



Mowing Tips

Proper mowing is important for a well-kept lawn. Although recommended cutting heights vary by type of grass, you should cut no more than one-third of the plant at any mowing. For cool-season grasses, increase mowing height during the summer to reduce stress on the turf. Bagging grass clippings robs your lawn of valuable nutrients. Clippings left on a properly mowed lawn act as fertilizer. During peak growing periods, usually in April, it may be necessary to collect grass clippings. In this case, add them to your compost pile to produce mulch.

Cool-season grasses in the Bay region will benefit from fall applications of balanced fertilizers that include at least 10 percent water-insoluble forms of nitrogen. Cut these grasses to a 2.5 inch height in the spring, move up to a 3 inch or 3.5 inch cut in the summer, and then back down to 2.5 inch when autumn comes. These mowing heights, alone, will reduce weeds by more than 50 percent.

Lawn Clippings

Lawn clippings represent nutrient recycling at its best. With proper mowing, clippings will not cause excess thatch (a tightly packed layer of organic debris that develops on the soil surface). Rather, clippings break down and return nitrogen to the lawn, reducing the need for fertilizers.

Recommended Turfgrass Mowing Heights (inches):

Kentucky bluegrass 1.5–2.5
Tall fescue 2–3
Fine fescue 2–3
Perennial ryegrass 1.5–2.5
Bermudagrass 0.5–1
Zoysiagrass 0.5–1

