

Commonly Asked Questions

Will grasscycling make my lawn look bad?

No! Follow the 1/3 rule—mow often enough so that no more than 1/3 of the length of the grass is cut. The short clippings decompose quickly and will not cover the grass surface.

Does grasscycling cause thatch buildup?

No! Research has shown that grass roots and stems are the primary cause of thatch, not grass clippings. Roots and stems contain large amounts of lignin (wood), a substance that decomposes very slowly. In contrast, grass clippings are approximately 80–85 percent water with only small amounts of lignin, and they decompose rapidly.

Does grasscycling spread lawn disease?

No! Improper watering and fertilizing are the primary causes of turfgrass disease. If a favorable environment for disease is present, it will occur whether grass clippings are left on the lawn or not.



Does grasscycling require special equipment?

Refer to your owner's manual or contact a local lawnmower dealer to learn if you can safely grasscycle. You may need to purchase a retrofit kit, and your mower dealer can assist you with selecting the correct one. Mulching mowers make grasscycling easy by cutting grass blades into small pieces and forcing them into the soil. Electric mulching mowers can also help reduce air pollution.

Are there alternatives to grasscycling?

Yes! Grasscycling does not work in every situation. Prolonged wet weather, mower breakdowns, or infrequent mowing are situations where grass clippings should probably be bagged since a large number of clippings may be generated. But don't throw the clippings away! Add clippings to your compost pile, or use them as mulch around trees, flowerbeds, and shrubs.

For more information, contact your local University of California Cooperative Extension office or visit the CIWMB website at www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Organics/Gardening/.

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INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT BOARD



GRASSCYCLE!



Make the most
of your lawn.



Make the most
of your time.

Grass clippings make up a surprisingly large portion of California's waste stream. State Law requires communities to reduce the amount of trash they send to California's landfills. Grasscycling is an effective way to reduce the amount of green materials generated in urban landscapes.



What is Grasscycling?

Grasscycling is the natural recycling of grass by leaving clippings on the lawn when mowing. Grass clippings decompose quickly, returning valuable nutrients back into the soil.



Enjoy A Healthier Lawn!

- Grass clippings add beneficial organic matter to the soil, which helps make lawns greener and healthier.

Save Money!

- Grass clippings act as a natural fertilizer and can reduce fertilizer requirements by 15-20 percent.
- Green waste collection programs are costly, and grasscycling can help keep garbage collection rates down.



Save Time!

- Grasscycling saves time and the hassle of bagging, raking, and disposing grass clippings.



Help The Environment!

- Reduces yard waste.
- Reduces turfgrass fertilizer and water requirements that can minimize toxic runoff entering storm drains and polluting creeks and rivers.



Tips for Successful Grasscycling

Mowing

- Mow your lawn when the grass is dry.
- Keep mower blades sharp.
- Follow the "1/3 rule"—mow often enough so that no more than 1/3 the length of the grass blade is cut in any one mowing.

Watering

- Water early in the morning to reduce evaporation and disease.
- Deep, infrequent watering produces a deeper, extensive root system.
- Lawns watered too frequently develop shallow root systems that make them more susceptible to stress and disease.

Fertilizing

- Apply small quantities of fertilizer more frequently rather than larger amounts occasionally for moderate, even growth.
- Avoid using large quantities of fast-acting fertilizers.
- Overfertilizing can weaken a lawn by causing excessive top growth, which can make it more susceptible to disease.