



## Lawn Care in One Easy Package

The following chart will help you care for your lawn. Your lawn will be healthy if the soil is kept healthy. This means you should have the soil pH (acidity level) tested every few years, fertilize if necessary in fall, mow the grass at a height of three inches or higher, and manage pests only when necessary. For more information, contact the Horticultural Diagnostic Lab at Cornell Cooperative Extension for specific fact sheets on these items.

### Things to Do

#### March

Rake lawn to remove debris.

#### April

Aeration is best done in fall; aerate now only if your soil is very compacted and dry enough to work.

Lime if indicated by soil pH test. (Liming may be done at any time as long as the soil is not frozen or the plants are not stressed by drought.)

Reseed bare spots; seeds must be raked into loosened soil for good contact. Use disease-resistant grass varieties.

If you have not reseeded and crabgrass has been a problem in past years, you may apply pre-emergent crabgrass killer when Forsythia bushes are in full bloom. Improve turf health and density to reduce crabgrass and other weed problems.\*

Onion grass and its bulbs can be removed by digging with a hand trowel; use weed killer only if absolutely necessary.\*

Begin mowing (3 inches or higher) when necessary. Leave short clippings on the lawn.

Hand pull or dig broad leaf weeds.

Wait until fall to fertilize.

#### May

Hand pull or dig broadleaf weeds; apply broadleaf weedkiller\* as a last resort (late May).

Wait until fall to fertilize low maintenance lawns. Fertilize established high maintenance lawns if indicated by soil test around Memorial Day. Use a slow-release fertilizer. Compost-based fertilizers may reduce disease problems.

If insect or disease problems occur, take a 12 x 12 inch sample of turf to Cooperative Extension for diagnosis. Call ahead for instructions.

#### June

During drought, choose between watering and summer dormancy. If you choose to water, apply a total of one inch of water weekly if there has been no rain. Contact United Water Company for a lawn-watering guide. Water deeply, early in the morning, once or twice a week.

If you allow the lawn to go dormant, you will be saving a precious resource and money. The lawn will survive as long as it gets ¼ inch of water during a three-week period.

#### July

Do as little as possible – do not fertilize or apply pesticide in hot weather.

Keep equipment off the lawn and do not mow drought-stressed turf.

## August – September

Grubs can be managed now, if necessary. Apply insecticide only if you can find more than eight to ten grubs per square foot of lawn.\*

Preferred time to seed or sod bare spots, or to establish a new lawn is when the weather begins to cool (late August – early September). Seed must be planted or sod laid in loose soil. Use insect and disease resistant turf varieties.

Preferred time to manage broadleaf weeds is in fall, especially after the first frost. Improve turf health and density to reduce weed competition. Use weedkillers as a last resort.

Fertilize high maintenance lawns if indicated by a soil test (around Labor Day).

Preferred time to aerate, if needed.

## October

October 1 is last chance for successful seeding.

Sod can be laid until the temperature dips below 40 degrees.

Rake leaves off grass and add them to your compost pile.

## November

Mow as long as grass is actively growing.

Fertilize (about two weeks after last mowing) if indicated by soil test. Use a balanced fertilizer with a 50 percent /50 percent or 70 percent/30 percent mix of slow to quick release nitrogen.

Lime if indicated by soil test.

\* Call our diagnostic lab for the latest pesticide recommendations.

Source: Explore Cornell Home Gardening Lawn Care Library. [www.explore.cornell.edu](http://www.explore.cornell.edu)

---

*Neither Cornell Cooperative Extension, Cornell University nor any representative thereof makes any representation of any warranty, express or implied, of any particular result or application of the information contained herein or regarding any product. It is the sole responsibility of the user to read and follow all product labeling instructions and to check with the manufacturer or supplier for the most recent information. Nothing contained in this information should be interpreted as an express or implied endorsement of any particular products or criticism of unnamed products.*

*The information on pest management for New York State contained in this publication is dated October 2006. The user is responsible for obtaining the most up-to-date pest management information. Contact any Cornell Cooperative Extension county office or PMEP (<http://pmep.cce.cornell.edu/>), the Cornell Cooperative Extension pesticide information website. The information herein is no substitute for pesticide labeling. The user is solely responsible for reading and following manufacturer's labeling and instructions.*