

## Grass - the natural green carpet

Your lawn should be a green oasis of personal well-being, bringing a piece of nature into our busy, modern lifestyles. Did you know that a quarter of the Earth's surface is covered with grass? Grass prevents soil erosion, reduces dust, dampens noise, regulates temperature and cleans the air.

A lawn consists of many individual grass plants, which not only have a cool and refreshing appearance, but also improve the micro-climate thanks to their photosynthetic activity.
Undamaged lawn areas offer environmental benefits and
are important oxygen producers. During the growth period, approximately $300 \mathrm{~m}^{2}$ of undamaged lawn provides the average daily oxygen requirements for a four member family. Finally, a lawn is much more than merely grass, even amateur gardeners can derive long-term pleasure from their lawn by simply following a few important rules and tips.

This lawn care brochure provides ideas on how to "Love your lawn", making your lawn a small green oasis that will sustainably improve the quality of life for us all.

We hope you find this brochure of use.

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## More than just grass

A lawn is like a vast organism with far-reaching effects for us all. It consists of countless individual grass plants, which all make a valuable contribution, and is home to numerous creatures and microorganisms for which it provides nourishment and a habitat.
A grassed area makes a garden homely while also making it appear larger, as lawns create an impression of space. A lawn can be experienced with all our senses: its soothing appearance, the smell of freshly mown grass, the feel of the cool, soft lawn underfoot, the taste of a stray sorrel leaf and the sound of longer grass blowing in the wind ...

## A lawn is not just a lawn.

A wide variety of demands are placed upon turfed areas depending on their use. Different examples include home lawns, park lawn, as a playing surface on a sports field or planted roundabouts and roadsides.

A family garden will also act as a playing area, where the occasional daisy, dandelion or clover patch is tolerated. Virtually no other type of plant is subjected to such high demands as lawn grasses are. They are continually being 'stepped on' but must nevertheless remain pleasing to the eye.

## Factors influencing a lawn



## Choosing a lawn type



Ornamental lawn: Cultivated for purely decorative purposes and with low resilience as these areas are seldom walked on. Ornamental lawns are not usually resistant against dryness.


Hard wearing lawn: This type of lawn is very hardy, it can withstand heavy use, even in bad weather. The grass is resilient and has good regeneration properties. The care requirements are considerable.


Utility lawn: A hardy universal lawn for virtually all areas around the house; resilient, relatively slow growing, less frequent mowing is required.


Landscape lawn: Resistant against dryness, low care requirements. Special grasses also grow in shady areas.

Lawn types (according to DIN 18917)

| Lawn type | Application | Properties | Maintenance |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Ornamental lawn | Decorative or show lawns | Dense carpet-like turf of fine blade grasses, <br> low resilience | High to very high |
| Utility lawn | Private gardens, public spaces | Medium resilience, resistant to dryness | Medium to high |
| Hard wearing lawn | Playing fields and sports areas, <br> sunbathing areas <br> Landscape lawn | Extensively used public and private <br> spaces | High resilience, resistant in demanding high resilience <br> locations | Mery low to medium | Medium to very high |
| :--- |



## The grass plant

The crown or growing tip is the growth centre, while the roots are the underground centre of the plant. Above the crown, the plant develops several leaf blades. It produces side shoots, which take the form of surface or underground runners, depending on the type of grass. These side shoots are responsible for the lateral growth of the grass and for the density of the carpet of grass. If the lawn is cut too short, the crown can be injured and the plant dies. Careful mowing and scarifying using highquality tools prevents damage to the crown and fosters healthy growth.

## The correct seed mix

Lawns are composed of a mixture of different grasses. However, famous names like 'Gardner's Pride', 'Wembley Turf' or 'Evergreen' do not make for a perfect lawn on their own. Depending on use, location and soil, certain grass types and varieties are ideal for each application. Lawn areas around the house, for example, must be resilient and easy to care for. Here, grass mixtures comprising of ryegrass, Kentucky bluegrass and red fescue are most suitable. The narrow blade ryegrasses grow quickly and are resilient. The broad blade Kentucky bluegrasses are highly resilient. The fine blade red fescues can be cut very short and are suitable for shady areas. The ryegrasses are not as dense as the highly resilient and slower-growing Kentucky bluegrasses. Both types of grass are, however, well suited for mulch mowing. The fine blade red fescues are well suited for mixtures and survive relatively well in the shade, provided they are not constantly cut short.

High hedges, walls or trees often block off a great deal of light and moss tends to form in the shade. Grasses such as tussock grass (Deschampsia cespitosa) or wood meadow-grass (Poa nemoralis) are suitable for areas with little light.


## Helpful tip:

In order to provide grass plants with the greatest possible surface area for vitally important photosynthesis, the cutting height should not be below 5 cm in shady areas. This also helps prevent moss from spreading.

## Consider the Football World Cup

On most major football pitches, the proportion of slow growing Kentucky bluegrass (Poa pratensis) is approx. $75 \%$. Its strong underground runners form a broad, resilient base. Mixed with this is approx. $25 \%$ ryegrass (Lolium perenne), which grows quickly, fills in bare patches and provides the perfect appearance for television.


|  | Poa pratensis <br> Kentucky bluegrass <br> Smooth meadow-grass | Festuca rubra <br> Red fescue <br> Red top | Lolium perenne <br> Ryegrass |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Leaf blade | Medium | Very fine | Vetch |

## Vital seasonal care for the lawn

## Spring

During the winter months, leaves die off and the wind blows leaves and foliage from trees and bushes onto
 the lawn. The lawn may also have suffered from snowfall and may present an unhappy, grey/brown appearance. Clear the lawn using a fine rake, a vacuum leaf collector or a suitable VIKING lawn mower. Once the ground has dried, warmed up $\left(+10^{\circ} \mathrm{C}\right)$ and growth has resumed, bare patches in the lawn can be resown. Spring fertilisation helps the lawn to grow strong and green again, if no nutrient reserves were provided during the previous year through continuous mulching. From around mid April, dead material can be removed using a lawn scarifier, which also aerates and loosens up the turf. Only mow islands of flowers or desirable patches of wildflowers after they have bloomed, in order to allow them to seed. To ensure that the flowers blossom again the following year, do not fertilise these particular areas.

## Summer

Water the roots on a regular basis. This means no more than twice a week. It is actually preferable to water the lawn extensively only once a week (approx. 20 litres per $\mathrm{m}^{2}$ ). Watering more frequently is likely to 'spoil' any lawn.


Either mulch mow the lawn continuously, or carry out summer fertilisation. If you mulch or fertilise with a VIKING Multi-Mower ${ }^{\text {TM }}$, you save yourself from having to fertilise during the summer. During hot spells, allow the grass to grow longer (approx. 5 cm ) and mow it during dull weather. Mow high 'holiday lawns' in several stages, first at the highest cutting position, then at a slightly lower one. Dig out undesirable weeds from the lawn, repair damaged areas and resow any bare patches in the late summer so that the grass is able to take hold during the warm autumn days.

## Autumn

Water the roots on a regular basis. Autumn fertilisation can be dispensed with if you use a mulching mower. Mow the lawn for the last time as late as possible before the winter, particularly if mild weather persists. Cut the grass to a length of $3-5 \mathrm{~cm}$ for the winter. Dig out persistent weeds, test the soil for lime, phosphor
 or potassium. Plant crocus, hyacinth and tulip bulbs in groups to provide a splash of colour in the spring. Remove autumn leaves before the winter, ideally using a VIKING lawn mower.


## Do it right first time: sowing your lawn

A beautiful lawn cannot develop on poor soil. Limited grass will grow on building rubble with a covering of dense acidic loam, whilst stubborn weeds will flourish. Loam and clay soil must be loosened up with sand and peat and allowed to dry. Lawn grasses do not like wet roots and water logging also promotes the growth of
moss. Excessive amounts of sand can dry out the soil. Therefore water retention should be improved through the addition of peat and compost. If the soil is too acidic, i.e. if it has a pH value below 5.5, lime must be added. This also prevents moss formation.


## 1. Loosening the soil

Loosen up compacted areas, ideally using a tiller or cultivator. Remove any stones or roots. If necessary, add sand or peat and rake it in roughly.


## 4. Spreading

Evenly spread the grass seed and starting fertiliser using a drop spreader or carefully by hand. It is better to sow too little than too much, approx. 15 to $20 \mathrm{~g} / \mathrm{m}^{2}$ is ideal. Grass plants sown too densely are likely to impede one another.
> (会) Helpful tip:

> Refrain from walking on new lawns for as long as possible, mow them infrequently to begin with and always water them generously.

2. Re-compacting

The soil must now be allowed to settle for a time. This re-compacting can be accelerated using a light roller on the dry soil to prevent subsequent sinking and unevenness.


## 5. 'Working in'

The evenly spread seed should be lightly worked into the soil to a maximum depth of 1 cm using a (hired) spiked or ridged roller.


## 3. Levelling

Uneven areas should be levelled using a rake. The soil must be finely crumbled so that the grass seed can take hold.


## 6. Watering

The various grasses in a grass seed mixture germinate differently. Ryegrass germinates within a week, red fescue takes two weeks and meadow grass around three. The topsoil must therefore always be kept moist with the finest possible water spray and small droplets so that the sensitive grass shoots do not dry out.


## Sowing grass seed mixture

Lawns can be sown from around March to mid June and from mid August to early October. Autumn is the best time to do this because there is sufficient rainfall and the ground has stored warmth through the summer. Grass seed only germinates optimally above a soil temperature of at least $10^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$. These temperatures are not always available in March. Furthermore, it may already be hot and dry in May and once germination

## Rolled turf

In order to speed things up, rolled turf is a good option. This is delivered ready-made and can be laid on prepared soil virtually all year round. It then simply has to be trodden down or roller and watered well. Rolled turf can also be walked on after a short time. When purchasing rolled turf, ensure that it looks fresh, green and healthy. Ideally, it should be purchased from a local producer so that as little time as possible elapses between cutting and laying. Ready-made turf saves around one year of preparation and lawn care work, and ensures an initially weedfree lawn.
has begun, the soil must not dry out again. With a good mixture, a seed quantity of 15 to $20 \mathrm{~g} / \mathrm{m}^{2}$ is ample for achieving a dense lawn, although more may be required in the case of the cheap mixtures. Starting fertilisers provide important nutrients for the young plants during the initial weeks, allowing the formation of strong roots and shoots. During the first two weeks, the lawn must be kept moist to a depth of 5 cm at all times.


## Achieving a beautiful and hard wearing lawn

## Mowing

Regular mowing makes a lawn dense and attractive. The grasses form new side shoots, leaf blades and runners, and weeds are effectively suppressed. The optimum cutting height is between 3.5 and 5 cm (never shorter than 5 cm in the shade). If the grass is mown shorter than its cutting tolerance, the lawn thins out. If the grass is very long, always mow in several stages, never in a single cut. Depending on the region, lawn characteristics, weathering etc. the lawn must be mown around 20 to 25 times between mid April to late October, i.e. approximately every week, depending on growth. Regular sharpening of the blades ensures a better cutting pattern and facilitates work.

## Watering

Grass consists largely of water (nearly 80\%). The water requirements of a lawn depend significantly on the temperature and the soil. As a rule of thumb, when
 watering, it is better to water less often and for a lengthy period than more often but briefly. During dry periods, sprinkle the lawn thoroughly in the evening once or twice per week. Water more frequently under trees and on sandy soil. You can test whether the quantity of water is sufficient using a spade: for this purpose, cut a sod to a depth of around 15 cm and check whether the water has penetrated to that depth. If this is the case, the lawn will be able to survive some surface dryness.

## Fertilisation

At the beginning of the growth period in spring (approx. mid March) your lawn needs a large amount of nutrients. Provided the cuttings have not been regularly returned to the lawn through mulch mowing, spring fertilisation should take place in March or April. Nutrients are essential for the growth of the grass, especially nitrogen ( N ), which promotes cell division and consequently the formation of every part of the plant. A lack of nutrients is visible through a loss of the green colour and poor growth. Good fertilisers contain nitrogen, potash, phosphate and magnesium in even proportions.

## Mulching

Grass itself is an excellent fertiliser. With regular cutting using a VIKING mulch mower, grass cuttings can be left on the lawn where they decompose and serve as a valuable source of organic nutrients. Remember: the cuttings must be finely shredded and spread. Their nitrogen content is rapidly mineralised and sustainably made available to the plants again. Please refer to pages 11-13 for more information on mulch mowing.

## Autumn leaves

Leaves must be removed, not only for visual reasons, but so that the lawn does not 'suffocate' due to a lack of air and light. As long as the grass is still growing it can also be mown and the leaves sucked up at the same time. During the winter, the grass should not exceed the normal cutting height of about 4 cm .

## The nutritional value of lawn cuttings

Lawn cuttings are ideal for covering vegetable patches or flowerbeds, or as a ground covering under hedges, bushes and trees. Spread loosely, they help keep the soil moist and roots cool during hot weather, protect against erosion, improve the soil quality and provide valuable organically bound nutrients. Lawn cuttings prevent weeds and form a protective layer for soil organisms. For composting, they should be mixed with leaves and shredded material, as larger quantities soon begin to ferment and then smell unpleasant.

| Vital nutrients: |  |
| :--- | :--- |
| Nitrogen (N) • | Promotes growth and a green colour |
| Phosphor (P) • | Strengthens the roots and is an <br> energy carrier |
| Potassium (K) • | Makes plants more resistant against <br> dryness, cold and diseases |



## Mulching

Conducted by the University of Natural Resources and Applied Sciences in Vienna-Essling over a four year period, a lawn area of $1,000 \mathrm{~m}^{2}$ was mown using a standard lawn mower and the cuttings always disposed of; the lawn was well fertilised with mineral fertiliser. Simultaneously, an equally dimensioned area was mown using a VIKING mulch mower and the cuttings were left on the lawn.

## Our findings:

- Consistently denser turf and a brighter green colour through mulch mowing 21 times per year over the entire vegetation period
- Greater efficiency than the quarterly mineral fertilisation on the reference lawn
- The nutrients returned by mulching met the optimum requirements in terms of both quantity and composition.


## Benefits to the environment

The organic bonding of the nitrogen in the mulching material prevents it from being washed out. The nutrients are released slowly, gradually and evenly. A considerable quantity of fertiliser is saved, protecting the environment and saving costs.

Mulch mowing reduces lawn thatch through improved growth of the grass. A lawn well supplied with nutrients allows no space for weeds and moss. The original composition of the grass varieties remains intact. On the fertilised lawn where the cuttings were collected, in contrast, significant changes occurred in the composition of the grass varieties, resulting in more lawn thatch.

## Mulch mowing to perfection

VIKING mulching mowers are based on the sickle mowing principle. This special feature means that the cut blades of grass are chopped up several times through a special air flow guidance system in the mower blade area, resulting in finely shredded grass particles. These cuttings are well distributed and can be left on the lawn surface, where they partially decompose and are returned to the cycle as fertiliser.

## VIKING mulching mowers

The specialist 'R Series' mowers provide an excellent solution for dedicated mulching. The sturdy, lightweight MB 2 R models are ideal for small to medium-sized gardens. The 3-wheel MB 3 R Multi-Mowers ${ }^{\text {TM }}$ can be manoeuvred around bushes and trees with extreme ease, even in high grass. As Multi-Mowers ${ }^{\text {TM }}$, they can be used as mulching or as side discharge machines.
The MB $4 R$ models have been awarded the renowned Nordic „Svanen" ecolabel, this proves their environmental and low-emission operational credentials.


## VIKING Multi-Mowers ${ }^{\text {TM }}$

Our Multi-Mowers ${ }^{\text {TM }}$ are multi-functional. The attached grass catcher box collects cuttings and leaves. However, without the grass catcher box and by inserting the mulching plug, the grass is cut several times and distributed evenly on the lawn. The grass cuttings can also be ejected rearwards.

## VIKING robotic mowers

The MI 632 and MI 632 P iMow models mow your lawn fully automatically and mulch the clippings. The grass is always only slightly shortened in the process. Especially fine grass clippings are therefore returned to the turf and the soil benefits from the valuable nutrients.


Mowing with a grass catcher box


Mulch mowing



VIKING test field after four years of consistent mulching

## Mulching or green fertilisation

The grass cuttings remain on the lawn. It is important, however, that the quantity of cuttings is not excessive and that they are finely shredded and evenly spread. The nitrogen content is rapidly mineralised and sustainably made available to the plants again. Consistent mulch mowing is advised.

On a lawn with healthy growth, approximately $1.5-2 \mathrm{~kg}$ of cuttings are generated per square metre per year i.e. $1.5-2$ tonnes for $1,000 \mathrm{~m}^{2}$ of lawn. Disposal in a green bin or composting is not always possible. For this reason alone, mulch mowing is becoming ever more popular.

1 = Mulch-mown lawn without additional fertilisation
2 = Mown lawn with collected cuttings and additional extensive mineral fertilisation

- Cut the lawn slightly more frequently when mulch mowing.
- Use a VIKING lawn mower. These shred the cuttings finely and distribute them evenly without clumps.
- During mowing, the grass should be cut by around one third of its height, less in dry weather.
- Mow the grass when dry if possible. If the grass is damp, mow slightly more slowly and cut less height off in order to prevent clumps.
- Always work at the maximum engine speed and with well sharpened blades.
- Check the mower housing more regularly, removing any cutting residue.
- Ensure that the mowing strips overlap.
- Always cut very high grass in stages.
- Vary the mowing direction. The blades of grass are caught better this way and the cuttings are distributed more evenly. Therefore a more uniform cutting pattern is achieved.



## Help with lawn problems

Most lawn problems can be solved by the selection of the right grass seed, regular mowing, fertilisation, watering and scarifying. However, lawn renewal is sometimes the only remedy.

Recommendations:


- Mow short: Mow the old lawn as short as possible. This weakens the old grass and improves the growing conditions for the new grass.

- Scarify: Scarify the short mown lawn several times in both longitudinal and transverse directions. After scarifying, the excess material must be thoroughly removed.

- Prepare the soil and sow: Spread starting fertiliser and suitable grass seed evenly over the old lawn. Cover the seeded area with a thin layer of soil or peat and work in using a rake.

- Watering: Because of the differing germination of the grasses in the seed mixture, water regularly within the first three to four weeks - preferably using a sprinkler system.



## Weeds

Weeds, such as dandelions and thistles, and weed grasses may impair the appearance and use of your lawn. As they are unable to withstand frequent mowing, this is one way of reducing them. The most environmentally friendly form of combating weeds, however, is digging them out. If the lawn has bare patches, weeds are likely to take root, so resow these regularly. In contrast, weeds do not stand much chance on a healthy well-cared for lawn.



## Moss

Moss does not drive out the grass, but establishes itself where grass no longer grows. Moss herbicide is therefore not a solution. Moss benefits from lawns that are cut too short and by weakened grass. Improvements can be made, however, by raising the cutting height and through good fertilisation. If moss infestation is due to the soil being too moist or due to too much shade, the long-term measures of targeted fertilisation, soil improvement and resowing with a good grass seed mixture must be taken. The soil under a moss-infested area is often too acidic. This over-acidification arises due to waterlogged, compacted soil conditions, with an absence of air. Good drainage is necessary as just spreading lime will not remove the moss.

## Fungal diseases

There are many fungi that can infect the lawn, but only a few are really damaging (e.g. snow mould). They occur with unfavourable conditions: very dense grass, thick lawn thatch, high humidity, too low or too high pH values, over fertilisation or a thick covering of leaves in winter. Well regenerated, well cared-for lawns are fairly fungus resistant. If fungal diseases do occur, immediately seek expert advice.

## Scarifying - lawn care for professionals

Scarifying is the vertical cutting or scoring of soil and grass roots with special appliances, such as our powerful VIKING lawn scarifier. This ensures improved aeration of the soil, with lawn thatch and weeds being removed. A lawn which is regularly scarified (once or twice a year), shows improved growth, is healthier and has a more attractive appearance.


Scarifying should be performed in late spring, when the soil is dry and it is a little warmer (over $+10^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$ ). Warning: Hot spells can occur as early as May - do not scarify under such warmer conditions. Scarifying can also be performed in late summer, but with less intensity. The lawn can still make a good recovery and is then fortified for the winter break.


After scarifying, it is beneficial to perform sanding and fertilisation. Resowing with an appropriate seed mixture is only necessary in the case of large bare patches.

## Helpful tip:

- Work under dry weather conditions.
- Mow normally before scarifying, not too short (2-3 cm).
- Test the depth setting of the lawn scarifier on an unproblematic area.
- Do not scarify too deeply the first time, just 'comb' the surface.
- The scarified material must be removed from the lawn surface (possibly using a lawn mower with grass catcher box).
- The scarified material can be sucked up using a VIKING lawn mower.


## Revitalise your lawn: Electric and petrol scarifiers

LB 540. A petrol powered scarifier which is easy to manoeuvre and gets rid of lawn thatch quickly..


LE 540. Powered by electric motor for quieter working. Moves elegantly over the lawn and aerates the soil.


Restore your lawn with the VIKING LB 540 and LE 540 lawn scarifiers. They remove moss, lawn thatch and weeds sustainably and provide good aeration of the soil. Water, air and nutrients can again reach the roots more easily, the lawn will become more resilient and achieve a more lush green colour.


The 7 individual double blades penetrate only a few millimetres into the soil. The six-position adjustable working depth is controlled via the ergonomic control on the handlebar. It can only be adjusted when

the scarifying unit is in the neutral / transport position. A larger, reinforced deflector enables the ejection of greater quantities of moss and weeds.

The cable strain relief and the switchwith overload protection
 provide for operational safety on the electric model LE 540. The VIKING petrol powered LB 540 is easy to start via the ReadyStart function and can be securely controlled with the soft grip handlebar. The lawn scarifier is also easy to manoeuvre via wheels with double ball bearings. Meanwhile space-saving transportation and storage is achieved by folding the handlebar.

Sharp blades carefully penetrate the soil and provide for good aeration.


To get the most from your lawn, scarify once or twice a year. This can easily be completed using a stylish VIKING machine.

## Choosing the right mower

## 1. Large or small?

Which mower is the right one for you? That depends, first of all, on the size of your lawn. Our lighter, easy to handle lawn mower models are suitable for small to medium-sized lawns of up to $800 \mathrm{~m}^{2}$. Self-propelled mowers with additional features and larger cutting widths are more suitable for larger lawns of up to 3,000 $\mathrm{m}^{2}$.

## 2. Electric? Battery? Petrol?

The size of the lawn is also important here. If your lawn is no larger than max. $800 \mathrm{~m}^{2}$ and presents few obstacles for a power cable, then an electric mower is a good choice. It also mows quietly and without exhaust emissions. However, if you wish to mow larger, uneven or inaccessible lawns, you should use a petrol mower.

## 3. Grass collection or mulching?

All VIKING lawn mowers (except the R Series) have a grass catcher box for collecting grass cuttings. Mulching is another option (except the 2 Series). A particularly ingenious product is the VIKING Multi-Mower ${ }^{\text {TM }}$. Special multi-blades cut the grass and shred it into very fine particles. With the grass catcher box attached, they work as grass collectors. With a mulch insert, the grass cuttings fall back onto the lawn as a natural fertiliser.

## 4. To mow or to have the mowing done for you?

With the VIKING robotic mowers, you can entrust the care of your lawn to a new generation of lawn mowers. Both the MI 632 and MI 632 P iMow models mow your lawn fully automatically and mulch the clippings. Your lawn is always beautifully cared for and you can lean back and relax.

## For large areas: Ride-on mower

## 1. How large is the lawn you would like to mow?

The T5 and T6 Series offer the right cutting width and mowing performance for large lawns. For lawns up to around $4,000 \mathrm{~m}^{2}$, the manoeuvrable R4 Series ride-on mower is ideal. For lawns up to $8,000 \mathrm{~m}^{2}$, the T4 Series side-discharge lawn tractors are recommended.

## 2. What is the terrain like?

If the lawn has several bushes and trees and if the spacing between beds is tight, we recommend our streamline R4 Series ride-on mowers. The T4 lawn tractors are also incredibly manoeuvrable as no grass catcher box is required. Extensive lawns where speed, maximum cutting performance and ride comfort is required will be more suited to the T5 and T6 Series lawn tractors.

## 3. What equipment do you require?

All mowers feature single-pedal self-propulsion, forward/reverse drive lever, hydrostatic gearbox and electromagnetic mowing deck activation. The mowers with 2-cylinder engines are even more powerful. Look out for accessory options such as the covering hood or the practical tilting trailer.


## Love your lawn



## VIKING Approved Dealer

