



**1. Use Natural Fertilizers To Restore Your Lawn.**  
New natural fertilizers from companies such as Ringer contain health food for your lawn, including microorganisms that build healthier soil and lawns. Chemical fertilizers don't promote the long-term health of your lawn and can contaminate groundwater.

**2. Attack Pests With Biological Products.**  
New natural pesticides use biological controls such as pest-fighting bacteria and pest-killing substances produced by plants and flowers. Chemical pesticides may pose a threat to people, animals and the environment.

**3. Recycle Your Grass Clippings.**  
Recycle leaves and grass into nutrient-rich compost to help condition your lawn and garden. Recycling kits contain a special bag and material for speeding the natural breakdown of the debris. Composting your lawn and garden debris helps combat the rapidly growing landfill crisis.

## Natural lawn care practices can yield beautiful results

Despite the horror stories about the global environmental crisis, few real solutions have existed for fighting the battle on the homefront. But that's changing. Thanks to recent breakthroughs in natural, chemical-free products for the lawn and garden, you now can do your part. And there is a major extra benefit: Research shows the natural products actually can work better and produce lusher, healthier lawns and gardens.

### Three-step process

According to Ringer Corporation, the nation's leader in natural, environmentally sound gardening systems, there is a simple three-step process for making the switch:

One, begin using natural, organic fertilizers that outperform the chemical products you buy from stores or lawn services.

Two, switch to natural, biological pesticides, which are highly effective yet use no toxic chemicals.

And three, recycle your grass clippings, leaves and garden debris into nutrient-rich compost rather than send the material to rapidly filling landfills.

### Natural fertilizers

First, the fertilizers—new natural, organic fertilizers have been proven to build healthier, lusher lawns in research at several universities for one simple reason: They enhance the natural process already occurring in the soil.

For example, a product called Lawn Restore actually adds living microorganisms to the soil. They speed up the conditioning of the soil by breaking down organic matter such as dead grass and feeding the living grass. These microorganisms also can suppress common patch diseases in lawns.

Also, slow-release nutrient sources in the fertilizers, such as bone meal and wheat germ, feed the grass with "natural food." Chemical fertilizers, on the other hand, simply stimulate the grass plants with chemicals and actually deplete the soil of microorganisms by failing to provide the necessary food. And excessive use of chemical fertilizers poses a threat to groundwater, lakes and streams.

### Natural pesticides

For stopping pesky pests, manufacturers also have turned to nature and have enhanced natural processes with safe, new natural products. Some of the natural products use insecticidal soaps to kill aphids and mites on contact. Others use pyrethrum, a natural pest-killing sub-

stance derived from chrysanthemum flowers.

These provide quick, knockdown results and can be used on fruits and vegetables right up to the day of harvest. But probably the most significant advancement is the use of natural bacteria to attack and kill specific pests.

### Wipe out grubs

For example, if your lawn is showing the tell-tale brown spots of a Japanese Beetle grub infestation, a product such as Grub Attack controls the grubs by introducing BP, a grub-killing bacteria, into the soil, infecting and killing the grubs. The bacteria then spread and remain effective in eliminating the grubs for the next 15 to 20 years.

Not only are these approaches highly effective in eliminating pests, they also pose no threat to people, animals and the environment. And that's becoming a major concern regarding the chemical pesticides.

### Advances in composting

Finally, there are the new solutions to disposing of grass clippings and leaves. Many cities and states are banning the dumping of this debris in space-pressed landfills because it can account for 20 to 40 percent of landfill material during peak periods.

What do you do with the stuff? If the term "composting" conjures up nightmares of a stinking heap requiring constant turning via pitchfork, you can rest easy. New advances in composting systems make it a simple, clean task.

### Help from microorganisms

For example, this year Ringer has introduced the Recycle Kit for Grass Clippings. Simply dump grass clippings into the kit's heavy-duty composting bag, add the packet of compost starter and some water, seal the bag and turn it once every few days. In about 30 days you'll have nutrient-rich compost to spread over your lawn or garden beds.

The secret to these new products is yet another example of working with nature. The compost maker contains microorganisms to speed up the natural breakdown of the debris.

Many major retailers such as K-Mart and Target are placing special emphasis on these and other "green products" this spring, as are most garden centers and home centers. For free information on environmentally sound lawn and garden care, contact Ringer Corporation, 9959 Valley View Road, Eden Prairie, MN 55344, or call (800) 654-1047. SH903697

## High energy efficiency ratings and timers help save on cooling costs.

Warm weather doesn't have to mean excessively high electric bills for cooling your home.

There are two primary factors for smart consumers to consider when purchasing a room air conditioner: Cooling capacity and efficiency.

"Cooling capacity is the amount of heat and moisture transferred from indoor air to the outdoors," explains Gary Thompson of Carrier Corporation, the world's largest manufacturer of air conditioning equipment. "In other words, it's the ability of the unit to cool and dehumidify your room adequately."

Cooling capacity is measured in British thermal units per hour (BTU/hr). Thompson cautions that bigger is not always better when it comes to capacity.

"A room air conditioner with too much cooling capacity will result in a cold, unpleasantly moist feeling because the unit won't run long enough to lower the humidity level. Also, the unit will cycle on and off excessively, resulting in reduced efficiency. On the other hand, a unit that's too small will not cool a room sufficiently."

Cooling Load Estimate forms, available from air conditioning dealers, help consumers determine proper capacity for the size of a room. Carrier also makes available through its dealers a room air conditioner cooling load calculator.

When it comes to efficiency, however, bigger is better—the higher the Energy Efficiency Rating (E.E.R.), the more efficient the air conditioner. The E.E.R. is the unit's BTU/hr output divided by the watts of electricity it uses. When shopping for a room air conditioner, check the E.E.R. on the yellow hangtag required by law on each new unit sold.

The more efficient units with higher E.E.R. numbers use less electricity and are more economical to operate. Carrier offers room air conditioners with E.E.R.s up to 12.0, the highest efficiency rating available.



A PROPERLY SIZED high-efficiency room air conditioner with a 24-hour programmable timer, such as those in Carrier's International Series™, will help cut cooling costs.

In addition to cooling capacity and E.E.R., some models of room air conditioners offer energy-saving features the consumer will want to consider before purchasing a unit. For instance, Thompson points out that Carrier offers 24-hour programmable timers on 22 of its 23 International Series™ room air conditioners.

"This is a real energy-saver," says Thompson. "Instead of leaving the unit

on all day so the room is cool when you come home, you can set it to come on an hour before."

Look for a high E.E.R. unit with the right cooling capacity for the size room you want it to cool, and you'll enjoy air-conditioned comfort without excessive electric bills.

To locate your nearest carrier dealer, call 1-800-CARRIER or look in your local telephone directory.

## Antiques: Still trendy after all these years

While there certainly is plenty of beautiful, high-quality furniture being made today, there's something about things crafted in past centuries that is particularly appealing in today's fast-paced, high-stress, often impersonal world.

For an antiques lover, there's nothing like the thrill of finding a treasure at a bargain in an unexpected place. And once the object has been lovingly restored to its former glory, there's the pleasure of imagining the person who created it with skill and care, as well as its former owners and the uses to which it may have been put.

Experienced collectors and amateur

enthusiasts alike will be delighted by the recently published *Antiques at Home* (Clarkson N. Potter, Inc.), by Barbara Milo Ohrbach. Ohrbach, whose Manhattan boutique, *Cherchez*, features antique textiles and decorative accessories for the home, has assembled in her book a truly stunning collection of full-color photographs from the world of collecting.

A browser's delight, *Antiques at Home* also offers a wealth of practical advice. Chapters cover ceramics, wood, glass, paper, silver, and textiles: What to look for, terminology to know, and where to find the best quality items. Each chapter

also includes a list of tips for handling, cleaning and storing the objects once they have been acquired.

Even if one is not already a collector, Ohrbach's enthusiasm, and the beautiful treasures pictured in the volume, will probably inspire an urge to rush out to the nearest antiques shop or tag sale in order to begin a collection of one's own. Luckily, the last chapter of the book features a list of antiques shops, auctions and fairs throughout the United States, Canada, Great Britain and Europe, as well as directories of museums, galleries, and historic houses.

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## It can help to be square

Professionals and avid do-it-yourselfers alike use "squares" to perform complicated calculations, and to ensure the correct determination of various angles.

According to the experts at Stanley Tools, a carpenter square—a flat piece of steel or aluminum cut into an "L" shape with graduated markings—is ideal for determining the length of any rafter for

any given roof pitch; for figuring the volume of a board; finding the circumference and center of a circle; calculating proportions; and laying out ellipses, miters and hopper joints.

Combination squares, with an adjustable metal or plastic handle, are designed for marking right angles; making longitudinal lines on boards; finding depth of holes; making 45-degree angles; and for leveling and plumbing surfaces.