



John Bradshaw's How to grow the perfect lawn

1. First, feed the lawn



"You must feed early. I feed my lawn just after the snow melts and when the ground is firm."

"Why? Soil cannot release existing food to the grass until early May, when soil gets warm enough. Result? The lawn slowly starves. But CIL Golfgreen can start feeding your lawn as soon as the soil starts to thaw. By feeding early, you take a great first step towards your Perfect Lawn. Gently rake away the thatch of leaves and debris. Use a spring-toothed rake. Apply CIL Golfgreen at 20 lb./1000 sq. ft."

Note: It is not necessary to water after this Spring application of CIL Golfgreen.

2. Check soil hardness with pencil

In early May see if you can poke a pencil four inches into the sod. If it goes in easily, the soil's too hard. Most food and water cannot reach the roots. "As soon as the soil is firm, loosen hard packed soil with a rented aerator (the type that removes plugs of soil is best). Rolling the lawn is not usually necessary unless the roots have been heaved by excessive freezing and thawing.

"Aerate your lawn each Spring (Fall too, for better results). Aerating is very important. Golf-course greensmen aerate greens every month."

3. May — wipe out crabgrass, weeds, grubs

"As the soil warms up, crabgrass and weeds begin to grow. Ants, grubs and wireworms get hungry. There's only one product in Canada that can control crabgrass, weeds and insects with one treatment: CIL Lawn Doctor. Quite honestly, it's the best all round lawn treatment I have ever used. It controls:

Crabgrass, Chickweed, Plantain, Dandelion, Annual wild grasses, Ants, Wireworms, Sod webworms, White-grubs and many more lawn problems. To get full benefits, CIL Lawn Doctor must be applied before the crabgrass seeds begin to germinate.

"Apply early when weeds are in leaf, but before apple and lilac flower buds are open."

(a) Mow the lawn three days before application. Then rake off all dead organic matter — leaves, twigs, grass, clippings. Avoid using organic top dressings like peat moss at this time since they can stop Lawn Doctor working.

(b) Choose a sunny morning. Apply at 20 lb./1000 sq. ft.

(c) Wait three full days before watering or mowing the lawn. Then water it generously. Make sure you get CIL Lawn Doctor. Nobody here makes anything like it. I know — I've tried them all. Those lucky people without crabgrass or grubs can use CIL Weed & Feed. See below.

If no weeds are present use CIL Golfgreen 10 lb./1000 sq. ft."

4. June may bring weeds again

The weed seeds may come from other gardens, from birds, or from deep in the lawn soil. As the first 2 or 3 weed leaves emerge, apply CIL Weed & Feed. Apply 8 lb./1000 sq. ft. on a sunny morning. Don't cut or water the lawn for 3 days afterwards.

If you escape June weeds, feed with CIL Golfgreen. And count your blessings. Improved-bluegrass lawns (Like Merion, Fylking, Green Baron) should also get CIL Golfgreen in early July. Water generously after feeding. But don't feed other lawns in July."

5. August — Late Summer Care

If your lawn shows no signs of weeds or crabgrass, feed with CIL Golfgreen at 20 lb./1000 sq. ft. around mid-August. If you have weeds, but no crabgrass, feed with CIL Weed & Feed at 8 lb./1000 sq. ft.

If you did not use a crabgrass preventer in the Spring, and crabgrass plants are evident, you can stop next year's crabgrass by applying CIL Lawn Doctor at 20 lb./1000 sq. ft. Lawn Doctor will also get rid of poa annua and broadleaved weeds and soil insects that may be present. Just apply Lawn Doctor as directed in Section 3."

Note: If you're planning to reseed the lawn in Fall, don't apply CIL Lawn Doctor or CIL Weed & Feed. Feed with CIL Golfgreen instead.

6. Late September — protect your lawn from winter

As the sun gets low in the sky, it stimulates grass to store up food for winter.

So feed your lawn. Grass left uncut becomes weak, and easy prey for snowmold and winter-kill. The wrong kind of plant food (too much nitrogen, for example) can aggravate the problem by leaving grass tender.

CIL Winterizer
Specially developed by CIL — feeds the grass and conditions it against frost damage and fungus-attack.

It also stimulates grass to form new roots and store food for winter.

"Apply at 20 lb./1000 sq. ft. in late September or October. Water generously at once."

Weeds

"Some tough creeping weeds may still be present. Then is the best time to deal them a death blow — kill them any time through September with CIL Winterizer Weeder at 8 lb./1000 sq. ft. — and don't water in."

How to spread fertilizer and avoid grass-burn

"All these CIL lawn foods are guaranteed not to burn when used correctly". But how should you apply lawn food correctly?"

1. Use a good spreader with an accurate flow-setting. "20 lb./1000 sq. ft." means exactly 20 lb. Not 15 lb. nor 40 lb. For a perfect lawn, you need a good spreader. The CIL Cyclone Spreader is one I can heartily recommend.

2. Spread on dry grass. Apply in the morning, when the dew is off the lawn, but before it gets too hot. Water generously after spreading to get the plant food working.

(Note: Don't water in CIL Lawn Doctor or CIL Weed & Feed until 3 full days after treatment.)

3. Fill spreader off lawn with spread shut. Open spreader only when moving along lawn. Shut off when turning corners and before stopping.

4. Walk steadily at normal walking pace. Otherwise you'll get a 'spotty' lay-down of lawn food. And a spotty lawn.

5. Spread criss-cross to prevent overlaps and 'missed' areas. Cut the recommended flow rate in half: for Golfgreen, Lawn Doctor and Winterizer, set spreader at 10 lb./1000.

For Weed & Feed, set spreader at 4 lb./1000. Criss-cross the lawn as in the diagram. This covers each part of the lawn twice, and each part thus gets a full feeding.

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How to Deal With Some Common Lawn Problems

Mushrooms. Lift sod and look for rotting wood — dead tree roots, for example. Aerate area. Soak it to 6" depth and treat with a fungicide.

Bumps. Don't roll bumps: it compacts the soil. Lift the sod and scoop out excess soil. Replace sod and water it.

Hollows are best leveled out by adding an inch of sterilized topsoil per month until surface is level.

Bare-spots under trees can mean too much shade for the grass. Or, not enough food. First try feeding CIL Tree Food once a month. If after two months the grass doesn't respond, re-seed area with shade-adapted grass.

Bare-spots in sunny areas. Gently dig out grass-plants from the lawn edge. Rough up soil in bare-spot and plant one grass-plant per square inch. Water well. The bare-spot will disappear within a month."

Spot Renovation

"Sometimes small areas develop unwanted coarse grasses such as tall fescue and twitch, or difficult grasses such as bent. Mid April or Mid August you can renovate these spots by 'burning' off the grasses or weeds with CIL Herbex Soluble Granules or Herbex Pressurized Spray. Do this with low light conditions at dusk or on a dull day to improve kill. After 48 hours the vegetation should be dead. Rake it all away, rough up the soil, fertilize lightly with CIL Grow-All and plant grass plants or seed as for 'Bare Spots' above."

Undesirable grasses

"Sometimes bent grass or twitch grass grow intermixed with the better turf grasses. Bent can be discouraged by spraying with CIL Lawn Weed Killer in Mid May and late August, follow with power raking or verticutting to remove thatch, fertilize and raise mowers to 2" cutting height. Quack or twitch grass may be discouraged by raising cutting height to 2", and fertilizing the area with a minimum of 50 lb. of CIL Golfgreen per 1000 sq. ft. per season.

Maintaining the Perfect Lawn

"After one season of following my Perfect Lawn Program you will have a lawn that is the envy of your neighbourhood. How do you keep it that way? Again it's quite easy. Next year, just follow the steps in my program for Trouble-Free Lawns.

Remember the way to keep weeds and other pests out of your lawn is to maintain a thick carpet of grass by proper feeding, proper mowing and proper watering."