



What is Grasscycling?

The term “grasscycling” refers to the practice of leaving grass clippings on the lawn when mowing. Grasscycling means that all of the beneficial nutrients and moisture that are in the clippings are returned to the soil. Healthy soil that is rich in organic matter provides your grass with most of what it needs to grow into a healthy lawn.

Grasscycling increases lawn growth by over

50%, significantly reduces your water consumption, minimizes the time spent on lawn care, shrinks your lawn care costs and best of all, lets you enjoy a beautiful, lush chemical free yard!

The easiest, cheapest, and most convenient way to achieve a healthy lawn is by grasscycling! Read on to learn more about the whys and how-tos of grasscycling.

Fast Facts on Grass:

- A healthy lawn converts CO₂ to O₂
- Dry lawn clippings are composed of 4% nitrogen, 2% potassium, and 0.5% phosphorus.
- Lawn clippings contain almost all the nutrients required by your grass to grow.
- Golf courses leave their clippings on the lawn.
- In North America, approximately 60% of our drinking water is used to water our lawns and gardens.

Why Should I Grasscycle?

Save Money and Resources

Grass clippings are the perfect, free fertilizer for your lawn. Left on your lawn, they will help your soil retain up to 80% of its moisture by protecting it from drying sunrays. So not only will you save money on bags, you can also reduce your water bill and any dependence on chemical fertilizers.

Save Time and Work

By leaving your grass clippings where they fall, you save yourself the time and effort that is required to rake and bag them. According to the final report for the “Don’t Bag It!” grasscycling program, participants were able to cut an average of 35 minutes off the amount of time required to mow their lawn.

Save your soil

The key to a healthy lawn is healthy soil. Grasscycling can boost your soil’s fertility by up to 30%.

Save the planet

Grass clippings represent approximately 20-25% of household solid waste. By grasscycling, you greatly reduce the amount of organic matter being sent to the landfill. Moreover, while chemical fertilizers offer a quick release form of nitrogen, the fertilizer that isn’t immediately used by your lawn is washed away in the next rain. Grasscycling offers a natural time-released form of nitrogen that allows your lawn to use the nitrogen at the time and in the quantity it requires.



Local Lawn Care Info:

Manitoba Eco-Network

Organic Lawn Care workshops and information

Phone: 1 (204) 947-6511
mbeconetwork@mts.net
www.mbeconetwork.org

A Grasscycling Q&A



CALL THE COMPOST INFOLINE

Toll free:
1 (866) 394-8880
In Winnipeg
call: 925-3777

Need help getting started, or specific advice? We are here to answer all your composting questions!

We can send you:

Free information on choosing a bin, plans for building a bin, information on specific topics such as compost tea, troubleshooting and vermicomposting.



The Compost Action Project is a service of Resource Conservation Manitoba (RCM), with thanks to the City of Winnipeg Water and Waste Department and Manitoba Conservation for financial support.

For further information on this project and RCM, please contact us at the following:

Toll-free: 1 (866) 394-8880
In Winnipeg: 925-3777
Fax: 1 (204) 942-4207

Email: rcm@mb.sympatico.ca
Or visit us on the web at

www.resourceconservation.mb.ca

How often should I mow my lawn when I grasscycle?

You should always mow your lawn when the blades of grass have grown to a certain height, not when your calendar tells you to. Ideally your grass blades should be approximately 3" tall, and when mowing, never remove more than a third of the blade.

Do I need a special lawnmower to grasscycle?

While mulching mowers accelerate the decomposition process by further reducing the size of the clippings, any mower can be used. However, there are kits available to transform most rotary, walk behind, or riding mowers into mulching ones. Regardless of the type of mower you use, it's essential that the blades always be sharp and that the lawn is dry for mowing.

Won't the grass clippings add to thatch build-up?

Thatch is the layer of living and dead plant matter on top of the soil surface. Excessive thatch (more than 1/2") can lead to prob-

lems. However, clippings account for less than 2% of thatch build up! Grass clippings are 90% water by weight and contain very low levels of lignin (the part of the plant cell that is resistant to decomposition). This means micro-organisms present in the soil can break them down quickly. The accelerated rate of decomposition prevents clippings from contributing to thatch build-up and helps the lawn absorb the nutrients in the clippings.

The major cause of thatch build-up is the rapid growth of roots and other plant tissue due to over-watering and over-fertilization.

If dethatching is necessary, try the following methods in spring:

- hand-raking
- power raking
- core aeration

My grass is too long to leave the clippings on the lawn—what now?

Raise your lawn mower blades and mow the lawn in stages, removing a third of the blade each time, until your grass blades are down to an approximate height of 3".



Did you know?

One hour using a gas powered 3.5 horsepower mower produces the same amount of air pollution as a car driven 550 km?

A conventional gasoline lawnmower pollutes as much in an hour as 40 new cars running for the same time?

Push mowers available today are light-

weight at only 16 to 30 pounds versus the 40 to 60 pound models of the past.

Cordless electric mowers produce about half the noise of gas-powered mowers.

Newer gas mowers generate up to 70% lower emissions than models produced 10 years ago.