

# Lawn watering and fertilizing techniques



A lush, green lawn is a sight to behold. Many variables are involved in growing and maintaining grass and water and fertilizer are among the most important components.

Knowing how much water and fertilizer to apply and when to apply it can make a big difference in the appearance and health of a lawn. That's because a well-fed and watered lawn will develop a

better root system, which makes the lawn less vulnerable to stressors like drought, mowing, foot traffic and heat, according to the Scotts company.

## Fertilize.

There is no magic formula governing when to fertilize a lawn. The type of grass and how well established a lawn is must be considered. Experts suggest having the soil tested to determine its pH levels and if any nutrients are lacking. A fertilizing schedule can then be developed after testing.

Keep in mind that overfeeding a lawn will not make it grow any better and actually can damage the turf. Several small applications of fertilizer during the lawn's most active growing period may be helpful, advises the home

improvement resource Tools Around the House. An annual application (late spring for warm-season grass or fall for cool-season grass) may be all that's needed.

Certain fertilizers need to be applied and watered in. Others may be combined with weed-control products and must be set on top of damp grass. Read packaging to determine the right application.

## Water.

The right watering schedule and techniques can help a lawn thrive. Scotts says adjusting for climate and nature can help grass to grow strongly. A lawn that has a grayish cast or appears dull green is telling an owner that it needs water. Another test is to step on the lawn. If footprints disappear

quickly, the grass blades have enough moisture to spring back.

Water the lawn in the morning before 10 a.m. when it's cooler and the winds tend to be calm so that the water can soak in. For those who must water at night, do so in early evening so that the water can dry before nightfall and will not contribute to disease.

Scotts says to water an established lawn until the top six to eight inches of soil is wet. Most lawns need one to 1.5 inches of water per week from rain or a hose to soak the soil that deeply.

Newly established lawns may require more water to keep the soil moist but not soggy.

Visit a lawn care center for more information on lawn watering or visit [www.scotts.com](http://www.scotts.com) for additional tips.

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## Signs gutters are in need of repair



Homeowners should take stock of their gutters so they can address any issues. Compromised gutters can contribute to water issues in basements and adversely affect a home's foundation if not addressed immediately, so it behooves homeowners to learn the signs that gutters are in need of repair or replacement.

• Gutters hanging off the home: Gutters were once installed predominantly with spikes. However, many industry professionals now install gutters with hanger brackets.

ets. Why the change? Spikes loosen over time, leading to the gutters hanging off the home. That can contribute to serious issues if left untreated. Gutters hanging off the home need not necessarily be replaced, but rather secured to the home, ideally with hanger brackets instead of spikes. Brackets hook into the front of the gutter and are then screwed into the fascia of a home. A professional who specializes in gutter repair can perform this task relatively quickly and it's an inexpensive yet highly effective solution.

• Gutter separation: Gutters that are no longer fastened together can leak and contribute to issues that affect the home's foundation, siding and appearance. Clogs and the accumulation of debris can cause gutters to separate because they are not designed to hold too much weight.

Replacement of separated gutters may or may not be necessary depending on how big the problem is and the condition of the

existing gutters. If replacement is not necessary, separated gutters may be remedied by securing the joints, another relatively simple and inexpensive fix.

• Peeling exterior paint: Paint that appears to be peeling off of your home may indicate that water is seeping over the edge of the gutter closest to your home. When that happens, water is coming down the side of the house, causing the paint to peel. In such instances, replacing the gutters is often necessary.

• Basement flooding: Not all signs of deteriorating gutters are outside a home. Many a homeowner has been flummoxed by flooding in their basements and such flooding can be caused by aging, ineffective gutters. That's because deteriorating gutters sometimes allow water to leak near the foundation of a home, contributing to basement flooding.

Homeowners should address any issues they find while inspecting their home's gutters.

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