

A well-manicured lawn enhances the appearance of the home

This article is provided by local Realtors and the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) for the benefit of consumers in the real estate market.

A well-manicured lawn enhances the beauty of your home - as well as your neighborhood. Over the winter months, your lawn has been beaten down and bruised by rain, snow and ice, and now needs some tender, loving care.

Most professional landscapers agree that you should begin preparing your lawn for the hot summer months well in advance. As soon as you begin these preparations, your lawn should start to respond with signs of a healthy and happy existence.

In fact, with the right approach, you can have a lawn that will flourish throughout the season.

Raking

Experts recommend that the first step you take is to rake your lawn to clear it of any debris. When raking, don't use the regular, fan-leaf rake which is commonly used to clear lawn clippings and leaves - it won't achieve what you are trying to do.

The heavier garden rake is recommended for this task. What you need to do is pull hard on the rake, pulling up dead roots and debris. Don't worry about the grass plants that are being subjected to this treatment, because the deep-rooted plants will grow.

Compacted Ground

If your foundation is clay soil, your lawn may end up suffering from compaction, particularly if it is used a lot - either as your child's personal sports field or a regular pathway. Compaction will result in lacklustre grass, and eventually, a dead lawn.

If this has happened to your lawn, then you should aerate it. To aerate, holes must be punched

into the soil so that water can go deep into the root zone. Contact a local landscaper or garden centre to find out more about this procedure.

Fertilize

The next step is to decide whether your lawn needs to be fertilized. Again, contact your local landscaper or garden centre to see what is best for your lawn.

If fertilizer is required, use a slow-release, granular type. Also use fertilizers labelled "SCU" - which stands for sulphur coated urea. Urea is a nutrient which contains nitrogen and will furnish your lawn with the required nourishment.

All fertilizers have three numbers on the package. They represent the macro-nutrients in the fertilizer - nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium - the three most common, but most needed nutrients missing from the soil. Many lawn experts suggest that you use a fertilizer with a high first number (which stands for nitrogen) for the best results on your lawn.

Weeds

Pulling weeds has always been a tedious task, but one that has to be done if you don't want your grass roots to be choked by these invaders. Weeds also make your lawn unattractive.

To control weed growth, lawn experts advise that your lawn should be well nourished. If it is, it should fight off weeds on its own. This will also mean that you don't have to use as much herbicide on your lawn. (There are several "natural" alternatives to chemical herbicides. Contact an environmental group to find out more.)

Cutting Your Lawn

Many landscapers and lawn experts agree that you should cut your lawn regularly - at least once a week. Some also suggest that you leave your clippings on

the grass because it feeds the grass roots. If you let your grass grow too long, however, you'll have to rake up the clippings.

You should also have your lawn mower blade checked at the beginning of the season. A dull blade will tear the grass tips and give your lawn a brown appearance. You should also have the engine checked and the oil changed.

The Summer Months

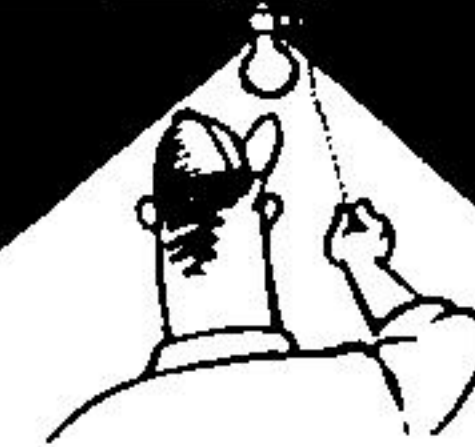
Once the summer arrives, the hot weather will make your lawn go dormant. Don't worry, there are two things you can do to save it.

The first step is to water it - particularly if there has been a lack of rain in your area - once a week, slowly and deeply. Use a sprinkler instead of a hose. It is better to water your lawn less frequently, giving it a good, thorough soaking, than to give it frequent, light soakings.

The next step is to leave your grass a little longer than you normally would when cutting. Plants get most of their nourishment from the sun's rays, while the roots supply the water and raw nutrients. By keeping your lawn longer, you'll allow your grass to receive the required nutrients that will help it survive the heat.

By following these tips, you should end up with a healthy, thriving lawn. If problems occur, don't hesitate to call your local landscaper or garden centre to ask for advice.

Phil's Basement



As far as I'm concerned, there isn't anything that's much better than sitting in the sun, eating a hot dog and watching the Toronto Blue Jays play baseball. Unless, of course, you're doing it in SkyDome.

I had scooped some tickets from Garnet, our niece Maxine's husband—well, maybe "scoop-ed" isn't the right word. I found out that I had paid half-price for tickets that ol' penny-pinching Garnet got free from work.

Anyway, off we went, my wife Em and I. Neither of us has been to SkyDome since it opened, and we only got out the door after promising our kids, Kyle and Belinda, that we'd get more tickets later in the summer so the whole family could go. We were disappointed that the roof was closed that day, but the hot dogs tasted the same and the seats were fantastic. Imagine our surprise, though, when the roof began to open shortly after the game began. What a treat! Within minutes, we were bathed in beautiful hot sunshine.

It was amazing, really, the difference the sun made, dazzling through the open roof and warming everything up so quickly. I could see why our

next door neighbour Terry and his wife had decided to use a solar energy system to heat their new pool.

Terry said that once the installation costs are recovered, the system will operate free of charge. He figures they can recover those costs through fuel savings in the first few years. Using conventional electric heating, he says they would have spent about \$14,500 to heat the pool, compared to the total cost of \$3,000 for a solar system.

Anyway, the Jays won and to top things off, Em found a most interesting item under her chair. She leaned over to put her drink down, and staring her right in the face was a \$100 bill!

So now I think I'll call old Garnet up and thank him again for those "half-price" tickets. Poor Garn, I bet he won't sleep a wink tonight thinking about that \$100 bill!

This newspaper, in conjunction with Ontario Hydro, is bringing you Phil's Basement to help "bring home" ideas on how to save energy. To receive the brochures "An For Energy Efficiency", call Ontario Hydro at 1-800-263-9000 and tell them Phil sent you.

Survey Completed May 23/91		MORTGAGE RATES ANNUAL INTEREST					
		* Rates Quoted Are For Closed Mortgages					
SIX MONTH	ONE YEAR	TWO YEAR	THREE YEAR	FOUR YEAR	FIVE YEAR		
TRUST COMPANIES							
Canada Trust	N/A	10.00	10.75	11.00	11.25	11.25	
Municipal Trust	10.25	10.50	10.75	11.00	11.125	11.125	
NRS/Royal Trust	10.25	10.25	10.75	11.00	11.25	11.25	
CHARTERED BANKS							
Bank of Commerce	N/A	10.00	10.75	11.00	11.25	11.25	
Bank of Montreal	10.00	10.00	10.70	11.00	11.25	11.25	
Bank of Nova Scotia	10.00	10.00	10.75	11.00	11.25	11.25	
Royal Bank	10.00	10.00	10.25	11.00	11.25	11.25	
Toronto Dominion	10.00	10.00	10.75	11.00	11.25	11.25	

This survey is prepared to help the Herald Homestyle readers track weekly Bank and Trust Company mortgage rates

RE/MAX (416) 873-4937
 TORONTO LINE: 454-9101
 2 MILL STREET E. MILTOWNE ACTON
 Member of Brampton & District Real Estate Board
 An Independent Member Broker

HEATHER (WHITING) SCOTLAND
 Associate Broker
853-2086



IT'S A WRECK BUT WHAT THE HECK!
 - \$99,900 -
 Try 10% down and use your cash to rejuvenate this 3 bedroom bungalow set on 2 1/2 acre just minutes from town. Call Heather (Whiting) Scotland, Associate Broker at 853-2086. RMAC91-33



LET'S GO BACK TO YESTERDAY - \$179,900
 Experience the charm of original wood work and plate railing, a cozy fireplace, French doors, etched glass windows and enclosed porches. This conveniently located solid older home features 3 bedrooms (with closets) plus a developable attic, updated wiring and plumbing - just waiting for your decorating touches. Call Heather (Whiting) Scotland, Associate Broker, at 853-2086. RMAC91-40

- LOTS - PRIVATE AND PRETTY - \$99,900 -
 Pretty treed lot, pretty close to town, pretty good price, pretty good deal. Call pretty quick! RMAC91-41

HIGH ON THE ESCARPMENT - \$169,900 -
 This private treed 10 acre lot on a paved road close to town offers generous vendor financing. Call Heather (Whiting) Scotland, Associate Broker at 853-2086. RMAC91-34

RENTALS
 * 5 bedroom farm house, 20 plus acres. \$1,200/month plus utilities.
 * 3 bedroom country home with 2 bedroom inlaw suite. \$1,500/month plus utilities.
 * 3 - 1 bedroom apartments \$525, \$550 and \$650/month, and all plus hydro. No smoking, no pets.
 Call Heather (Whiting) Scotland, Associate Broker at 853-2086.