

"Green" Tips for a Great Lawn

It's summer, and for many homeowners, the lawn battle is on. We weed it, we mow it, we blast it with chemicals. All to get that perfect green carpet that looks so great on the golf course but is so tough to achieve at home.

Stop fighting your lawn and start enjoying it. Here are some useful tips that can help you kick the chemical habit, and get a great-looking lawn... naturally.

Start with the soil.

Check the quality by taking a handful and squeezing it. If it crumbles, add some nutrient-rich compost in spring and fall. If it's sandy, add some humus to help it hold water. Check the pH too. Most garden centres offer this service. If it's less than 6 or 7, add some lime.

Use the right grass.

Clover and fescue are good for dry summers, and bluegrass and ryegrass are ideal for areas that get lots of sun. For shady spots, try fescue or a groundcover like periwinkle or pachysandra.

Feed it.

Fertilize every spring and fall, and when you mow, leave clippings where they fall for added nitrogen, phosphate and potassium. Water deeply but infrequently to encourage deeper root growth. Set up the sprinkler and let it do the watering for you every four to seven days.

Just a little off the top, please.

Weeds can't grow in the shade of tall grass. Setting your mower blade to about 3" is an easy way to keep your lawn dense and healthy.

Give it some air.

To improve drainage and help oxygen get into the soil, aerate by walking around in golf shoes. A spiked roller or aerator works too.

Free the soil.

Your lawn gets clogged by tangled dry grass, roots and dead leaves that get between the soil and the living grass. Cut through it every fall with an inexpensive dethatching rake so your lawn gets the nutrients it needs.

Think beyond the blade.

Add some clover next time you seed, and you'll get a thicker, more richly textured lawn. Plus, if you get a few larger-leafed weeds growing, they won't be as noticeable.

Not the DIY type?

Check the yellow pages. Many lawn services now offer natural and/or organic lawn care that's not much more expensive than chemical services.

No room for Grass?

Fill a few pots on your balcony or patio with decorative grasses, flowers or herbs. It's easy to take care of them naturally; use quality soil, water deeply every fourth day, and take advantage of the growing number of natural and organic products available at your local garden centre.

Whether you want a nice lawn, a pretty garden or some attractive landscaping, a great-looking exterior helps you enjoy your home and boost its value. Contact The Gia Lucchetta Team to learn how exterior improvements can increase your resale value.