

Fertilizers

Adding fertilizer is one of the most effective ways to grow a thick healthy lawn that naturally out-competes weeds and insects. Fertilizers provide important nutrients that improve lawn density, root growth and overall grass health. Over time, grass will naturally deplete the soil of needed nutrients, especially nitrogen. Regular applications of fertilizer are necessary to replenish these nutrients.



Nitrogen (N)
Phosphorus (P)
Potassium (K)

A complete fertilizer contains three active ingredients that will be displayed as numbers on the package label:

- 1. Nitrogen (N):** essential for grass growth, turf thickness and green color.
- 2. Phosphorus (P):** necessary for proper root development and important in many vital growth processes.
- 3. Potassium (K):** (potash) promotes disease resistance, wear and drought tolerance, and winter hardiness.

Fertilizer Ratio: The ratio of the ingredients is important. A soil test is the best way to determine the correct ratio of nutrients needed by your lawn, but in most cases is not necessary. Fertilizers with a 4-1-2 ratio of N-P-K such as 20-5-10 are good for general use. The chart below suggests ratios for specific lawn conditions.

Fertilizer Ratios for Lawn Conditions

Lawn Condition	Numbers in N-P-K ratio should be:
Mature Lawn An established lawn needs primarily nitrogen. Choose fertilizer with a larger ratio of nitrogen.	Largest number should be Nitrogen (N) as in example 20 -5-10.
New Lawn Use a starter fertilizer high in phosphorus (middle number). Avoid high nitrogen content.	Largest number should be Phosphorus (P) as in example 20- 27 -5.

How to Apply:

Carefully follow the instructions on the package. Use a spreader to avoid burns, missed areas, and spotty green patches. Fertilizing your lawn by hand is never a good idea. For a video demonstration of fertilizer application or further information, visit www.letscurbpesticides.ca and click on the "Healthy Lawn Care" link.

When to Apply:

Fertilizer should be applied in the early spring and again in late fall. Apply after aerating, if done. After mowing, leave grass clippings on the lawn. They provide an additional source of nutrients.

Slow Release Fertilizer: Some fertilizers provide a quick 'green up' of your lawn, but do little to provide a lasting supply of nutrients. Purchase slow release fertilizers. These break down over time and provide a steady, long-lasting source of food for your lawn. Slow release fertilizers are far less likely to 'burn' your lawn if over-applied. Look for package labeling that indicates the fertilizer is slow release, controlled release, timed released or water insoluble.

Organic Fertilizer: These fertilizers are made of naturally occurring materials from vegetable, mineral or animal sources. Microbial activity and the micronutrients provided by organic fertilizers lead to improved soil health. Most organic fertilizers are also slow release.

About Weed and Feed

This product is **not** the same as a fertilizer. It also contains pesticides/herbicides. It is not effective at preventing weeds, but is often mistakenly used this way. Using weed and feed causes potentially harmful chemicals to be spread on your entire lawn whether needed or not. Avoid products labelled as "weed and feed," "weed control," or "broadleaf control." A better approach to preventing weeds is to use good quality fertilizer and follow the healthy lawn care methods listed on our website.



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