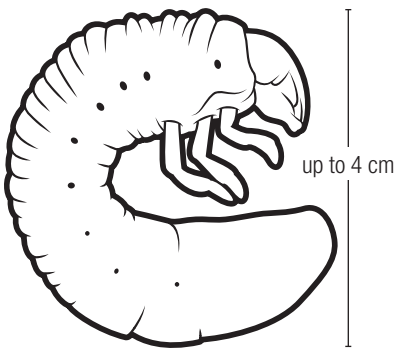


# White Grub

White grubs are common lawn pests in Ontario. The term 'white grub' is used to describe the larval stage of three different beetles: the June beetle (or 'June Bug'), the European chafer and the Japanese beetle. The larvae have white, c-shaped bodies, six legs and range from .5 to 4 cm in length.



## Damage from White Grubs

Grubs feed on the root system of grasses. This results in brown patches of wilted and dying grass. Initially, damage may look similar to drought stress but will spread throughout the lawn as the grubs move to new feeding areas. Additional damage can be caused by animals digging up the lawn to feed on the grubs. The presence of a large number of birds feeding on the lawn is another good indication of grubs. Turf that has been damaged will be easy to lift up because grubs will have eaten the grass roots. Grubs should be visible underneath. Grub damage generally appears in May and September.

## Monitoring:

It is important to check for grubs before they are mature enough to damage your lawn. Monitoring for grubs should be done in early August. They will be large enough to see, but not mature enough to have done significant damage.

1. With a sharp knife, carefully cut three sides of a square of turf roughly 30 cm long (approximately 1 square foot).
2. Peel back the grass and look for grubs.
3. If 5 to 10 larvae per square foot are visible, further action is recommended, especially if the lawn is already stressed.

## Your lawn is at risk for grubs if:

- your grass is shorter than 2.5 inches (6 cm)
- you water improperly (lightly and frequently)
- you do not add fertilizer
- your lawn is made up entirely of Kentucky blue grass

## Your lawn will resist grubs if:

- you raise your mower height to cut at 3 inches (7 cm)
- you water deeply but not often (no more than once a week)
- you add fertilizer in early spring and late fall
- you add a mixture of different grass seed types

## Treat Smart:

**Nematodes** are the best non-chemical means of treating an existing grub problem. Nematodes are living organisms that are harmless to your lawn, but are parasitic to grubs. Local garden centres usually stock nematodes and can provide additional information on how to effectively use this product.

Prevention is the best defense against grubs. A good fall lawn cleanup will help reduce the number of grubs that over-winter in your yard. Rake the lawn to remove excessive thatch and aerate if the soil is compacted (hard).

## For a strong, grub-resistant lawn:

- Raise mower height to 2.5 to 3 inches (7 cm). This will discourage beetles that prefer to breed in shorter grass.
- Fertilize in early spring and late fall to create a thick lawn with strong roots. Grass with healthy root systems can better withstand grub feeding.
- Water once a week to a depth of one inch to promote deep root growth. This also helps produce strong root systems.
- Regularly add a mixture of grass seed types to your lawn including fescues and ryegrasses. These grasses are less favourable food sources for grubs.
- To repair grub damage, apply topdressing or compost and grass seed.

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