

# ***Keeping Your Lawn Green This Summer***

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## **Why lawns turn brown in the summer**

Summer is the time when most lawns become dormant and turn brown. It's the natural way for turf grass to protect itself from heat and drought stress.

However, some lawns have brown spots because they are suffering from chronic fungal problems such as Red Thread or Dollar Spot. The browning caused by spring fungus activity normally disappears by now but has persisted because of the drought.

Whether the browning is from normal summer dormancy or slow recovery from fungus, the solution is the same. If you prefer to keep your lawn green all summer, please follow these instructions for watering and mowing your lawn.

## **Watering**

To keep your lawn green, deep weekly soakings will be critical. Water for about twenty minutes, twice a week, in the early morning or late afternoon. Deep watering will help roots grow deep, for more efficient access to nutrients and water.

Don't wait until drought symptoms are present to water. The grass will become stressed as it repeatedly must use its food reserves to break dormancy. Drought symptoms include: bluish green lawn color, footprints that don't bounce back readily or, eventual browning.

## **Mowing**

Lawns in our area are best mowed at a height of 3-4 inches in the summer. This length encourages deep root growth, better access to water and reduces stress on the plant. Whenever possible, do not remove more than a third of the grass blade when you mow. Mowing too short will worsen lawn stress and browning.

Clippings are a natural source of free nutrients for your lawn and only need to be removed if they are in clumps! Keep mowers well maintained and blades sharp for a clean cut. Rotate your mowing pattern on a regular basis to reduce soil compaction.

If you use a lawn cutting service, please communicate these mowing instructions to them.