



Fall Lawn Care FAQs

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Review a few of the basic questions customers might have about taking care of their lawns in the fall.

ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME: Approximately 5 minutes for the PDF. Use the Additional Discussion section to spend more time on this topic.

HOW TO USE: The lesson includes a PDF which you can use similar to the way you would use a PowerPoint presentation. The trainer's notes will offer notes for each slide, but you may elaborate on each as much as you wish. These are only a few of the questions customers might ask as they look for the products they need to take care of their lawns in the fall season.

Slide 1 - Introduction

During the fall season, people may not be thinking about their lawns as much, especially as the grass isn't growing as quickly and the leaves are starting to fall. However, this time of year is still ideal for projects such as repairing bare spots, aerating and dethatching as you prepare the lawn for winter. Here are some of the questions customers may ask as they get ready for those projects.

Slide 2 - How do I repair a bare spot in my lawn?

First, make sure you know what is causing the problem so you can prevent the grass from dying again. Is that area getting a lot of foot traffic and needs a walking path installed? Is there a problem with insects or a disease you need to fix first? Next, look for a lawn patching product made specifically for this situation. It will have seed and fertilizer. Cover the bare spot with the lawn patching product and then keep it watered.

Slide 3 - What is the best time of year to repair base spots in the lawn?

You can plant seed as long as the soil temperature is 50 degrees or higher. However, the two best times are in the spring and the fall, as long as the new grass has time to get established before the first frost. Spring is the best time to plant warm season grasses, while fall is the time to plant cool season grasses. Grass planted in the fall has the advantage in that it does not have to compete with common lawn weeds, which are starting to go dormant at this time.

Slide 4 - What is aerating the lawn and how often should I do it?

Aerating is a way of removing plugs of soil from the lawn, allowing water, air and nutrients to get down to the roots of the grass. It's usually done with a machine that removes the cores from the ground. How often you aerate depends on the type of soil and grass you have. Aerate clay soil twice a year and sandy soil once a year. Spring and fall are the best times to do this.

Slide 5 - What is lawn thatch?

Lawn thatch is a layer of stems and the crowns of dead grass just above the soil. Lawn clipping decompose quickly, but thatch decomposes slowly. If it builds up, it creates a problem. To fix it, you need to use a dethatching machine or a core-aerating machine.

Slide 6 - How can I tell if I should dethatch my lawn?

You should dethatch after the level of thatch on the ground has built up past ½ inch. Some thatch on the ground is useful as it acts as insulation, holding in moisture and keeping grass from overheating. Too much thatch, however, can prevent moisture, air and nutrients from reaching the soil. It also encourages pests and lawn disease.

Slide 7 - Should I fertilize the lawn in the fall?

The fall is probably the best time of the year to fertilize the lawn. If the summer has been hot and dry, a dose of fertilizer will help it recover. Even though the grass isn't growing as quickly as it does in the spring, it is building strong roots in preparation for the winter. Applying a fall fertilizer will help the grass start strong in the following spring.

Slide 8 - Closing comments

These are a few of the questions customers might ask as they're working on their lawns this fall. It's important to learn as much as you can about products in this category so customers will continue to shop our store. Always attend vendor presentations, when possible, to learn more about the specific products we sell.

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION:

- Review the types of lawn fertilizers, including 4-step programs, that you carry that are appropriate for fall application.
- Review any fall lawn projects that are specific to your area of the country.

