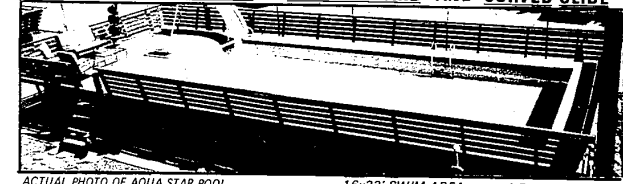


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Your Lawn Can Be Beautiful

Improving Old One

Planting New One

If the old lawn has not been a howling success, try to determine causes for its failure.

Not a whole lot can be done in the way of grading or soil improvement, short of regrading the lawn. But you can introduce better-adapted grasses, check weeds, increase fertility, improve mowing practices, restrain pests and lighten use of heavily trafficked sections.

Most old lawns have a layer of partially decomposed vegetation at the base of the sod, called thatch. Unless thatch is removed, new seed can scarcely reach the soil, which it must contact in order to root.

Where thatch is heavy, fertilizer may not penetrate to

the rootzone, nor pesticides reach the pests. Even rain may not soak through into the ground.

A brisk raking can free a small lawn of thatch, but thatch is more efficiently removed from large areas by powered machines. These usually can be rented. Loosened thatch should be swept up for the compost pile.

POOR LAWNS often contain starved grass, a condition easily corrected with lawn fertilizer. Over-seeding with quality grasses is a good accompaniment to fertilization. There are many new bluegrasses, fine fescues, bentgrasses and perennial ryegrasses from which to choose. Bolster seedings may

be so light as half the normal seeding rate.

It is probably well to forget chemical weed control until enough to have had a few mowings.

Spring weather provides the needed magic for turning a newly refurbished lawn into a resplendent sward. Growth comes easy in spring, but don't be lulled into repeating mistakes of the past. Don't mow the grass unduly low, or use strong fertilizers in hot weather.

Traditional bluegrasses and fine fescues are best mowed no lower than 1 1/2 inches (new cultivars like Fyking, Penstar, Baron and Sodo tolerate clipping at an inch or less).

Colonial bentgrasses, such as Highland mow neatly at 3 1/2 inch; they should be clipped each few days. Fescues require only light feeding, but the newer bluegrasses and bentgrasses deserve some fertilization each several weeks to look their best.

Starting a new lawn is not so troublesome as it once was. Vastly improved equipment now mechanizes the effort, and a fine assortment of bluegrasses, fescues, bentgrasses - even tury-type perennial ryegrasses, - is here.

A prosperous lawn needs good "life of the land." When grading avoid steep slopes, or depression that may impound water. Where drainage is poor tiling may be needed. Underground sprinkling systems are becoming popular, and inexpensive plastic systems can be self-installed.

Weedy vegetation, if abundant, can be eliminated with non-selective herbicides before soil preparation.

Equipment for scarifying the soil ranges from special "power rakes" to tractor-drawn discs. These scuff the surface enough to make an adequate home for seed. But it is hard to beat old-fashioned

soil cultivation for a really top-flight seedbed.

Before you plow and disc, or rotary till, check lime needs. Almost certainly fertilizer will be required, like lime most effectively mixed into the rootzone during seedbed cultivation.

Don't over-work the soil, pulverizing it to a dust; it then cakes and resists insoak of rain. If the seedbed seems fluffy soak it; loosen the surface again and rake level when dry enough.

SPREAD GOOD quality seed uniformly over the thousand square feet. Grasses in the blend should be "fine-textured," perennial, and have the ability to spread. Bluegrass, fescue mixtures are widely used, and bentgrasses serve well in humid climates or for lawns that will be mowed low.

Combining the new low-growing bluegrasses and

fescues with colonial bentgrasses such as Highland and Holfior has been encouraging. Seed is distributed most accurately by a good lawn spreader.

Lawnseed settles nicely into the pebbled surface of a loosened seedbed, and is ideally situated for quick sprouting and good rooting. A much such as straw a few straws thick keeps a seedbed from drying out readily, reduces the need for watering and affords some soil protection.

Newly seeded lawns mulched with straw, spagnum, excelsior, woven nettings, chopped twigs or suchlike, will generally "show green" within two or three weeks. As seedlings progressively root more deeply, irrigation can taper off. Begin mowing when grass about doubles its normal cutting height.

Distressing Simulates Age In Oak

Old-looking oak floors are currently among the most popular kinds of floors, according to the Oak Flooring Institute.

Some of these floors are really old - they come by their aged look honestly - but many are "distressed" to simulate the attractiveness of age.

There are several ways of achieving the "old" look in an oak floor. One of the easiest is to stain a floor dark. For this, you should use a dark penetrating sealer.

In many areas of the country, there are contractors who specialize in creating "distressed" floors.



THE OUTDOORS is brought indoors in a Mediterranean setting for the Ultra/Bath bathing center. Dark woods effectively accent the bone beauty of the sculptured pool and shower tower.

Full Line Yard Stocks Everything

With so many types of retail outlets carrying do-it-yourself materials and tools

what is the best kind of supplier for a homeowner to choose? It all depends, of course, upon one's skill and knowledge of a project underway but, generally, the best source is the one professionals use - a lumber and building supply company.

The reasons for this are many and varied but one of the chief factors that affects purchasing decisions is the variety and depth of stock in material, tools and sundries available. Builders demand that a supply yard carry just about everything they may need in constructing a house and this same broad stock, is

therefore, available to the Saturday tinkerer.

A specialty store or discount operation might be promoting a particular item for a job but it is only the full line yard that has on hand, and at competitive prices, tools, nails, adhesives, advice, finishing materials and related items as well as the promoted item.

In addition, the lumber and building material dealer is geared to supplying individual small requirements of all materials from his broad stock and can best tailor the amount of purchase to the job to be done. The sales personnel at the counter are inclined to suggest the odd little things that will probably be needed on almost any job and thus save the homeowner a return trip.

'Snapping' Is Explained

New owners of an electronic air cleaner may be surprised occasionally to hear a sharp snapping sound emanating from their air cleaner.

Air cleaner experts point out that such a sound is known as "arcing" and that it is perfectly normal.

This arcing is caused by larger dirt particles being collected on the electronic cell. Arcing also will occur if the electronic cell is still damp after being washed.

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