

# Fall Lawn Care Tips!



1. **Lower lawn mower height:** Your normal grass height of 2½ to 3½ inches needs to be reduced gradually to 1½ to 2 inches. Reduce the height by one-half inch every two weeks. Lower grass height takes some of the effort out of leaf raking and makes the lawn less attractive to snow mold fungi and nesting rodents.
2. **Water thoroughly:** If rain is sparse, be sure to water all lawn and plant areas—especially evergreen shrubs. Adequate soil moisture protects plants from winter injury.
3. **Rake, mulch, and cover:** Mulch or rake leaves off lawn areas as soon as possible. Tender plants benefit from leaf, needle, or other mulches and evergreen plants appreciate wintertime protection with anti-transparent materials such as WILT-PRUF®, which reduce water loss. Cover plants that grow under roof eaves. Packed, falling snow can break even the healthiest shrub.
4. **Let the Clippings Lie:** Do Not sweep leaves or grass clippings into the street where they can wash into the storm drain.
5. **Build up roots with selective fertilizer use:** Fall is the best time to feed your lawn. It is when the fertilizer benefits the grass instead of the weeds and helps build a healthy root system. A soil test is essential for understanding its exact nutritional needs. Depending on soil test results, add no more than one-half to one pound of nitrogen and one-half pound of potassium per 1,000 square feet of turf. The best fertilizers are composted organic material or contain either slow- or timed-release nitrogen. Because no phosphorus should be needed on established lawns, a sample fertilizer label could read 6-0-3 or 30-0-15. Reduce Herbicides – If you have weeds: aerate annually and power rake.

## [Visit These Sites for More Information](#)

[http://www.thinkbluemaine.org/homeowners/lawn\\_garden.htm](http://www.thinkbluemaine.org/homeowners/lawn_garden.htm)

<http://www.maine.gov/dacf/php/pesticides/yardscaping/index.htm>

<http://www.cumberlandswcd.org/yardscape/>

