

# Lawn Care — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into a working plan for your specific lawn. You will record your grass species, soil-test numbers, and measured area, then build a fertiliser calendar, an irrigation schedule, and a weed and renovation plan you can follow all year. Keep it next to your soil-test report and update it each season.

## Reading Your Lawn: Soil, Grass Type, and Goals

Establish the three facts that drive every other decision: what grass you have, what your soil test says, and how big your lawn is.

### Exercise: Identify Your Dominant Grass

Pull one tiller from a healthy patch and examine it. Work through the prompts to name the dominant species and confirm whether it is cool-season or warm-season.

- Is the leaf tip pointed or boat-shaped, and is the blade narrow or wide?  
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- Does the plant spread by above-ground runners (stolons), below-ground runners (rhizomes), or stay in clumps?  
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- In which season does it look best and in which does it brown out (summer heat vs after frost)?  
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- Based on the above, what is your best guess for the dominant species, and is it cool-season or warm-season?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Worksheet: Soil Test Results Log

After your university extension soil test returns, transcribe the key numbers here. Note the lab's recommended amendments in pounds per 1,000 square feet.

Date sample taken  
\_\_\_\_\_

Lab name  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Soil pH  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phosphorus (P) level and rating (low/medium/high)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Potassium (K) level and rating  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Organic matter percent (if reported)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Recommended lime or sulphur (lb per 1,000 sq ft)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Recommended phosphorus (lb per 1,000 sq ft, or none)

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Next retest date (2-3 years out)

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### Worksheet: Measure Your Lawn Area

Break the lawn into rectangular sections, measure each, and total the area. You will use this number for every fertiliser, seed, and product calculation in the course.

Section 1 length x width (ft) = area (sq ft)

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Section 2 length x width (ft) = area (sq ft)

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Section 3 length x width (ft) = area (sq ft)

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Total lawn area (sq ft)

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Total lawn area in thousands of sq ft (for rate math)

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### Checklist: Foundation Setup Checklist

- Pulled 10-15 soil plugs from across the lawn into a plastic bucket
- Sampled shady and sunny zones separately if they differ
- Mailed the sample to a university extension or accredited lab
- Identified the dominant grass species and season type
- Measured and recorded total lawn area in square feet
- Chose a maintenance level (low, medium, or high input)

## Mowing and Watering the Right Way

Set the correct mowing height for your grass and calibrate your sprinkler to deliver one inch of water per week.

### Worksheet: Mowing Plan by Grass Type

Look up your grass's height range from the course, set your target, and confirm the trigger height where the one-third rule says to mow.

Grass species

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Recommended height range (in)

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My target mowing height (in)

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Trigger height to mow (target divided by 0.66, in)

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Summer height adjustment (raise toward upper end)

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Blade last sharpened (date)

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### Exercise: Sprinkler Catch-Can Calibration

Place 4-6 straight-sided cans across one sprinkler zone, run it for 30 minutes, and use the results to set your weekly run time toward one inch.

- What was the average water depth (in) across the cans after 30 minutes?

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- At that rate, how many minutes are needed to apply one inch?

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- Does water pool or run off before soaking in, meaning you should split into two sessions?

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- What weekly run time and start time (4-9 a.m.) will you program?

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### Checklist: Mowing and Watering Habits Checklist

- Verified actual cut height by measuring blade-to-ground on a hard surface
- Never removing more than one-third of the blade per mow
- Alternating mowing direction each session
- Leaving clippings on the lawn (grasscycling) when conditions allow
- Watering deeply once or twice a week, not daily
- Watering in the early morning, never in the evening

### Feeding the Lawn: Fertiliser by the Numbers

Read a fertiliser label, calculate exact application amounts, and lay out a feeding calendar timed to your grass's growth.

### Exercise: Calculate Pounds of Product to Apply

Use the formula: pounds of product per 1,000 sq ft = nitrogen target divided by the bag's N percent as a decimal. Then scale to your whole lawn.

- What is the first (N) number on your fertiliser bag, as a decimal?

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- What nitrogen target per 1,000 sq ft are you applying (e.g., 0.75 or 1.0 lb)?

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- Target divided by the N decimal = how many pounds of product per 1,000 sq ft?

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- Multiplied by your lawn area in thousands of sq ft = total pounds to buy and spread?

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### Worksheet: Fertiliser Product Record

Log each product you use so you can repeat what works and track your annual nitrogen total. Leave the running total empty until you add up the season.

Product name and N-P-K numbers

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Percent slow-release nitrogen

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Nitrogen applied this round (lb per 1,000 sq ft)

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Date applied

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Watered in after application (yes/no)

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Running annual nitrogen total (lb per 1,000 sq ft)

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### Checklist: Safe Application Checklist

- Confirmed the N percent and converted it to a decimal before calculating
- Kept quick-release nitrogen at or below 1.0 lb per 1,000 sq ft per application
- Applied half north-south and half east-west to avoid stripes
- Shut the spreader off at the end of each pass and turns
- Swept granules off driveways and sidewalks back onto the lawn
- Scheduled the most important feeding for early fall (cool-season)

### Weeds, Renovation, and Winterisation

Identify and control weeds by category and timing, plan aeration and overseeding, and prepare the lawn for winter.

#### Worksheet: Weed Identification and Control Plan

List the weeds in your lawn, sort each into broadleaf, grassy, or sedge, and note whether it is annual or perennial to choose the right control and timing.

Weed name

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Category (broadleaf / grassy / sedge)

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Life cycle (annual / perennial)

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Control method (pre-emergent / selective post-emergent / sedge product / cultural)

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Target timing (spring at soil 55 F, fall, etc.)

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#### Exercise: Aeration and Overseeding Plan

Plan a renovation in your grass's best growing window. Calculate your seed quantity from the course rates and your measured area.

- What is your best overseeding window (early fall for cool-season, late spring for warm-season)?

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- What is the overseeding rate (lb per 1,000 sq ft) for your grass species?

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- Multiplied by your lawn area in thousands of sq ft = total seed needed?

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- How will you keep the seedbed continuously moist until germination, and have you avoided pre-emergent near the seeding date?

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#### Checklist: Winterisation Checklist

- Applied a late-fall feeding with potassium before the ground froze
- Continued mowing until growth stopped, then lowered the final cut slightly
- Removed or mulched fallen leaves so they did not smother the grass
- Kept foot traffic off frozen or dormant turf
- Drained and blew out irrigation lines before the first hard freeze
- Noted any matted snow-mould areas to rake gently in spring

## Your Action Plan

1. Identify your dominant grass species and confirm cool-season or warm-season.
2. Pull and mail a soil sample to a university extension lab, then record pH, P, and K.
3. Measure your total lawn area and convert it to thousands of square feet.
4. Set your mower to the correct height range and sharpen the blade.
5. Run the catch-can test and program irrigation toward one inch per week, deep and infrequent.
6. Apply any lime, sulphur, or phosphorus only in the amounts your soil test specifies.
7. Build your nitrogen fertiliser calendar around your grass's growth, prioritising the early-fall feeding for cool-season lawns.
8. Identify weeds by category and apply pre-emergent or post-emergent control at the correct timing.
9. Core aerate and overseed in the best growing window, keeping the seedbed moist until germination.
10. Winterise with a final feeding, a final mow, leaf removal, and irrigation blow-out.









