

Angie's list[®]

FALL MAINTENANCE GUIDE

== LAWN CARE ==



lawn care



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yard cleanup/storage

- Rake leaves, remove branches, and clear flower beds.
Move cans of paint indoors to keep the paint from freezing.
- Clear leaves from the yard. Fallen leaves will deprive your grass of crucial sunlight during the fall months.
- Leaves can also accumulate and get wet, leading to mold growth and attracting pests, such as termites. If your lawn is properly winterized, it has a better chance at surviving the colder temperatures and it will be more likely to flourish when spring arrives.
- Cover the grill and any patio furniture.



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lawn care checklist

AERATION

- **Aerate your lawn** in the fall for good root development. Aeration allows for air, moisture and fertilizer to travel to the roots of the grass more efficiently.
- If you intend to plant grass seed, the best time to aerate your lawn is in early fall.

LAWN TOOLS

- Put away lawn equipment and hoses. Drain gasoline and **dispose of properly**, or run lawn equipment until gasoline is empty. It can gel up over winter and cause start failure.

MOWING

- Mow grass until it stops growing and keep it about 3 inches tall to minimize weed growth.

PLANTING

- Plant flower bulbs in late fall to establish a strong rooting before winter. Add a 2- to 3-inch layer of mulch around your plants.
- Transplant shrubs and plants if desired.

SEEDING/OVERSEEDING

- Sow grass seed to fill in bald spots. Overseed to produce a healthy lawn for spring.

TREE CARE

- Fall is the best time of year to plant trees. Water newly planted trees and bulbs with 1-1/2 inches of water every week. Trim tree branches away from the roof and gutters.



LAWN CARE

HOW TO

fertilize your lawn



For cool-season grasses, fall **lawn fertilization** helps promote healthy roots, which translates to a more verdant and pest- and disease-resistant lawn for spring. If you're not interested in doing the job yourself or are concerned you'll kill your grass, consider hiring a lawn care treatment professional to spruce up your greenery for you.

NEEDED:

- Fertilizer
- Fertilizer spreader
if using granular fertilizer
- Gloves

1 Find out what type of grass you have. Check your local county extension or do some online research to determine your grass type. Most cool-season grasses can be fertilized in late spring or late fall. Warm-season lawns are best fertilized in the late spring or summer.

For cool-season grasses, experts generally recommend fertilizing twice in fall: Once in early fall with a high-nitrogen fertilizer to strengthen blade growth and again in late fall with a high-phosphorus fertilizer to promote

root growth. Fertilizers high in potassium can help grass better withstand winter weather conditions.

2 Choose a fertilizer. Read the labels on the fertilizer packaging carefully to make sure they're compatible with your grass type. Also pay attention to the three-digit formula code on the bag. For example, a label that reads "25-5-10" means that if the bag weighed 100 pounds, it would contain 25 pounds of nitrogen, 5 pounds of phosphorus and 10 pounds of potassium. For best results, always follow the application instructions included on the label.

3 Avoid the heat. Spreading fertilizer on a hot day or during a dry period increases the chance the treatment will burn the grass. If possible, wait for a cool day and some rain.

4 Spread the fertilizer. Use gloves to protect your skin from chemicals in the fertilizer. If using a granular fertilizer instead of liquid, use a fertilizer spreader, which you can buy at your local hardware store.

Make sure the spreader setting matches the fertilizer you use (this info can be found on the fertilizer label). Walk behind the spreader at a normal pace and move systematically so you cover all areas once.

5 Water after fertilizing. Most dry fertilizer products require water to be effective, but you can usually wait a few days for rain after fertilizing. However, if kids or pets will use the lawn soon after treatment or temperatures are above 85 degrees (which can increase the chances of fertilizer burning the lawn), water the lawn shortly after fertilizing.

6 Maintain your lawn. Fertilizing will cause your grass to grow faster, so it will require more frequent mowing.

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