

Instant lawn requires more than watering

A lawn is essential for a good appearance of the grounds. When you have a good lawn it shows off the rest of the garden at its very best.

Every turf or lawn expert will say that the best time to start a new lawn, especially from seed, is in the fall. But here we are in the spring and you need a lawn—immediately. There is one simple solution. Put down sod. When given proper care, sod can be put down at anytime, spring or fall.

Sod, as we all know, consists of the actual grass plants in a sheet or roll, like carpet. The green is seen immediately. But if you look at sod closely you will see that it has only a fraction of the roots that a normal grass plant will have. Most of the roots were left in the field where the sod was removed. This is an important thing to remember.

There is also a feeling that sod can be put down on any soil—even that which looks and feels like concrete—and it will grow and flourish. Not so. If you are going to pay the high price one does for sod, give it some good soil to grow in. Prepare the soil just as you would if you were going to plant seed. Add plenty of peat, moss and mix this into the upper few inches. Rent a tiller for a day and you will save a lot of digging.

Add some fertilizer. Use one of

those made especially for lawns, one with a high nitrogen content.

As for the sod: order it in advance. Ask for deliver—from the sod farm directly, if possible—on a day when you can lay it down immediately, which means you should have your soil prepared. Don't let your sod stand around for any length of time; it will start to decompose just like compost if given the opportunity.

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When putting down the sod, make sure that what roots are left make good contact with the soil. Any gap between soil and sod could result in the sod's drying out.

Roll the sod with a lawn roller after it has been laid. This is done to further insure contact between roots and soil. Of course, you should have raked the area pretty thoroughly so that it is nice and smooth. Sod goes on much easier over smooth soil.

Now comes the important part: Be sure to water the sod immediately, and keep it moist for most of the summer. Water it every day if necessary. The reason: Those roots that were removed must be replaced, and the only way they will grow well is by their having ample water. You also need more water than normal be-

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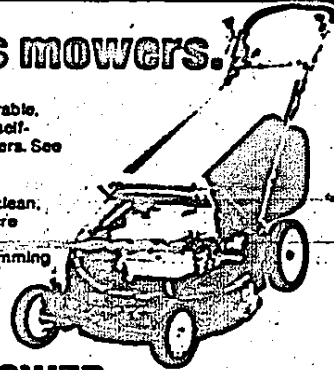
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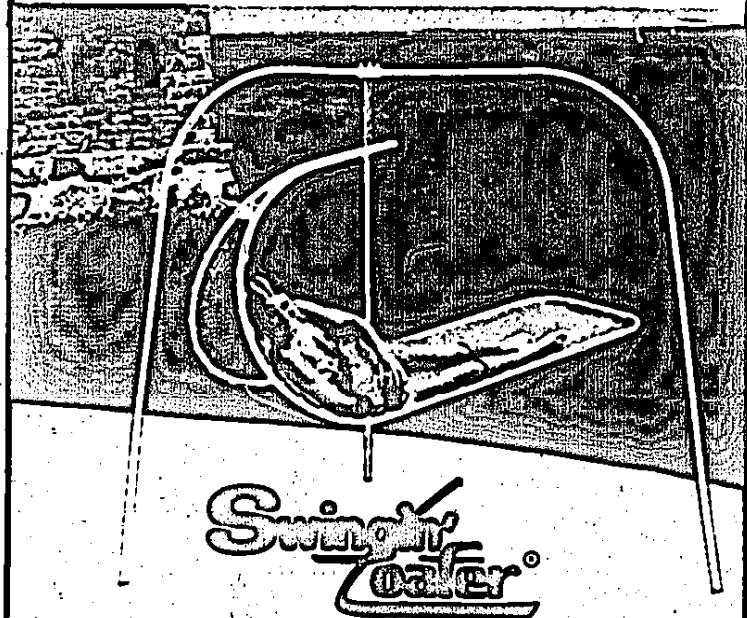
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