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Use of Lawn Maintenance Tools

Saves Time and Sore Muscles

One lawn maintenance chore that is as important as that which is the correction of disease, overwatered, debris-laden turf. A lawn in this condition is called "chatched" and the condition is relieved—slowly and painfully by hand, or quickly and mechanically by a power rake.

Two generations ago your grandfather would have thought you meant to "rake" the lawn. In any turf at the result of normal grass growth in which new blades replace old as they are "chatched" off.

This condition is further accelerated if grass clippings are allowed to remain on the lawn after mowing, especially in present-day lawns which have been encouraged to extravagant growth by intensive feeding.

Thatch forms an impenetrable layer which can smother new growth, cause water to roll off the lawn, interfere with new seeding, and hinder penetration of fertilizers and other products. An especially thick thatch can also encourage fungus and insect infestation.

Experts recommend detatching in the Fall, if re-seeding is to be done and also to prevent Winter-smothering and snow mold.

The removal of grass clippings has a two-fold purpose. In addition to giving lawns a clean, neat, more uniform appearance, removal of lawn sweepings tends to reduce grass disease and helps to control weeds by limiting their breeding.

Furthermore, the experts say any debris such as leaves, lawn mowers, etc., which are permitted to remain on the lawn, will tend to rot, cut off light and air and, in damp weather, encourage disease. Certain leaves highly rot in the garden—the more beautiful for maintenance care right now.

Suit Families To A T

New Carefree Cottages

Leave Time For Leisure

A vacation home should not become a vacation. That's why buyers of cottages at the shore, on a lake, or in the woods are wary of maintenance chores that dribble away their leisure time.

A definite trend toward completely finished, trouble-free summer homes has been observed by Houston's builder Bryan, who sells about 350 cottages a year along the Texas Gulf coast and nearby lake area.

"Up to a few years ago, we sold mostly shell homes—those in which the finishing work is done by the homeowner himself," Bryan said. "Now buyers want a home in town, a home ready to move into. They don't want to spend their time working on it."

Bryan reports that buyers show a keen and knowing interest in the basic specifications of the home—the kind of siding, the roofing material, type of doors and windows. When satisfied as to their durability and low maintenance, they then proceed to discuss location, design and layout.

The average buyer of a Bryan summer cottage is described as in the 40 to 50 year age range, owns a home in town, a boat and most likely two cars, and has an excellent credit rating.

"These people," Bryan declared, "don't need to, and don't want to, spend their leisure time working on their vacation cottages."

One of the first questions they ask is about the siding. How well it stands up? How long before it has to be painted?

Bryan explains that the siding of the "Texas T"—the newest model—is of mineral fiber with an acrylic-plastic finish that's baked on at the factory. It has a colored finish that needs no paint to protect it. The colors stay fresh and bright because they're a permanent part of the acrylic finish.

Bryan says buyers are also concerned with the roof. He tells them the self-sealing asphalt shingles have been tested by the Underwriters' Laboratories to withstand high winds—an important consideration on the Gulf.

The cottage, which is an 860-square-foot "T"-shaped model, is built on creosoted pilings to provide maximum view and protect the lower sections from water and insect damage. There are two bedrooms, one in each wing, with a connecting bath, and a living room, dining room and kitchen along the base of the T. Each bedroom has its own sun porch.

Bathroom storage cabinets can be built as open shelves against an available wall, or into a nearby closet.

In either case, if there are small children in your household, a special section to store medicines and lotions under lock and key is a must.

The depth of the cabinet should be 18 inches to hold a stack of large bath towels folded lengthwise in thirds; the full height of the bathroom or storage area, floor to ceiling.

Window Styles Are Key To Character Of Dwelling

Builders and architects are relying increasingly on window treatment to emphasize the style of new homes and to give them individuality.

A Colonial house often is keyed by a big bow window, sometimes flanked by narrow swinging-out casements with diamond-shaped grilles. An Early American farmhouse is suggested by tall double-hung windows treated with grilles that give the effect of many small rectangular panes.

Contemporary suburbs may feature banks of awning windows, large casement or sliding windows, or double-hung windows with a single horizontal window placed high on the wall for privacy. Floor-to-ceiling windows are used where maximum light and a view are wanted.

The deftness of a designer in selecting and locating windows can do much to give a house individuality, especially in large suburban developments. The many styles of wood windows available in stock sizes provide

an economical means of achieving variety. Even when house designs in a development are uniform, differences in window styles can set the homes apart.

Since the exterior color scheme is an important factor in individualizing a house, the paintability of wood windows is another factor homeowners appreciate. Stock windows of ponderosa pine come from the factory chemically treated for durability and ready to be painted or stained.

Besides giving a house an appearance of warmth, windows made of wood, which is a natural insulating material, actually help keep the house warm in winter and cool in summer. They come from the factory fully weather-stripped and equipped with hardware carefully engineered for easy opening and tight closing.

Wood windows of every type—sliding, casement, vent, bow, bay, awning, hopper, double-hung, picture and window-door combinations are sold by home improvement centers and lumber dealers.

Now Is Time To Think Of Paneling Room

A practical remodeling project is the paneling of a child's bedroom with wood.

Wood paneling provides a cheerful but relaxing atmosphere for study during the school season.

Modern patterns of paneling are well adapted to this type of remodeling. They can be applied directly to existing walls in less than full floor-to-ceiling length. There is a slight spacing between panels that their full thickness projects from the walls.

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