

# Fall Yard Work



Prepping your yard for fall is vital for keeping your lawn healthy during the winter and gives you a leg up on having a lush looking yard for the next season.

## Clean Up Leaves

Raking up leaves is what comes to many of our minds when we think “fall chores”. However, just because it seems obvious does not make it any less important, as, “leaves will smother the grass if they are allowed to create a mat.” (Home) Instead of leaving them to crush your grass, collect them. Then, utilize your fallen leaves to help with your next growth season: “Leaves make an excellent, nutrient-rich leaf mold compost and also can be used as shredded mulch over tender perennials.” (Home)

## Care for the Lawn

There are many steps you can take during this time to ensure you have lush, green grass come next spring. One to consider is de-thatching. “Thatch is that yellowish-brown grass that lies underneath the living, green grass.” (Almanac) Leaving too much thatch in your yard can leave your green, growing grass starving for nutrients and hydration. Take the time to eliminate some of this buildup by raking out the thatch.

Two other steps that are most beneficial to take now include aerating and seeding your lawn. If your soil is compact, nutrients and water will have a hard time reaching the roots of your grass. Therefore, aerating your lawn can help support healthy plants. Fall is also a good time to seed your lawn. Even healthy-looking lawns can develop bare patches if they are not seeded regularly. Seeding ensures great coverage of green grass in the spring.

The last mow of the season is an important date that you should take the time to circle on your calendar now. The end date for grass growth varies by region, so make sure to look up when you should be preparing to lower it’s height to 3” as, “Ensuring the grass is at least 3” high will help the lawn develop strong roots for the upcoming year.” (Home) Do this in increments, lowering the blades on your mower each time you mow leading up to the last day.

## Water Trees

There is also maintenance you can perform to prop up the health of the trees on your property. This can be an excellent time to plant new trees, but “try to get new trees in the ground at least six weeks before the ground freezes to allow the roots the chance to become established before dormancy.” (Home) For your established trees, slow down the pace of watering at the beginning of fall. However, “...once the trees’ leaves have dropped (but before the ground freezes), give all trees and shrubs a deep watering, covering the entire canopy area.” (Almanac) This will give your trees a boost as they go into the winter months.

However, skip pruning your trees and shrubs during the fall. “Pruning encourages plants to grow more, which is not what they need when they are about to go dormant.” (Home) Save this activity for the spring unless the wood is diseased or dying as any new growth produced where you prune is likely to die during the cold months to follow.

## Work Cited

Jane, Mary. “Fall Yard Clean Up: The Ultimate Guide to Autumn Yard Work.” Home for the Harvest, 3 Mar. 2020, [www.homefortheharvest.com/fall-yard-clean-up/](http://www.homefortheharvest.com/fall-yard-clean-up/).

Old Farmer's Almanac. “10 Fall Cleanup Tips for a Better Spring Garden.” Old Farmer's Almanac, [www.almanac.com/content/10-fall-cleanup-tips-better-spring-garden](http://www.almanac.com/content/10-fall-cleanup-tips-better-spring-garden).

Produced by the

Utility Arborist Association Environmental Stewardship Committee  
and Davey Resource Group:



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