lush look. You can reduce this ground compaction and add air to the soil by aerating your entire lawn. After you aerate, fertilize and water so the nutrients can easily reach the root system.



Instead of using a mulching kit to break up and blow leaves back into the turf, you can attach a materials collection system to your lawn mower. Once you've gathered the leaves, put them in your compost pile for future fertilization of flower beds and natural areas.

- It is best to fertilize a month before your lawn goes dormant. The fertilization provides important nutrients that help your lawn continue to grow underground throughout the winter.

- A great way to keep your lawn looking thick all year long is to reseed in the fall. First, loosen the soil to a depth of $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. Then water thoroughly for several weeks to help settle the soil. Next, fertilize and spread seed generously following the recommended guidelines.

By following these simple techniques, you will help keep your lawn healthy and free of leaves. So enjoy the cooler weather and be the envy of the neighbors.