

# Your Yard

## Fighting The Fall Leaf War

by Mike Ferrara  
*The Lazy Homeowner*

(NAPSA)—It's fall. That means it's time to haul out all of your weapons for the war on leaves. If you're a lazy homeowner like me, you're bringing in the big guns—the tools and technology that make the task as easy as possible.

My personal favorite is a blower/vac. Look for blower/vacs with at least two air speeds—a lower speed for sweeping out the garage and gathering leaves into smaller piles, and a higher speed to tackle the heavy wet leaves. I own a Toro Ultra Blower/Vac—the most powerful handheld blower/vac you can buy. It features a true variable speed control, so I can control the power—anywhere from a 225-mph jet stream of air, down to a 90-mph breeze.

The Ultra Blower/Vac is also a powerful vacuuming, mulching machine. A magnesium impeller grinds leaves and twigs into a fine mulch, reducing as much as six-teen bags of leaves down to one.

For those of you who would rather hit the yard with a low-tech approach, it might be time for a new rake. There are a number of new models on the market, most geared toward making the task more comfortable. For my money, an old-fashioned steel tine rake is the most durable rake you can buy. It's great for clearing loose or compacted leaves, getting under



**By “locking” leaves in place, you can finish your raking chores on your own schedule.**

bushes and around trees. Steel tine rakes can also be used as light de-thatching tools. If you're looking for a lightweight rake, poly or plastic rakes are a good choice. They're easy to handle and good for raking leaves, grass and other loose materials. Combination rakes that are made with both poly and steel can incorporate the best features of both types.

Here's an idea you can file under “Why didn't I think of that?” This year Toro is introducing a brand new product called Leaf Lock. Leaf Lock forms a protective shell over your leaf pile, locking it in place. It's made from 100 percent corn byproduct, so it's all natural. It's also very easy to use. Just gather your leaves into a

pile, wet down the leaves then sprinkle on the Leaf Lock powder. Spray the pile again and after a few minutes Leaf Lock hardens and your leaves are captured in place.

Leaf Lock is the perfect product for homeowners in communities with loose leaf collection at the curb. With Leaf Lock you don't have to worry about getting the leaves to the curb the very day the community collection truck comes by. You can do your yard clean-up on your timetable. If the truck comes by on Tuesday and you're cleaning your yard over the weekend, just apply Leaf Lock and your leaves will stay put until the truck gets there.

Leaf Lock is also great if you need to bag your leaves. It allows you to clean a portion of your yard, secure the leaves with Leaf Lock and then head into the house to watch the Sunday football game. You can rake one day and bag the next, without the hassle of re-raking.

Whether your approach is high-tech or traditional, choosing the right lawn tools can help you get the job done quicker. Then you can get back to the tasks you really enjoy—football anyone?

For more information on fall lawn care, log onto [www.yardcare.com](http://www.yardcare.com). For information on Toro products log on to [www.toro.com](http://www.toro.com) or call 1-800-595-6841.