

# HOME, LAWN & GARDEN

## Gearing up for garden season

(NC)—With lawn and garden season upon us, it's time to give your tools a tune, a clean and in some instances, an upgrade. Remember, your lawnmower and garden tools have been sitting idle for months and may be in need of some TLC before being put to use. Consider these lawnmower and garden tool maintenance tips from The Home Depot Canada:

### Step-by-Step Lawnmower Maintenance:

- 1) Disconnect and change your spark-plug:** If the plug isn't corroded or damaged, you may be able to clean and reuse it – but it's always good custom to replace the old plug to keep your mower running smoothly. To change a sparkplug, loosen it with a plug wrench.
- 2) Change your air filter:** One of the most common sources of lawnmower problems is the air filter. To change the filter, simply remove the cover and pull the filter out then shake or blow out any debris. If the old filter is noticeably dirty, you should consider replacing it with a new one.
- 3) Lubricate your wheels:** Keep your wheels in good working order by lubricating them with automotive grease. Use a ratchet and socket to remove the wheel and be sure to smear some grease on the axle before putting the wheel back in place.
- 4) Sharpen your blade:** Check your mowers blades periodically for nicks and dents. If the blade becomes dull, you can sharpen it yourself with a little careful handling. Use a block of wood to help hold the blade still. Wear leather gloves and hold the blade in place while spraying the nut with penetrating lubricant. Then, use a ratchet to turn the retaining nut counterclockwise. Once you have the blade in hand, put on your safety glasses and sharpen it with a file or a metal grinder.

**5) Check your cable:** To keep your cables from wearing out lubricate them with dry graphite.

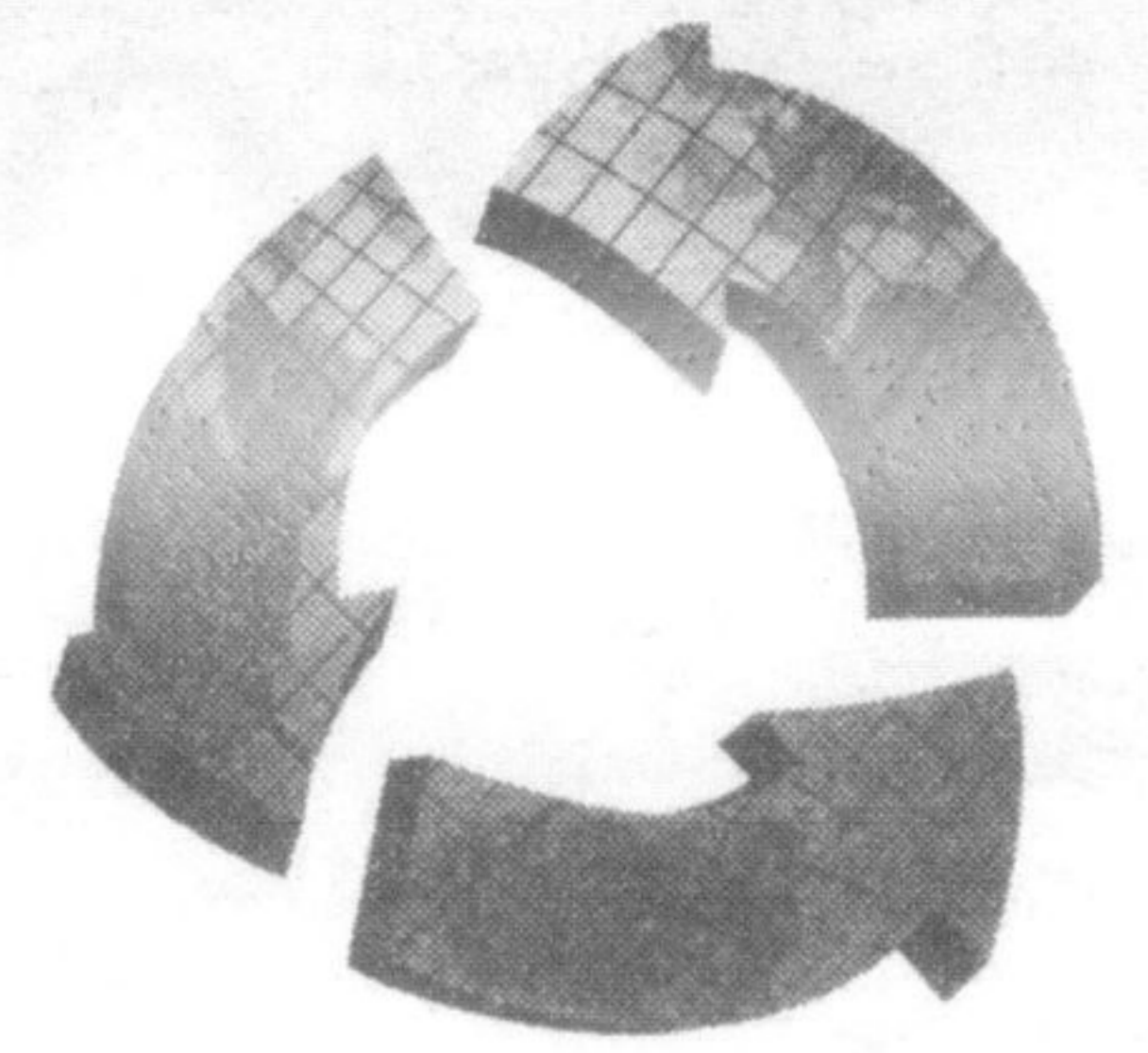
### Garden Tool Care Tips:

- 1) Keep them clean:** To keep your garden tools in top-notch condition, try and keep them clean and dirt-free after each use. Lightly oil any
- 2) Rust be gone:** If your garden tools are rusty, simply take some sandpaper and scrub the rust off. Then dip your metal tools in a bucket of sand and oil, such WD-40 or motor oil, to prevent future rust.
- 3) Oil and sharpen:** To keep plant cutters sharp and mal-

leable, lubricate the screws and bolts and sharpen the blades regularly.

**4) Coat the handles:** Tools with wooden handles can either be stained or varnished to prevent wear and tear, or coated with spray-on rubber.

For more lawnmower and garden tool maintenance tips, visit The Home Depot in your community.



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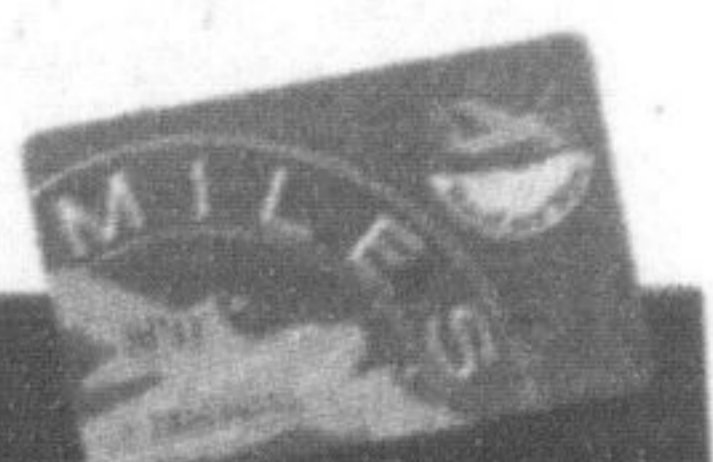
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