

Tackling Turf, No Football Involved
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Adding to the autumn “TO DO” list is taking care of your lawn before the throes of winter arrive. How does weeding, removing thatch, aerating, fertilizing, patching or reseeding bare areas sound? Let’s take a closer look at these tasks.

Weeding! UGH. I know. But, those of us with cool season lawns know that the dandelions and other intruders are stand outs right now. It is a perfect time to nab them as they display their prowess while the rest of the turf is sulking and brown. Just do it!

Thatch is the build up of living and dead grassroots and stems between the soil and the grass blades. If the thatch becomes too thick, it prevents nutrients and water from getting to the roots. Removing thatch can be done in the spring or fall (or both if the thatch is thick as some experts recommend). Using a de-thatching rake is the most common tool of choice (although there are de-thatching machines that can be rented).

Aerating is the process of either puncturing small holes in the lawn with a step-on tool or power tool, or removing cores of soil with a coring machine. The intent of aeration is to allow nutrients and water to get to the roots. It is especially good for clay soils or lawns with excessive thatch.

Fertilizing in the fall is a good thing. It will help your lawn return in top form in the spring: stronger and earlier. Although some turf pros recommend fertilizing four times a year, if you choose to fertilize but once, it is nearly that time. An easy way to remember lawn fertilizing times is to remember holidays: May Day, Father’s Day, Labor Day and Halloween. Halloween will be sneaking up soon, fertilize.

Just when you thought you might store the garden tools away, this final turf battle rears its head. Don’t forget to keep the leaves raked so they won’t smother the lawn and patching or reseeding bare areas as needed is a timely task to undertake as well. Weeding, de-thatching, aerating and fertilizing are important to your lawn’s health and well worth the time and effort. Smile! Enjoy!