

YOUR LAWN



Sharpen Lawn Maintenance Skills

(NAPSA)—Remedy all jealous urges to peek in your neighbor's planting playbook with these tips on the early preparation of lawn and garden equipment.

For openers, choose the tools in your garage that will give you effective and satisfying results. The biggest deterrent from a proactive lawn care plan is tool maintenance. If all the necessary pieces are clean and sharpened before the first dew, you'll be ready to tackle your yard. Recommended items to prepare are lawn mower blades, hedge shears, hand pruners, garden tools, lawn sprinkler and spreader.

Sharpen Mowing Skills

Outdoor power equipment, such as a walk-behind or riding lawn mower, are imperative to accomplishing lawn care chores. However, keeping the equipment in top condition can be a chore in itself. Prepare your mower before grass cutting season by changing the oil and replacing the spark plugs. This simple maintenance will ensure that your mower will be running smoothly all season long.

In addition, make sure that a dull blade isn't damaging the grass, making it susceptible to disease. Sharpening the blade at the onset of the season helps ensure that a cut lawn will be a healthy lawn.

Wearing protective eyewear and heavy gloves, carefully remove the mower's blade and secure it in a vise or clamp. Use a Dremel Rotary Tool with the lawn mower and garden tool sharpen-



ing attachment and grinding stone to sharpen the blade according to your lawn mower's instruction manual. The attachment allows you to sharpen most blades parallel to the original angle removing as little metal as possible. The attachment is set at a 30-degree angle. Clean dirt and debris from the blade and check the balance before reinstalling. The attachment makes sharpening fast, easy and affordable—it retails for under ten dollars.

Additional mowing tips include:

- Mow lawn once per week; twice may be necessary with rapidly growing grass
- Avoid mowing wet grass
- Set blade height between two and three inches for a healthy cut

Sharp Trimming Tools

Hedge shears and hand pruners are essential pieces of many lawn and garden equipment sets. They provide a simple and precise option for shaping shrubs and hedges of all sizes. Like lawn mowers, keeping these respective blades clean and sharp makes for a quicker and easier cut. You can use the Dremel

rotary tool, lawn mower and garden tool sharpening attachment and grinding stone. This will allow you to tackle both the lawn mower and tool blades at once. While you're sharpening, don't forget the traditional garden tools, such as hoes and shovels.

Additional trimming tips:

- Prune in the spring for overall shape; trim lightly to maintain in the summer and fall
- Prune dead or damaged branches as close to their bases as possible, to keep the plants healthy
- Consider long-handled pruning shears for branches less than one inch thick

Don't Forget to Feed and Water

Watering and fertilizing all areas of the lawn helps prevent dry patches and uncontrolled weed growth. As a general rule, most lawns require about one inch of water per week from rain or sprinkling and about four to five feedings of fertilizer per year. In order to accomplish this, you'll need your trusty, not rusty, sprinklers and spreader to do the job throughout the season. Pull both items from the garage and before using, clean off caked-on grass and debris with a hose and Dremel bristle brush accessory.

Now that all your lawn and garden tools are clean and sharp you've got yourself a playbook full of ways to get a jump on the season.

For more information on Dremel products and project tips, visit www.dremel.com or call 1-800-437-3635.