

Many people spent every weekend mowing, weeding, edging and trimming their lawn. In order to ensure your lawn makes a complete recovery after winter hibernation, you may want to spend the

fall taking steps to help your lawn survive the winter months ahead.

Start with the basics: remove fallen leaves, and debris. Leaf cleanup is among the outside chores that homeowners dread the most. Raking & blowing leaves can be arduous, but all the work can have impactful benefits. Fallen leaves can smother the grass and cause dead spots, decay and mold. It's simple; remove them as needed throughout the fall season, so as to be able to complete the remaining tasks to better improve your lawn over the dormant season.

Cut the lawn short unless the season is warm and wet. Aerate the lawn if you have not so in the past couple years, and apply fertilizer with a strong winter guard [30-0-10] or fall winter starter [25-12-12].

**When to apply fall fertilizer:** Late fall fertilizing is a crucial last step in lawn care programs north of the transition zone. Although the exact timing can vary due to weather conditions, the final fertilizer application should be made sometime between October and November, when the grass stops growing or slows down to the point of not needing to be mowed, but before the ground freezes.

Proper timing is essential. If fertilizer is applied too early, while grass is actively growing, it can invite winter injury and snow mold. Do not apply fertilizer to frozen soil or over snow or ice. After the fertilizer is down for a few days, then repeat leaf removal process, again and again and again depending on how many trees you have.

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