

and Lawn Garden

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Lawn maintenance refresher course

When you walk down your street, are you confronted with a sea of lush, green lawns? Sounds idyllic, doesn't it? While many of your neighbors may have discovered the key to successful lawn maintenance, does your lawn make you want to:

a) put up a large barrier to hide it from view;

b) pave it over so you won't have to deal with it anymore; or
 c) tear it up and start over again from scratch?

If you answered "yes" to any or all of these questions, then it's time to take a little refresher course on lawn maintenance.

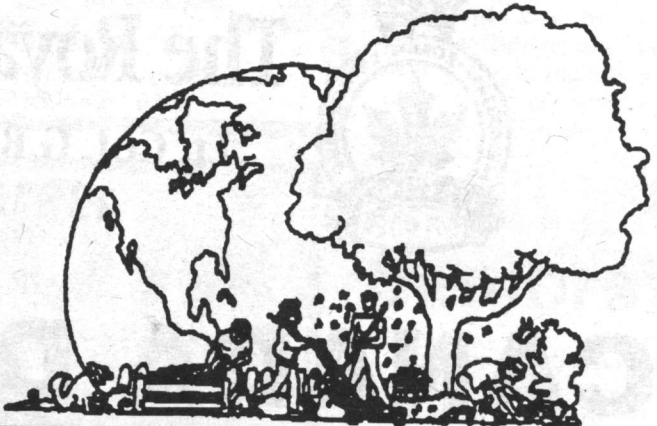
Keep in mind that you don't have

to spend a king's ransom to have a healthy looking lawn. It just takes a little know-how, elbow grease and patience.

First of all, painful as it may be, take a good, long look at your lawn. It may not be as bad as you think. Look for signs of compaction and erosion or other irregularities.

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- see a demonstration of how to make and manage a compost pile
- get answers to your composting questions and concerns
- learn how to become a neighbourhood composting rep.



THURSDAY JUNE 10
 7:00 - 10:00 P.M.
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 36 ARMSTRONG AVE.
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BRING YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS!
 The workshop is being presented by the Recycling Council of Ontario (R.C.O.) in cooperation with Wastewise
 It is part of COMPOST ONTARIO, a project run by the R.C.O. with funding from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.
Artwork courtesy of the Metro Toronto Works Department.

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Clear Debris
 To get things started, clear off any leftover debris from winter - leaves, twigs, and general muck - and then rake it briskly with a garden rake to pull out all the dead and loose material. This should help make it easier for your lawn to absorb nutrients - like water and fertilizer.

If you find you have a great deal of compaction, you should consider aerating your lawn. This can be done with a special, rented tool - or you can hire an expert to do it for you. Before you decide to do this, however, make sure you're sure you know how to work the equipment.

Dethatching is another thing to keep in mind because it removes debris below the surface which can prevent nutrients from reaching the roots. Dethatching consists of removing dead, loose material, allowing air and water to penetrate your lawn.

However, this doesn't need to be done on a regular basis; it depends on the shape your lawn is in. Consult an expert for more information.

You should also consider using some fertilizer - one that's high in nitrogen. The three main nutrients your lawn requires are nitrogen, phosphate and potash. These are known as macronutrients.

To select the proper fertilizer for your grass type and soil conditions, consult the experts at your local gardening centre. Also be sure to follow directions carefully.

Weeding
 Weeding is also an important ritual if you want your lawn to have a healthy green luster. Once it becomes strong and healthy, your lawn should be able to ward off weeds on its own by choking them out.

This may seem like an arduous task; after all, nobody really enjoys weeding, but the results will be worth it. To make the chore somewhat easier, consider using a weeder you can operate from a standing position.

By keeping a watchful eye on weed growth and nipping them in the bud, you shouldn't have to resort to using chemical herbicides. However, if you're overwhelmed by weeds, you may want to consult a lawn care company.

Cutting the Grass
 Cutting your grass on a regular basis is also important, but try not to cut it too short. Taller grass will help choke out weeds that thrive on sunlight - making it harder for them to gain a foothold. Many experts also suggest you leave your cuttings on the lawn to help feed it.

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