

KIWICARE®



Autumn Lawn Care

Kiwicare Lawn Maintenance

www.kiwicare.co.nz

Early autumn is the very best time to get your lawn healthy, weed free, thickened and looking great in preparation for winter. Don't wait for spring next year as so many do. Although spring is also a good time sow lawn seed and control weeds, if you do it now you will be able to enjoy your lawn come spring, rather than have to work on it.

De-Thatch

If your lawn has **excessive thatch** (more than 2 cm deep, in early spring, and for small areas, use a thatching rake, which is a sharp-tined rake that rips the thatch out of the lawn. Rake the grass, digging deep to penetrate the thatch and loosen it. In early spring removing thatch by raking is best to prevent damaging new growth.

Alternatively, you can naturally dethatch your lawn by applying **LawnPro D-Thatch** to feed the micro-organisms that break the thatch down. D-Thatch is also in **LawnPro Turfclean Rapid** so you can weed, feed and dethatch your lawn in one easy application. **LawnPro D-Thatch** is the safer, more natural option.

The best time to dethatch your whole lawn is in late summer/early autumn when the grass is actively growing. Unless the lawn is small a power dethatcher/scarifier is the best manual option but can damage your lawn for a period. You can rent a power dethatcher from most garden or hire centres.

Rake up the debris with a and place it in your compost heap or green waste and irrigate the lawn. It is then a good time to aerate your lawn by forking or using a coring machine. After aerating, overseed with **LawnPro Lawn Thickener** and fertilize with **LawnPro 7-Day-Green**. 7-Day-Green is 70% lime and will raise the pH of the lawn soil and help prevent the build-up of thatch due to the acidifying effects of over fertilisation.

When the job is finished, the lawn will look roughed up, but don't panic. It will recover and eventually look better than before. It will take about 3-4 weeks for the lawn to recover and show signs of new growth.

See the article **To Mulch or Not To Mulch** for advice on keeping a good level of thatch in your lawn.

Sweep Up Autumn Leaves

Sweep up leaves or blow them off your lawn; don't allow autumn leaves to build up on the lawn in autumn and winter as these will weaken the grass underneath and harbour pests and disease. See the '**Rake Up Those Leaves**' article for more.

Aerate

Aerate (spike) your lawn to improve oxygen movement to the grass roots and improve drainage so that the lawn soil is not waterlogged through the winter period. Push a garden fork 10-15 cm into the lawn and gently pull back on the fork to open up the soil structure. Do this over the whole lawn

or particularly compacted areas. This also encourages earthworms whose activity in the soil is beneficial because they redistribute nutrients and naturally aerate the soil.

Clear Weeds

Lawn herbicides such as [LawnPro All-in-1](#), [LawnPro Turfclean](#), [LawnPro Turfclean Ultra](#) and [LawnPro Prickle and Hydrocotyle](#) are most effective when weeds are growing actively in autumn (and spring). Many weeds will continue to grow through the winter months so dealing with them in autumn will mean many fewer to deal with in spring.

Trim Back Shading Trees and Shrubs

Your lawn needs light. Particularly in the months with shorter days your lawn grass needs light to remain healthy. So trim back any trees or shrubs that have grown over your lawn or shade your lawn for much of the day.

Fertilise and Sweeten Your Lawn

Give your lawn the nutrients it needs for the autumn growth and to survive the winter to come. [LawnPro All-in-1](#) provides both weed control and nutrients. Other options include [LawnPro 7-Day-Green](#) which will give the lawn the potassium and phosphorous needed for root growth and frost tolerance. It will also correct the pH (sweeten) acidic soils which would otherwise suit the growth of moss and weeds over the cooler months.

Thicken Up and Fix Patches

Early autumn is the most effective time to thicken your lawn up by over-sowing with [LawnPro Lawn Thickener](#) and to fix bare patches with [LawnPro Lawn Thickener](#) or [LawnPro Smart Seed](#). A thick lush lawn provides a good insulating layer which helps protect grass roots from frosts.

Mowing

In later autumn raise your mower height a notch or two and keep your lawn a little longer through the cool months; a good autumn/winter mowing height is approximately 40 mm.

Monitor

Check the health of your lawn regularly in autumn and winter. Pests such as grass grub, fungal disease, moss and other problems can affect the lawn in autumn and winter. For a healthy lawn, early identification and correction of problems is essential. Watch for any changes in the lawn's condition, identify the problem using the [Kiwicare Problem Solver](#) and apply the solution recommended.

Follow these simple tips and you will be able to enjoy your lawn autumn, winter, spring and next summer.

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LAWNPRO



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For information, advice and our interactive
problem solver

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