

Homeowner Tips on Landscapes

You can help maintain the health and beauty of your landscape with these mowing, mulching and pruning tips. Together, we'll create a landscape we can both be proud of.

Mowing

Proper mowing dramatically impacts the health of your lawn. The following tips will help ensure your lawn looks its best:

- **Mow frequently.** Do not remove more than 1/3rd of the leaf blade in any single mowing. Usually, this means that you should mow at least once per week during the growing season and once every 10 to 14 days during the dormant season.
- **Use a sharp blade.** Sharpen your mower blades frequently to prevent disease and maintain good color.
- **Avoid mowing wet grass.** Wet clippings can clog your mower, reducing its ability to efficiently cut the grass.
- **Leave clippings, if possible.** Grass clippings return vital nutrients to your landscape. If you must collect clippings, compost them to be used as a soil modifier or as mulch.
- **Keep clippings from washing into runoff areas, storm drains or directly into bodies of water.** While grass clippings are nutrients to your lawn, they are pollutants to bodies of water. Instead, sweep or blow clippings off of roadways, sidewalks and driveways and back onto the lawn.
- **Mow at the proper height.** The following recommended mowing heights ensure the best possible appearance.

Grass Type	Mowing Height	Best Location
Floritam (St. Augustinegrass)	3.5 to 4 inches	Full sun areas
Seville (St. Augustinegrass)	2.5 to 3 inches	Moderately shaded areas
Bitterblue (St. Augustinegrass)	3 to 3.5 inches	Slightly shaded areas
Bahiagrass	3.5 to 4 inches	Full sun areas
Bermudagrass	1 to 1.25 inches	Full sun areas
Centipedegrass	1 to 2 inches	Full sun to partially shaded areas
Zoysiagrass	1 to 2 inches	Full sun to moderately shaded areas
Tall Fescue	1.5 to 3 inches	Full sun to moderately shaded areas

Mulching

Mulch provides many benefits to your landscape, including water retention, weed suppression, soil insulation and landscape beautification. Follow these tips when using mulch:

- **Use mulches made from recycled materials.** Non-recyclable materials are detrimental if they end up in our waterways and landfills.
- **Apply mulch at least 2-3 inches deep after settling.** This maximizes the weed suppression and water retention.
- **Do not pile mulch against trees or shrubs.** Trees need a clear space for air to reach the trunk.
- **Do not pile mulch against your house.** Mulch helps retain moisture, a condition that allows termites to sustain life.

Pruning

Proper pruning is essential to an aesthetically pleasing landscape. Keep the following principles in mind when deciding to prune your landscape plants:

- **Prune to direct or alter growth.** Every time you make a pruning cut, you stop growth in one direction and encourage it in another.
- **Prune to encourage flower or fruit production.** Pruning after flower and fruit production is finished generally improves the flower or fruit production for the next season. Check with your Massey GreenUP Specialist to determine the best time to prune your plants.
- **Prune to promote plant health.** As shrubs age, older limbs and branches become weak. Prune older branches back to encourage younger, more vigorous shoots.
- **Prune to repair damages.** Strong winds, lightning, even repeated pruning can damage plants. Thin out older, weaker, brittle or diseased limbs and branches to improve the vigor of your shrubs and trees.
- **Prune to alter, restore or rejuvenate.** Pruning can help make an established or neglected plant more attractive.