



The Green Thumb

By GEORGE ABRAHAM

Home landscaping: Your home is your castle. You should take care of it on the outside as well as on the inside.

No reason why you can't landscape your grounds yourself. Anything you do to enhance your home is like putting

money in the bank. The way you do it is up to you. You should take care of it on the outside as well as on the inside.

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Proper Preparations End New Lawn Worries

A new lawn can be planted with greatest confidence if the seedbed has been cultivated, mixed in plenty of fertilizer (and lime, too, if a soil test shows acidity).

It is possible to scorch old vegetation chemically, scratch the surface (as with a powered tilling machine) and then seed. But seed stands the best chance of settling to a good site for sprouting and rooting among loose soil chunks.

Soil cultivation may be a rotary tiller (almost no one seems to spade sizable areas anymore), or a tractor with cultivating and leveling implements can be hired.

Don't rework the soil more than necessary to get it level, for repeated tillage pulverizes soil aggregates and destroys structure. A dusty soilbed "melts" to an impervious surface upon first watering, seals off the sown seed from air, and causes future water to run off rather than soak into the lawn.

USE A LAWN SPREADER to sow seed uniformly. About three pounds of a Kentucky bluegrass-fescue blend is all that is needed for 1,000 square feet, or only half this much of tiny seeded varieties such as Highland benigrass.

If possible, mulch the new seeding. Any loose material that conserves moisture and protects the soil will suffice.



OFFICE TONIC—A tree will transform a cold office into an interesting, relaxing room.

Around home you might find dried lawn clippings, or the power company can perhaps provide chipped twigs. Stringy spigatum peatmoss can be used.

IF THE SOILBED is kept moist by light sprinklings and weather is warm, the seeding should sport a fuzz of green in two to three weeks. Natural mulches need not be removed, but of course a plastic covering is another matter.

Roots of new grass grow about as much as the tops, so when the grass is an inch or

two tall watering can become less frequent.

As soon as the grass leaves turn a bit floppy, two to three inches tall, it is time for mowing. From then on mow each time the lawn exceeds its customary height (usually about three-fourths inch for bentgrass, 1 1/4 to two inches for bluegrass and fescues) by 50%.

After a few mowings the lawn will be well enough established to endure weed treatments if needed, including spring crabgrass preventers such as Azek, Betasan, Dacthal and so on.

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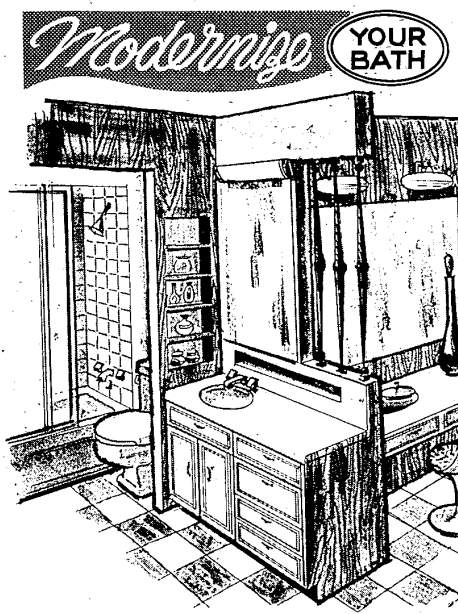
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