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How to Keep Your Landscape Plants and Shrubs Healthy and Thriving

Banish that Brown: Five Fertilizing Tips for a Perfect Lawn

If you want to have a healthy, green lawn, then it is best to provide it with the right nutrients in order for it to thrive. There are several ways in which you can help your grass to remain green throughout the season. By fertilizing the soil and balancing out the pH in your lawn, it will result in better grass. Here are five ways in which you can make your fertilizer work for your lawn.

Use fertilizer that is a slow-releasing product. There are several different types of fertilizers that can be applied to your yard, all which have different qualities in them. If you decide to fertilize your lawn, then the best thing to use in the spring is a slow-releasing product. This means that the fertilizer will continue to give nutrients to the ground throughout the season.

By doing this, you will only have to fertilize your lawn once or twice throughout the season. It will also eliminate weeds from your yard, as they will be replaced by the fertilizer that is in the ground and consistently working on the nutrients in your yard.

Schedule when to put fertilizer in. Depending on the region in which you live, the climate you have, and the type of soil, which you are dealing with, your lawn will need to have fertilizer put in at different times of the year. Some of the fertilizer provides the best nutrients in the spring, where the nutrients can be soaked into the soil for the season.

Other types of fertilizer is best put in before the winter season as it will provide nutrients to the grass throughout the ice season when your grass is getting ready to hibernate for the winter. If you schedule out the right times for your lawn fertilizing maintenance, it will allow for better growth throughout the season.

Using weed control fertilizers. There are several different types of fertilizers that can be put in the ground for the main purpose of eliminating weeds from your yard. By doing this, you will have to do less maintenance on your lawn when weeds start to show up on your grass. It will also prevent weeds from slowly appearing throughout your yard and taking the nutrients that are intended for the grass. By applying weed control at the same time as regular fertilizer, it will help provide more nutrients for your grass.

Spread the fertilizer evenly. There are spreaders available in order to spread the fertilizer evenly throughout your entire yard. If this is not done, it will cause grass burn in some places from too much fertilizer being placed, and not enough fertilizer in other places will cause more weed growth, and less nutrients to be able to go to the grass, causing brown patches. This is especially important if your yard is sloped, as the unevenness can cause problems in how much fertilizer is put in each area.

Know how much fertilizer to apply. It's important to know the pH of your soil, as well as the type of soil that you have. You can measure the type of soil by seeing the thickness, which it has. The soil can be anything from sandy, to silt, loam, or clay. By knowing the texture and thickness of your soil, you will be able to tell exactly what kind of fertilizer you should apply and how much of it you will need in order to change the balance of your soil and allow for more growth and greener grass from your lawn. By measuring out how much fertilizer you need, it will help to prevent a lack of nutrients or too much fertilizer throughout your yard, which can cause problems.

By knowing what type of yard you have, as well as knowing how much fertilizer to apply and when the best time to apply it is, you will be able to have greener grass and a better, healthier lawn throughout the year. If you choose not to fertilize your yard, it can cause several problems, such as brown patches, a lack in nutrients, weeds, and problems with water being absorbed into the ground. Fertilizer is known to help the yard to look greener and have better nutrients year round.

Caring for Your Plants

One of the best things you can do to save money on your landscape is to properly care for your plants. This is very important to keeping a healthy yard and an attractive landscape. If you properly care for your plants, you will save money in maintenance costs, and you will save money in having to replace plants that succumb to disease or other problems associated with poor care.

Caring for your plants is not only good for the plants, but it is also good for you. You can get good exercise, escape from the stale air of your home, and get a little bit closer to nature. Not only do these things have positive physical benefits, but they have mental and emotional benefits as well. When you care for your plants you are saving money, helping your over all well being, and preserving a beautiful landscape.

Keeping your soil in good condition is essential for the care of your plants, whether the plants are part of the lawn, or whether they are trees or flowers. Having good soil is essential, as good soil provides nutrients to the plants and also offers moisture, as good soil preserves water and can act as a reservoir of moisture. Keeping your soil healthy is the beginning of caring for your plants. You can keep the soil healthy in a number of ways. Check the acid and alkali contents and make sure that they remain at levels that are good for your plants.

Also, it is a good idea to add organic material to your soil at least once a year. Using organic mulch is a good way to keep your soil in good shape. In shrub and flowerbeds, and around trees, wood chips can help the soil retain moisture and they will break own and provide nutrients as well. Reducing compaction is also important, as it allows air down into the soil and frees up room for beneficial organisms like earthworms.

There is also more room for the roots to grow (any kind of roots ,Âi grass, tree, flower, etc.), giving them a firmer foundation and better health. Annual aeration will help your grass and the trees and shrubs that you have planted on your lawn. Turning the soil each year and adding

special potting soil to the garden and flowerbeds at fall planting can also help.

Efficient watering techniques are also very helpful with plant care. These techniques include things like watering deeply and not terribly often. For the most part, people water their lawns too frequently. This keeps the roots shallow (shallow roots mean less healthy grass) and much of the water either runs off or evaporates. Watering in the early morning (before 10) and in the evening (after 6) can reduce losses to evaporation and increase the amount of water that is actually absorbed into the soil.

When watering flowerbeds and trees and shrubs, make sure that rather than simply letting a sprinkler run, you take care to use the hose to water deeply. For established plants, there is no need to water more than once a week. Even the lawn does not need to be watered more than once or twice a week. This type of watering schedule forces the roots to go deeper into the soil, looking for moisture and creating healthier plants that are more tolerant of drought conditions.

Other good care practices include pruning woody plants and inspecting for pests and diseases. Not only does this help with the health of the plants, but it also contributes to their attractiveness. You can help your plants look fuller (especially evergreen shrubs) by pruning yearly.

Blossoming plants also benefit from such care, as they will have more blooms when properly pruned. Additionally, when you inspect regularly for pests and diseases, you can catch problems before they get out of hand. You can properly treat the issue as needed, and save time and money in replacing the plants later.

While many people make use of fertilizers, pesticides, and weed killers, these are not necessarily essential for good plant care. It is true that these chemicals can contribute to the health and the look of your landscape, but if they are used improperly they can also cause damage. Make sure that you carefully read the instructions in full before applying any such product. Then, make sure you follow the directions exactly. Too much of these chemicals can actually harm your plants.

Fungus Fever: Three Ways to Protect Your Lawn from Fungal Growth

During the spring and summer, having a healthy, green lawn is one of the hopes for all homeowners with a yard. However, in order for this to happen, the right maintenance and care for your lawn should take place. One of the steps in caring for the maintenance of your lawn is making sure that there is balance between the water, soil and nutrients in your yard. If this doesn't happen, it may cause problems with fungus in your yard.

There are several different types of fungus that can grow in your lawn, all which grow in relation to the amount of water that is in your yard, as well as the type of climate that gives them room to flourish. Fungus may also have an opportunity to grow if your soil isn't balanced from fertilizer or compost at the beginning of the season.

Some types of popular fungus include mushrooms, mildew, dollar spots, and fairy rings. These

are a few of several types of fungus that can move into your lawn. Some ways to notice the fungus is through patches of yellow, red, or orange in your lawn. Other types of fungus will begin to spread from the tips of the grass, causing brown blades to form.

No matter what type of fungus begins to take over your lawn, it is known that they can eventually spread over your entire lawn, taking the nutrients and moisture that is needed for your grass. Because of this, there are ways to prevent the fungus from appearing and taking over your lawn.

1. Keep your lawn dry. Most fungus will begin to form after the winter is over or during the fall. If extra snow is not drying on your lawn or if there is too much shade, it gives a perfect spot for fungus to grow. By removing snow that won't melt you can prevent some of the fungus that will grow in your lawn. Before the winter arrives, you can also make sure to cut your grass down in order to make sure that the grass stays aerated and doesn't keep the moisture locked into the grass.

If it is spring and fungus is beginning to grow, it is probably because the water isn't drying during the days that you water. Make sure to water in the morning so that the grass has time to dry during the day from the sun. If it is not going to be warm and sunny that day, it is best to wait to water until you know that the water will be dried from the sun.

2. Kill the fungus with different products. There are several different types of natural ingredients that will take the moisture out of the fungus that you have in your yard. One type of ingredient is baking powder mixed with water. You can spray this over the area where the fungus is. The baking powder will act as a neutralizing agent to get rid of the fungus. You can also use plain corn meal by spreading it over the area where the fungus is. If you choose to use one of these ingredients, make sure you know what type of fungus is in your yard first, then use the proper type of ingredient in order to get rid of the fungus.

3. Prepare the soil to prevent fungus. Before laying fertilizer or soil in the spring, or before you have put in new sod, it is best to make sure that it has some type of preventative ingredient from fungus. This, as well as mulching will balance out the nutrients in the soil in order to prevent fungus from appearing. Often times, it is best to make sure that there is enough nitrogen in your soil and grass. If there is too much nitrogen, or not enough, it will often cause problems with fungus having room to grow. Things such as greensand or glauconitic can be purchased in order to balance out your soil again.

In order to keep your lawn looking healthy and green throughout the seasons, it is best to find ways to prevent different types of fungus from overtaking your lawn. This can be done through simple maintenance of making sure that the soil, water and grass all remains balanced and healthy.

Looking for Just the Right Landscaping Plant?

Finding the perfect landscaping plant is not such an easy job. There are so many different plants for you to choose from and each will have its own special ways that make is a great find

for your yard. You can choose any kind of landscaping plant that will compliment your particular yard, just make sure that the landscaping plant that you choose can live in your climate. Not all landscaping plants can thrive in all areas so talk to your local plant specialist. The place where you usually get your plants may be able to help you with your selection of landscaping plant.

There are many different kinds of landscaping plants for you to choose from and some of the best ones are the ones that you would normally never think of. For example if you want to have a gorgeous border you can use sage plants. This is the perfect landscaping plant for any home especially yours. You can do so much with this great landscaping plant. Not only can you make wonderful borders with it you can also add them to pretty herb gardens.

What makes herb gardens to fun is that they are not only pretty to look at they are also practical. You can use all of the herbs that you grow as a landscaping plant in your cooking. Cooking with herbs is such a wonderful bonus to having a gorgeous landscaping plant.

When you are looking for a landscaping plant you will also need to take into consideration what time of year it happens to be. You cannot usually go into a gardening store looking for a landscaping plant in the middle of winter and find a summer bloom. Your shopping will have to be at least a little seasonal. Your landscaping plant, some of them anyway, will have to be purchased at certain times of the year.

You can find a landscaping plant that is annual or one that is perennial. An annual landscaping plant will need to be bought and purchased anew each year where as a perennial landscaping plant will grow back each year on its own. Some perennial plants like tulips for instance will double in number each year if left alone. When there gets to be too many in one spot of this kind of landscaping plant you can simply dig down and split some of them up and plant them elsewhere.

Landscaping Plants

Landscaping plants are plants that will be easy to care for yet beautiful at the same time. There are all sorts of plants that you can use for your landscaping design. It really depends on the area in which you are landscaping. You will need to take a few things into consideration before you decide on what plants to use for your creation. You can find landscaping plants at any home and garden center or green house.

Considering what types of plants to use

When you choose to use plants for your landscaping, you are going to have to think about what plants will grow better in the area in which you are planting them. Different plants need different things to grow. When it comes to the cost of the plants and the risk you are taking when you decide on plants before knowing what you need, it pays to research your decisions.

Think about the amount of sun and shade that you will have in your landscaped area. Choose plants that can live in the conditions that you are working with. Be sure that you are using plants that compliment your ideas and ones that are compatible with your other ideas for the

project.

Backbone of you garden

If it is trees that you are looking for to line your landscape, then you may want to think about oak trees. These are pest free trees that can adapt to almost any conditions. You cannot beat the beautiful colors of these trees. Oak trees provide lovely shade and no matter where you live, there is probably an oak tree that will work for your design. Maple trees are another great way to go. They also have fascinating colors and can adapt well in any location. If you do not want to use trees, you can always go with a plant or flower that pops out for your border.

Shrubs make good choices for any landscape

You may also choose to have shrubs as your outline for your creative design. Shrubs are a great way to make any landscape idea come together and look well maintained. There are different kinds of shrubs to choose from and again decide on the one that is best for your garden area. Hydrangeas are a beautiful shrub for most areas. The green foliage and vibrant flowers look great in the summer and they also produce festive fall color when the seasons change.

Fill in the Gaps

It is important to make sure that there are no loose ends when you are planning your own landscape for a back or front yard. If you are planning to have a sidewalk or patio in with your design, then it is important to accent your ideas. Perennials are a great way to accent any focal point. You can use perennials or annuals to decorate your masterpiece or you to fill in empty spaces. You can choose from many colors and sizes. The fun part is deciding which ones to use where. Just remember to make them collaborate with all your other creative pieces.

Whatever you choose to decorate your landscaping design with, remember to maintain them and keep them looking fresh and vibrant. Pay attention to the small things and you will see a big pay off in the end.

Landscaping Shrubs

If you are looking for a no hassle, low maintenance border, then you may want to think about using shrubs. Shrubs can bring color and beauty with hardly any work at all. There are so many different styles to choose from and you will be sure to find the perfect one to fit your landscaping needs.

Types of shrubs to choose from

Many different types of shrubs provide great texture and colorfulness. These types include azalea, lilac, hydrangea, hardy shrub rose, and dogwood. Planting a colorful shrub border will add a wonderful focal point along any home or walkway. They can also offer a balance to any garden by adding height to any flower garden.

One great border

The key to planting a wonderful border is to design layers of colors and textures, and height. Whatever shrub you decide to plant, they will add color and texture to your home for every different season. Shrubs can grow to be enormous but as long as you keep them trimmed and maintained, they will add beauty and style to any home.

You can also use shrubs to line your property with. If you want to add a borderline between your neighbors' house and yours, this is the perfect way to do so. Shrubs will divide the space without shutting you in like trees do. Shrubs are a great choice for this project and one that both you and your neighbors will enjoy.

Maintaining your shrubs

Shrubs need to have good soil. It needs to be well-drained soil as well. You may need to add compost to your soil before you plant your shrubs. Whenever you are ready to plant your shrubs, check the roots to make sure that the shrub is root bound. Loosen the roots with a knife and then you are ready to place the shrub in the hole. Make sure that you give your shrubs lots of water.

Do not worry if your landscape of shrubs looks kind of empty at first. Over time the shrubs will spread out and fill in the loose gaps. That is the best thing about shrub landscapes. You do not need to plant a lot to get a lot. If you want to, you can fill in some of the small empty spaces with flowers like perennials. You will be free to design a look that you and everyone else will enjoy.

Proper Mulching

Mulch is any type of material placed over the top of the soil to improve the soil. Mulch helps the soil retain moisture and can improve soil conditions. Additionally, mulch reduces weed competition by restricting the number of weeds that grow around your landscape plants. You can improve the health of your plants by using mulch around them to minimize damage by lawn mower blight and weed whacking.

When one practices proper mulching, it can actually help the landscape maintain a healthy appearance. It can even contribute to the look of a well-groomed landscape. It is important, however, to properly apply your mulch. If it is not applied properly, you might find that rather than helping, you can cause harm to your plants and trees.

There are many different types of mulch. Just as there are different fertilizers, mulches come made from different materials. They can be bought commercially, or you can create your own mulch and save money. The two main classifications of mulch are inorganic and organic. Many people believe that all mulch is organic, but it is not. Inorganic mulches, while more effective at keeping out weeds, will not add to the composition of the soil, as it contains no nutrients to put into the soil.

Inorganic mulches include various types of pulverized rubber, some geotextile fabrics, and even stones and lava rock. Organic mulches are comprised of things like woods chips, bark, leaves, pine needles, compost mixtures, cocoa hulls, and other mulches derived from plants. Even shredded paper, used in small amounts, can contribute to organic mulch.

The first thing to realize when properly applying mulch is that there is such a thing as too much. Too much mulch can result in a variety of problems. Because mulch does help retain moisture, too much mulch can lead to excess moisture. Especially in trees, this can lead to root rot. Do not pile mulch against the stems of plants or the trunks of trees, as this can cause stress on the plant tissues and lead to pest problems.

Too much mulch can also alter the pH of the soil, causing toxicities or deficiencies. Piled mulch provides nice homes for rodents, which in turn may chew the plant roots and cause tree girdling. Fine mulch can become matted if too thick and then prevent air and moisture penetration. Be aware of the type of mulch you are using. Replace inorganic mulch each year, and if you have mulch that breaks down slowly (like mulch containing cypress bark), do not add more mulch each year. Wait until the mulch is mostly broken down before adding a new layer.

Proper mulch depth is about two to four inches deep, and not directly up against trunks or plant stems. For trees, mulch should be applied at least out to the drip line, with a space between the mulch and the tree. The drip line is the border of the canopy of the tree. Root systems extend beyond the drip line, so it is okay to spread a thin layer of mulch beyond the drip line.

In order to properly apply mulch, it is important to take into account several factors. You should first inspect the area. Find out if there is enough drainage, you should also determine whether the type of mulch you will use is compatible with the plants you have. Check the depth of already placed mulch and do not add more if the depth is sufficient. Rake the mulch to prevent matting.

There are vegetable-based dyes that can improve the appearance of mulch that may be fading, but that does not need to be replaced. If there is poor drainage, 2 inches may be too much. Apply a thinner layer of mulch in these areas to prevent too much moisture retention.

The benefits of proper mulching are many. When properly applying mulch, you are contributing to the health of your landscape, making it more resistant to disease, insects, and drought. Organic mulches also contribute to the make up of the soil, adding nutrients and making the soil richer and better for the plants. By making good use of mulch, and avoiding excesses, it is possible for you to increase the health of your landscape and decrease the costs associated with maintenance and treatment.

Protecting Your Turf: How to Keep Your Neighbor's Weed Problem from Becoming Yours

You do everything in your power to care for your lawn and prevent weeds from infesting your grass--but what you do isn't always enough. Even if you are a good neighbor and take care of your home and your garden, not everyone in your area will do the same. If your neighbors

don't care for their lawns, then their weed problems can quickly become yours too. Here are a few things you can do to protect your lawn from unwanted visits from neighborhood weeds.

The first thing you want to do is try talking to your neighbor. If you have a neighbor who is not caring for his or her lawn, then you should try communicating with them about the problem. Letting them know that their failure to care for their own lawn isn't only affecting the appearance of their home, but also the health of your lawn might make all the difference.

Sometimes people are unaware of how inadequate garden care can affect those surrounding them. You may run into a few people who are less than neighborly about the situation, but most people will be very reasonable about these sorts of things when they are brought to their attention.

Proper lawn care will go a long way in preventing weeds from taking hold. If your grass is strong and healthy from proper mowing, fertilization, watering and irrigation then weeds are less likely to get a foothold in your lawn.

Once the weeds have started to spread, you'll want to deal with them as quickly as possible. Throughout the growing season, weeds are a problem you need to stay on top with whether they come from near or a bit further a field. Start by removing weeds that have come into your garden. You can dig, chop or hoe these invaders. Doing this right at the start will put you one step ahead of the weeds.

To prevent further weed development, you can lay down some mulch over the soil. Putting down this mulch will prevent weeds from germinating. You can use bark, leaves or even old newspaper, just about anything that will cover the surface of the soil and discourage weed growth.

You can also try to prevent weed growth by growing shrubs to their full size. The larger the shrubs are the more shade they will make on the surface of the soil. This shade will choke the weeds before they really get a chance to become established. You can also plant ground covers that will choke the weeds. If you have a great deal of ground covering plants, the weeds won't have any space left to grow in.

Even though you do your best to prevent weeds, they will occasionally crop up here and there. You need to make sure that you are pulling weeds as they appear so that they never go to seed in your garden. If you do not stay on top of this, you could end up with a very extensive and time-consuming weed problem.

You can use chemicals for weed control, but your best option is to start out with less toxic methods. If you find that you must resort to weed killers, always wear protective clothing, eyewear and gloves to reduce the risk to yourself. There are some pre-emergent chemicals on the market, which are preventive herbicides--meaning that they control weeds before they start to grow. You should only use these sorts of herbicides after clearing your lawn of weeds. Pre-emergent chemicals should not be used on weeds that have already begun to grow.

There are all sorts of ways that weeds can be spread: through vehicles, through animals and, of course, through your neighbor's lawn. The best thing you can do to prevent your neighbor's

weed problem from becoming yours is put in place the preventive measures discussed above and pull weeds as they come.

Also remember that a neighborly chat won't go amiss if your next-door neighbor's lawn is cause for concern. Before it escalates into a source of stress for you or a neighborhood tiff, speak with your neighbor about the problem calmly and reasonably. Sometimes bringing it to their attention is all that needs to be done.

Pruning

Like nearly everything else, it is possible to pay someone else to trim your landscape plants. However, it is much more economical to learn how to properly prune your trees and shrubs yourself. Additionally, the exercise gives some people great enjoyment, as it is an excuse to be outside and enjoy fine weather and fresh air.

There are different techniques to pruning, and different times of the year when such pruning is appropriate. By keeping a careful watch on your yard and paying attention to when your trees bloom, you can make sure to keep your landscape in the best shape through careful pruning.

Deciduous trees and bushy plants. These woody trees and plants are best pruned in early spring while they are still dormant. Some plants, however, go through a process of "bleeding," when sap runs out of the cuts. While this does not actually harm the plant or tree, it can cause homeowners distress and worry. Therefore, when pruning plants that tend to bleed (such as maple, box elder, black walnut, elm, birch, and honeylocust), it is also acceptable to wait until they are fully leafed out.

Woody bushes like lilac, spirea, mock orange, viburnum, and forsythia should be pruned immediately after blooming. These plants have flowering buds that are produced every previous growing season. And, by pruning such plants directly after they bloom, you will be able to decorate your house with the sweet smelling blossoms on the pruned branches. These small branches, and the thin, small branches of a tree, may be cut with ease all the way through with only a single cut.

When removing a large branch on a tree, however, you will need to make three cuts. This will help you avoid tearing the bark. The first cut is placed on the under side of the branch, and should be located about 12 inches from where the branch meets the trunk. This cut is not very deep--only one-fourth to one-third of the way through the branch.

Next, a cut should be made on the topside of the branch, and should be about two inches farther from the trunk than the first cut. Saw completely through the branch on the second cut. The last cut on the branch should be just beyond the branch collar. Leaving a stub encourages disease, and cutting the main trunk produces a wound that heals slower.

Evergreens. Evergreens have a slightly different consideration than the deciduous woody plants. They can be pruned in the early spring, but you should ensure that the new growth has hardened. Evergreens can be pruned practically any time between mid-April and mid-August. It

is important to have them trimmed before mid-August because if you wait any longer, they may not recover from their wounds in time to withstand the winter.

Pruning of evergreens should be based upon the presence of their branch foliage. Do not cut beyond the green foliage portion. If you continue to prune, lightly, evergreens such as arborvitae, yews, and junipers, each summer, they will eventually be a thicker and fuller plant. Failure to prune will result in scraggly-looking trees. Larger junipers and other plants may need a size reduction. In order to do this, follow the branches to be cut until you find new small growth that parallels the branch. Make your cut, diagonally, just beyond the reach of this smaller, parallel branch.

In some evergreens, you will find that the top has been lost due to injury. In such cases, you need to "build" a new top. This can be done by selecting the largest of the whorls nearest the top and by gently bending it up. Tie the branch to an attached brace, using a non-girdling material such as cloth. Then cut back the other lateral branches so that they cannot compete with the branch chosen as the new top. As with deciduous trees, it is important to cut back to a side branch or bud, and to leave no stubs.

No matter what type of tree you are pruning, the practices of topping, hat-racking, and heading are not recommended. These methods of trimming are not true pruning techniques, and they result in small shoots, called suckers, to form near the cut surface. These suckers are weak and rarely attractive, and they can distort the shape of the tree. And once improperly pruned, a tree may never return to its characteristic form.

Testing 1-2-3: How Soil Testing Can Lead to a Perfect Lawn

When you are getting ready to maintain your lawn, it is best to test the soil in order to see what you will have to do in order to keep it looking healthy. Soil testing will determine not only how much you need to water your lawn, but also will give you an idea of what nutrients are in your lawn. If there are not enough nutrients, or if they are absorbed in the wrong way through the soil, then your lawn can easily not look as healthy as it was meant to be.

When you test your soil in your lawn, you will be able to measure how much of each type of nutrient your lawn will need to receive. There are several ways to test your soil, as well as different conclusions that can be reached by measuring the soil in your lawn.

The first way to test your soil is through finding the pH balance of your soil. There are several test kits that are available for your use to determine the level of pH that your soil is at. If you are uncertain about using one of these kits, there are universities and companies, which offer pH balance testing for your soil. By knowing the pH, you can determine how many nutrients will be needed in order to balance out the soil. If the pH is off, it will be harder for the right nutrients to be given to your grass. By balancing out the nutrients through the pH, it will help with the growth of your lawn.

The second thing to consider with your soil is what type of soil you have. There are generally four different categories that are included in the types of soils that are present. The first kind is

sand. This is usually light and airy. If your lawn has sandy soil, it will be harder to maintain for several reasons. It is unable to carry a large amount of water or nutrients in it because it is a grainy type of soil that is smaller in size. If you have sandy soil, it is best to either replace it with a lot of nutrients, or water frequently.

The second type of soil is silt. This type of dirt is usually found around riverbeds. Like sand, it cannot retain much water and erodes easily. The problem with silt is that it will not retain water or nutrients when you water. Instead, it will wash away. The third type of soil is clay. This is opposite of sandy soil, as it is heavy in texture. While it absorbs water and nutrients easier, because of its thick texture, it is often hard for this to reach the lawn. The fourth type of soil is loam. This is noted to be a balanced type of soil, with a good amount of nutrients, but it won't cause drainage or hold things away from the plants.

You can test the soil you have by digging into your yard and picking up a handful of dirt. If the dirt clumps together, it is more like the clay. If it falls easily out of your hand it is closer to the sandy or silt type of soil. The loam soil will be found if it stays in your hand, but does not clump together when you test it.

Once you know which type of soil you have, you can determine what types of nutrients or fertilizer you need to add in order to grow a great looking lawn. If the nutrients are unbalanced in your yard, you might have problems with brown spots or wilting.

Soil testing will also help in determining how often you need to water your lawn. If the soil is closer to a clay type, then it won't be necessary to water your lawn as much. If it is closer to a sandy or silt type of soil, then it is important to water it consistently, as the water won't be absorbed as easily.

By testing your soil for both the pH balance, as well as for type of soil, you will be able to know how to maintain your lawn with little to no extra work. It will also help your lawn to look healthy throughout the spring, summer and fall seasons.

Top Five Watering Basics for a Perfect Lawn

One of the most important things that will be needed for a green looking lawn that stays healthy is through watering it properly. If you don't water it right, it can cause either wilting of the grass, or it will cause brown patches to be in different areas of your yard. Here are five watering techniques to be used when watering your lawn in order to make it look healthier.

Know how much water to give your grass. It is important to know the climate that you live in, as well as what type of soil that you have and the nutrients which you need to give your grass. By determining all of these different things, you will know how much water you need to supply with your grass. Each region is different, and can be measured easiest by keeping these things in mind.

Knowing how long to water your lawn. Many will stop watering their lawns after the spring and summer seasons are over. However, even if you are thinking that it is going to

snow a lot, beginning in the late fall, it is best to continue watering your lawn. Because of the colder temperatures that are arising, the shift in climate moves into that of a desert, meaning that the lawn is in need of more supply of water, rather than less. By the time the cold takes over, it will ice the water and freeze the ground, making it so that the grass doesn't receive the same nutrients that are needed.

Irrigation Systems. There are several different ways to water your lawn, which will make it easier for both you and the grass. Automatic irrigation systems are one way to water your grass. They can help to save money as well as save on water supply. If you have an even surface, the best type of system to put in is a spray lawn sprinkler.

This gives a lot of water to the lawn in a shorter amount of time, which will then be soaked up by the soil quickly. If your lawn is on a slope, it is best to have a rotor lawn system. This applies water at a slower rate, but can water larger areas that are uneven. By knowing what type of water system you need, an irrigation system can help in saving on maintenance time, as well as saving on water supply.

Know the soil type. This will help to determine how much water your grass will need. There are basically three different types of soils. The first is clay, which will not need as much water. The second is loamy soils, which is an average type of soil. The third type of soil is sandy, which requires more water.

The difference between these three is the size of the soil. The larger soils can soak more water and keep it in the yard. You can tell the size and type of your soil by the qualities and the size of the soil. For example, clay soil will be stickier and can be rolled into balls without falling apart. Loamy soil cannot roll in a ball, but will stick when you apply pressure to it. Sandy soil will fall apart without you being able to control the form that it takes.

Watering your lawn at the right time. If you water your lawn in the middle of the day, you are likely to have to water your lawn more, without the lawn carrying the nutrients for long periods of time. This is especially important when the weather is hotter, as the sun will take the water and cause it to evaporate, instead of allowing the water to soak into the soil. It is said that the best time to water is either in the morning or evening. This will not only help with preventing extra care to the lawn, but will also preserve water.

The most important thing to keep in mind when determining the factors in watering your lawn will be how to save on water while supplying the right amount of nutrients to the lawn. By doing so, your lawn will stay greener throughout the years.

Tree and Shrub Care Programs

In many communities there are companies that offer tree and shrub care programs. These programs are the health care plans of the plant world. They are designed to help you monitor and care for your plants, as well as treat problems that come up.

It is even possible for you to design your own tree and shrub care program that can aid you as you take care of the plants yourself, with minimal help from the care specialist. But one thing is certain: in order to keep your landscape looking healthy and attractive, you do need to take an active interest in some sort of care regimen for your trees and shrubs.

There are many benefits associated with having a care program for trees and shrubs. Benefits include catching infestations early and identifying diseases while they are treatable and before they do too much damage. A caterpillar infestation can cause defoliation, and if you move quickly to avoid this, your trees will look much better for longer.

Additionally, if plants have good care, they are more resistant to disease and will flourish, giving your landscape a more attractive look. A proper program of care can prevent these problems and save you money on down the road. The old saying "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is certainly true, especially as it relates to plants.

Other problems that a tree and shrub care program can help with are less detrimental to the health of the plants and more practical in nature. Proper monitoring can ensure that weak branches are removed before they fall on and damage your house. Additionally, proper care and pruning of branches ensures abundant flowering and a thicker, fuller look in evergreens. While better flowering and fuller plants may not directly affect the health of the plant or your wallet, they do add substantially to the attractiveness of a landscape and can contribute to the better enjoyment of your home.

Most tree and shrub care programs are developed and administered by specialized companies that provide care. They can also be arranged through an arborist or a master gardener. These programs do cost money, however. There are comprehensive programs that cover all costs related to monitoring your landscape plants and treating any problems or providing specific care. There are also programs that provide monitoring services and then charge treatments separately. The idea is to use a program that fits into your budget, and then reap the benefits of a landscape that is well cared for.

Another approach to the tree and shrub care program is developing and following one yourself. It may cost a little money up front, as you will have to consult with a master gardener or an arborist, but in the long run it is worth it if you take good care of your trees. In some localities, an extension office may have a horticulturist on hand to answer your questions at no charge. The key is to figure out a care program that you can carry out yourself, or that you can carry out mostly on your own, with back up help from professionals when needed.

Developing your own plan can be very rewarding. It helps you get closer to your landscape, and it can also help you spot problems quickly. You should have a regular schedule for inspection of trees and shrubs, as well as other plants, and a regular schedule of care and maintenance. To learn how to properly prune trees and shrubs, keep an eye out for community classes.

You can even pay for a session with a professional. Paying for a two or three hour lesson in pruning can save you hundreds of dollars in having to pay a yard service to do the work. Make sure you know the best times to prune, and do your pruning on a schedule as well as the rest of the landscape maintenance.

No matter whether you pay for a professional tree and shrub care program, or whether you carry out such a regimen yourself, it is important to have a plan for the proper care of the plants on your landscape. This way you will find that you have a more attractive landscape and save money in trying to fix large problems that arise through neglect.

The Landscaping Tip of All Time

There is many a landscaping tip out there to satisfy even the most desperate of landscapers or would be landscapers and you can find hundreds of them online. But in all of my years as a landscape artist I have come to the conclusion that while there are many different landscaping tips only a few are universal and there is a good chance that only one landscaping tip will do you any good.

The landscaping tip that you need the most will be different than the one I needed because each project is different, so take your time and learn about as many landscaping tips as you can before you start your project.

The landscaping tip that everyone can learn from is to always make your yard one that will look great at any time of the year. This can be tricky because in the middle of winter many things do not look so hot. This is why it is so important to learn about the kinds of plants and trees that will still bring beauty to your home in the depth or winter and in the summer heat.

To find the plants that will make this landscaping tip work will require you to do a little more work. You will have to find out what plants will thrive in your climate all year round. Of course some will do better during certain months but you need to always have something going on that is attractive in your yard.

The best place for you to find out the best plants for this landscaping tip is your local garden center. They are the experts and they should be able to answer all of your questions about what your choices in plants and trees should be. If this does not work for you then take a trip to the library and check out some books on local flowers and trees. These can be gold when you are trying to choose just the right things for your yard.

Another good landscaping tip is to layer all of your planting beds. This will bring a sense of unity and balance to your entire yard. To get this particular landscaping tip working at its best you should also use repetition in this design. Have these layers repeated throughout the yard and it will look that much better to those walking by.

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