

## Fall Lawn Care Tips from the Professional Landcare Network

Following you will find lawn care tips that have been designed specifically for various climate zones:

### **September**

#### ***Cool***

- Early fall is the best time of year to fertilize and renovate lawn to prepare for winter and get a good start for next spring.
- Remove thatch and weeds with hand rake or power rake. Make sure soil surface is exposed between grasses that are left.
- Consider aerating if not done in the spring, or if soil seems hard and compacted.
- Apply mixed fertilizer in 3-1-2 analysis ratio at the recommended rate. Limestone may need to correct soil acidity. A soil test can determine acidity level.
- Select a quality mixture or blend of named, improved varieties of grasses that are more insect and disease resistant, and sufficient vigor to crowd out weeds. Sow seed at recommended rate, passing over the lawn twice from different directions.
- Use a light dressing of topsoil or peat moss to help germination. Straw can be used to hold moisture and protect against erosion.
- Water, keeping the renovated area moist, but not soaked, until the new seeds begin to germinate and develop a root system.

***Temperate*** (use same as cool)

#### ***Warm***

- De-thatching of Bermuda grass is a good idea, if not done earlier in the summer.
- Apply fertilizer of 3-1-2 analysis ratio at recommended rate on Bermuda grass and zoysia.
- Use pre-emergent weed control for annual grasses on Bermuda grass, if needed.
- Continue mowing and water schedule.
- Homeowners in the upper South with Bermuda grass can over seed with a quality, named perennial ryegrass, which keeps the lawn green throughout the winter. Ideally, it should be seeded 6 to 8 weeks before the first heavy frost, and before the Bermuda grass goes dormant.

#### ***Hot***

- Continue mowing and water schedule.
- Apply fertilizer of 3-1-2 analysis ratio at the recommended rate for St. Augustine, Bahia grass and centipede.

## October

### **Cool**

- Still a good time to establish or renovate the lawn with quality, named seed mixtures or blends. (see September)
- If not already done for the fall, apply fertilizer in 3-1-2 analysis ratio at recommended rates for established lawns.
- Keep leaves and other debris raked from the lawn.
- Raise mowing height ½ inch and mow at intervals based on new height, still cutting only 1/3 of the leaf.
- Can still apply broadleaf weed controls, unless you have recently over seeded.

**Temperate** (use same as cool)

### **Warm**

- If not done in September, apply fertilizer of 3-1-2 analysis ratio at recommended rate for Bermuda grass.
- For established Bermuda grass, apply a pre-emergent control for annual grasses.
- The first half of October is the best time to over seed Bermuda grass lawns in the lower south and hot regions with a quality, named perennial ryegrass.
- Continue mowing at weekly intervals until leaf growth slows and stops.

### **Hot**

- If not already done this fall, apply fertilizer in 3-1-2 analysis ratio at recommended rates for established St. Augustine, Bahia grass, and centipede lawns.
- For St. Augustine, raise mowing height ½ inch and mow at 14-day intervals.
- For centipede, raise mowing height ½ inch and mow at 10-day intervals.

## November

### **Cool**

- Your lawn work is pretty much done until next spring!
- Continue to rake leaves and debris from the lawn.
- If you over seeded, mow new grass at ½ inch above normal cutting height to give manicured appearance.
- Continue to water if fall has been dry.
- Trim tree limbs and shrubs where grass had difficulty growing because of shade.
- You still have time to establish a new lawn with sod, provided the ground isn't frozen.

**Temperate** (use same as cool)

- On established lawns, you can still put down a pre-emergent control for annual grass and broadleaf weed control.

### ***Warm***

- If not already done earlier in the fall, you can still make a fertilizer application for the Bermuda grass lawn.
- Mow only if needed to maintain appearance.
- If lawn was over seeded with perennial ryegrass, make sure it receives water when conditions are dry.
- Remove leaves and other debris from the lawn.

### ***Hot***

- Mow only as needed to maintain manicured look.
- Post-emergent broadleaf weed control can be applied at recommended rates.

## **December**

### ***Cool***

- Continue to rake leaves and other debris between snow coverings.
- Try to minimize salt deposits on lawn areas adjacent to walk and driveway.
- Consider getting a soil test if not done this year. Call your local county extension office for procedures.
- Store mower and lawn supplies in a secure place for next season.
- Enjoy your time with your family over the holidays...and forget about the lawn for a few months.

### ***Temperate (use same as cool)***

### ***Warm***

- It's pretty much time to relax from lawn responsibilities.
- On Bermuda grass lawns, you can apply post-emergent controls for annual grasses and broadleaf weeds to help next year's lawn.
- Enjoy your time with family over the holidays...and forget about the lawn until next year.

### ***Hot***

- This is the quiet time for your lawn.
- You can still apply a post-emergent control for broadleaf weeds at the recommended rates to help next year's lawn.
- Enjoy your time with family over the holidays... and forget about the lawn until next year.