

lawn care calendar

Part of caring for a lawn and garden without using pesticides is accepting that each year will bring its own particular weather, insects and other unique seasonal conditions. Because of these seasonal variations, your lawn may look somewhat different from one year to the next. This is perfectly natural.

If the differences are due to weather or other temporary cycles, patience is the best response. It is not uncommon for one season's challenges to go away as the weather changes. Bothersome insects one season become the food source for beneficial insects the next. In other cases, such as when unwanted weeds are moving in or your grass is dying, you may need to adjust your natural program with the addition of aeration, some extra topdressing or a little hand weeding.

Regardless of the season's characteristics, however, there are some important practices that should be followed every year. These simple practices, in combination with proper mowing and watering techniques, will let you create a lawn that is healthy and vibrant. With just a little help from you, your lawn will be able to cope, season after season, with whatever Mother Nature has to offer.

bepesticidefree

It doesn't cost a thing!

The cosmetic use of pesticides in and around our homes has significant unintentional impacts on human health, animals, plants and the environment.

While there is still much to learn about the health impacts of pesticides, we know enough to justify taking a precautionary approach.

The Saskatchewan Environmental Society encourages you to consider the risks of using pesticides and then consider the ease of the natural alternatives. You'll soon learn that to be pesticide free, it doesn't cost a thing!

EARLY SPRING	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	NEXT SPRING
<p>Late April to Early May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharpen lawn mower blade • Raise mower height to 7.5 cm (3") • Rake lawn to remove thatch 	<p>May and June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aerate lawns • Top dress by spreading a mixture of aged manure compost and weed free top soil • Sprinkle grass seed over lawn • Water lightly daily (0.5 cm) until new grass is established <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify weeds—hand weed as necessary • Cut lawn before weeds go to seed 	<p>July and August</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water heavily (2.5 cm) once or twice a week • Continue to hand weed as necessary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut grass to a height of 7.5 cm (3") 	<p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean and winterize lawn equipment • Leave mulched leaves on lawn with mulched clippings from final cut 	<p>Late April to Early May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember to de-thatch and aerate each spring • Top dress and seed again this year and every third year after that



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gardencarecalendar

It is very important that you have an understanding of the plants in your garden and their specific care requirements. Each plant requires unique horticultural practices including pruning and watering. Understanding the specific requirements of garden plants will go a long way toward successful gardening. There are some general practices that will benefit all plants and should be part of a natural garden care plan.

SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut back dead plant material on perennials • Prune roses to improve air circulation and remove winter kill • Add a fresh 5 cm (1 to 2 inch) layer of compost and work into soil • Remove any large, wet clumps of leaves and add to composter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadhead (remove the dead flowers from) any plants which are enthusiastic spreaders to prevent spreading • Monitor garden for weeds and pests • Apply mulch to bare soil areas • Pull weeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide any perennials which have outgrown their space • Cut back roses to half their height • Remove any plants that were poor performers and note in journal for future planning • Leave the leaves in the garden for winter mulch or by the composter so fresh compost will be ready for spring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan your spring garden

treecarecalendar

The calendar for tree care, as for plants and shrubs, is highly dependent upon the tree species and unique seasonal conditions. In some cases, it will be necessary to call in a certified arborist for an exact diagnosis of the situation and to make care recommendations. However, you are in the best position to monitor and observe tree performance throughout the season and to ensure proper horticultural practices are being followed.

SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor for pests—this tends to be the most active time for insect damage • Knock down and remove any tent caterpillar nests • Check with arborist if large trees require pruning to remove dead or damaged branches or to allow more sunlight on your lawn— • Trim evergreens after spring growth to maintain shape or size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that trees, especially young ones, are watered during drought • Protect tree trunk and roots from summer construction activity and lawn equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let fallen leaves collect around base of tree to protect tree roots • New tree plantings over 3 metres tall can be staked. Remove stakes when roots become established in about one year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid piling snow containing salt shoveled from driveways on root zone of trees • Prune Elms before April 1



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This calendar is based upon an excerpt from Pesticide Free: A Guide to Natural Lawn and Garden Care available at www.toronto.ca/pesticides