



Proper Mowing Habits

Mowing your lawn correctly is essential to maintaining its health. Some key practices for promoting a healthy lawn include proper mowing height, maintaining sharp blades, and understanding the proper timing for each turf type.

COOL SEASON GRASS (Fescue & Bluegrass)

For individuals with tall fescue, understanding the optimal mowing height is crucial. This entails determining the right height to cut tall fescue grass and comprehending the significance of adhering to the appropriate height.

Tall fescue generally needs to be mowed at a height of 3.5 - 4 inches. Measuring from the soil to the tip of the blade provides an accurate gauge of its height. Tall fescue is a fairly resilient turf type and can endure drought conditions fairly well but nevertheless, it is imperative to mow tall fescue at the correct height. The ideal mowing height for tall fescue varies throughout the season and knowing the proper mowing height promotes healthy growth throughout the year.

As most lawnmowers do not cut grass higher than 4 inches, setting the mower deck to the highest position will consistently maintain tall fescue at a healthy height for the majority of the growing session. Here are some guidelines for fescue for each season!

For your first mowing, it is important to mow your lawn down to 2 inches or so. Be sure to bag your initial mowing. The first mowing will help get the dead tissue off the top of the grass, exposing the crown and the grass that has started to photosynthesize, and kickstart the season for you!

From March to May, mow your tall fescue lawn to a height of 3 – 3.5 inches. It is important not to allow the grass to grow so tall that mowing would remove more than 1/3 of its height. This may necessitate mowing your lawn as frequently as once a week. But it's important for good deep root growth to allow the grass to grow to the 3 to 3.5-inch range in the spring!

From June to August, mow your lawn to a height of 3.5 - 4 inches and prevent the grass from exceeding 5 inches in height if possible. Mowing a little taller in the summer helps to protect the crown of the grass, keeps soil temperatures cooler, and improves the overall appearance and health of your grass!

From September to November, slowly start reducing your mowing height on your lawn to 3 - 3.5 inches. Be careful not to mow it down too short during the fall season. The roots become



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very active during this time of year, and the taller you maintain the grass, the healthier and deeper your roots will grow going into the winter months.

From December to February, mow your tall fescue lawn to a height of 3 inches or so. Of course, there won't be much top growth during this time of the year, but we still need a good stand of grass to help protect the crown during the winter months!

WARM SEASON GRASS (Bermuda, Buffalo, Zoysia)

For those of you with warm-season lawns, mowing practices are almost completely opposite to those of cool-season grasses. The first mowing of the year for warm-season grasses can be done a little later because the grass will not start photosynthesizing until soil and air temperatures increase. Mowing warm-season grass too early can encourage weed pressure and cold weather-related damage to the turf.

Typically, you will want to keep your warm-season grass mowed between 1.5 and 3 inches. Buffalo grass does better when mowed closer to the 3-inch range for the majority of the season, while Bermuda and Zoysia should be mowed closer to the lower range during the growing season.

The initial mowing for these turf types can usually be held off until April in our area unless it is unusually warm in the early spring. The first mowing again should be bagged if possible, and you would want to mow it down as close as possible without scalping, usually in the 1.5 to 2-inch range.

From May to August, you would want to mow your grass in the 2-inch range to increase turf density. Warm-season grasses like Bermuda produce stolons and rhizomes, and the warmer the soil temperature is, and the more sunlight availability there is, the denser it becomes. Buffalo grass again, as mentioned above, we would recommend maintaining in the 3-inch range all year long.

From September to October, raise your mowing height to about 3 to 3.5 inches. This is incredibly important for the overall health of your warm-season grasses going into the winter and coming out late next spring healthy and strong. Warm-season grasses start to slow down as the temperature decreases in the fall. The primary way the grass will be able to produce more carbohydrates in the fall is by having a taller leaf blade. This enables your grass to produce as much food as possible and reduces the occurrence of winter kill substantially!

The last mowing of the season, once it's completely dormant, can be mowed down to 2 to 2.5 inches.



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