

MULCHING/BLADES TIPS

Save time and fuel with sharp blades and ideal mulching practices



What's the secret to mulching? The right blades and the right mulching plan!

It would be bliss if a magic mulching blade existed that simply made clippings disappear, but it does not. Mulching works well, however, if a few guidelines are followed:

1. Install a mulching kit under your mower deck that includes air-control shrouds, side discharge restriction and blades designed to work with the shrouding. All three elements are required for optimal mulching results.
2. Mulching hides clippings in the turf canopy. If there are too many clippings, or too little turf canopy, then the clippings have nowhere to hide. So, mow a little higher and follow the 1/3 rule. For example, when the grass is 4-1/2 inches tall, mow it down to 3 inches and the clippings will have adequate canopy to hide under.
3. Sharpen blades more frequently. Clippings need to be re-cut several times with sharp blades rather than bludgeoned to a pulp by dull ones. Because mulching blades re-cut grass clippings over and over, they need to be sharpened more frequently.
4. Dry clippings mulch better than wet ones. So, if possible, mulch when the lawn is dry, after morning dew and water from the sprinkler system has evaporated. In moist conditions, clean the deck more often for better results.
5. Disengage the clutch before passing over sidewalks and drives to prevent clippings from discharging onto these areas.
6. Fertilize less if you follow a regular mulch program. Mulching returns nutrients back to the soil, reducing the need for chemical applications.

Does it really matter if I sharpen my blades?

Dull blades can erase all the progress you've made with your lawn. Often what separates a green lawn from a brown one is how sharp the blades are on the mower.

Brown-topped lawns are often the result of grass blades being torn and shredded by dull mower blades. Torn grass is more susceptible to heat stress, discoloration and disease.

Sharp blades require less horsepower for cutting and they let you get the mowing done faster. Using less fuel is definitely a "green" way to mow.

Does mowing higher mean I'll be mowing more often?

The opposite is actually true. Cutting the grass too short does not save you any time. The good news is that maintaining grass at the proper height may require less time on the mower than if you were to cut it too short. There are two reasons for this. First, at higher cutting heights, the mower blades do not have to cut through the harder stems which typically grow closer to the ground, and there's also less risk of scalping. Less power required to cut the grass translates into faster mowing speeds and less fuel consumption. Second, if you follow the 1/3 rule (see chart), the higher you cut your grass, the more growing time you allow before the next mowing.

Grass Height	1/3 Rule Height
6.00 in.	4.00 in.
5.35 in.	3.50 in.
4.50 in.	3.0 in.
3.75 in.	2.50 in.
3.00 in.	2.00 in.
2.25 in.	1.50 in.
1.50 in.	1.00 in.

Grass Type	Optimal Height (in.)
Bermuda	1 to 2
Zoysia	1 to 2
Fescue	3 to 3.5
Bluegrass	2 to 3
Buffalo	2 to 3
Ryegrass	2 to 3
St. Augustine	2 to 3



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GRASSMAX™

IT'S ALL ABOUT A PERFECT CUT!



The only blade system in the world manufactured to meet the precise design tolerances incorporated into every Grasshopper DuraMax® deck. The cutting edge of GrassMax™ MARBAIN® blades are proven to last longer compared to aftermarket blades claiming to be exact replacements. GrassMax™ blades are 2.5 inches wide (3 inches on Extreme High-Lift Notched) and 1/4-inch-thick and through-hardened to hold their edge longer for a better-quality cut, minimal grass buildup and optimum airflow for side or rear discharge thanks to a patented heat-treating process that makes them 25 to 40% harder and last twice as long in field tests than aftermarket options. If cut quality and long wear are important, make sure the Grasshopper logo is stamped onto the blade.

LOOK FOR THE LOGO

on the grass side of the blade to be sure you're using GrassMax™ blades.



HIGH-LIFT NOTCHED	EXTREME HIGH-LIFT NOTCHED	MEDIUM LIFT	CONTOUR	HIGH-LOW MULCHING	SHREDDER™										
<p>Recommended for most normal side-discharging applications, from the moist grass conditions of early spring to final mowing in the fall. Available with optional LaserEdge® EverSharp™ technology that requires no sharpening for the life of the blade.</p> <p><i>Not recommended for mulching or vacuum applications. Consider Medium Lift or Contour blades in dry, sandy soils.</i></p> <p>In dry, dusty conditions, ensure that deck is leveled properly and consider using air dams to minimize dust blow-out from around deck.</p>	<p>Extra-wide (3 in.) blades are recommended for side-discharge applications in very lush or overgrown conditions. They are recommended for use with liquid-cooled models or air-cooled models greater than 23 hp.</p> <p><i>Not recommended for mulching or vacuum applications and should never be used in dusty, sandy conditions.</i></p>	<p>Recommended for use with all PowerVac® Collection Systems. Medium Lift blades are required with certain mulching packages - use Medium Lift blades with any mulching package that originally included Medium lift blades. Also recommended for most rear discharge decks.</p> <p><i>Also satisfactory for many side-discharge applications, including dry, sandy conditions.</i></p>	<p>The blade of choice for the highest quality cut in side-discharge mode in ideal conditions where the 1/3 rule is followed. They are also preferred when mowing over dry, sandy soils. In high-profile areas that are mowed on a regular basis, Contour blades will leave the most manicured cut.</p> <p><i>Not recommended in lush, moist, high-volume conditions.</i></p>	<p>Designed for use with all mulching packages beginning with SN 5700000 and above. In conjunction with the Down Discharge™ mulching baffles, High-Low Mulching blades recut clippings multiple times thanks to an extended cutting edge and a carefully crafted rise and fall airflow pattern that helps clippings disappear into the turf canopy.</p> <p><i>Use Medium Lift blades if they were provided with your original package.</i></p>	<p>Looking for a toothy-edged blade to break apart leaves or clippings in drier conditions? The Shredder™ Blade was designed for this purpose. Used with Grasshopper 52-, 61- and 72-inch DuraMax® decks, Shredder™ blades are the best choice when serrated-wing blades are desired to reduce volume of leaves and clippings.</p> <p><i>Not for Down Discharge™ mulching but can reduce leaf and clipping volume in drier conditions.</i></p>										
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