

How to Sharpen Your Lawn Mower Blade

A dull blade shreds grass as it cuts. This leaves grass vulnerable to disease and causes browning at the tip. So keep your blade sharp, to help your lawn stay healthier.

1. DISCONNECT SPARK PLUG

- *Before you start any gas mower maintenance, always disconnect the spark plug and, secure it off to the side so it won't start accidentally.*

2. PREP

- *Wear heavy gloves to protect your hands. To prevent fuel from leaking when you tip the mower on its side, close the gas cap over a sandwich bag.*

3. REMOVE BLADE

- *A block of wood or a blade removal tool will keep the blade from moving as you loosen it. Free the lawn mower blade by unscrewing the bolts.*

4. CLEAN

- *Use this opportunity, while the blade is off and the spark plug is disconnected, to clean the mower deck. Using a putty knife, scrape off grass and mud.*

5. SHARPEN BLADE

- *Your blade doesn't need to be razor sharp, just free of nicks with a clean, smooth edge. If you don't have a bench grinder, a rotary tool lawn mower sharpening attachment makes this quick work. It's designed to put an accurate 30 degree angle on the blade.*

6. BALANCE BLADE

- *An unbalanced blade can vibrate and damage the engine.*
- *Check your blade before reinstalling using a blade balancing tool.*
- *Or, hang the blade on a nail. If it's dipping to one side, sharpen from the back edge of the heavier side until it's balanced.*

7. REPLACE BLADE

- *Use a torque wrench to replace the blade so you can tighten the bolt to the precise setting.*
- *Set the wrench to the correct "ft-lb" indicated in the owner's manual.*
- *Over tightening the blade can damage the engine and prevent the blade from spinning freely. Under-tighten it and the blade could loosen and fall off.*

HELPFUL TIPS:

- *Gasoline gets stale in 4-6 weeks and can gum up the lawn mower's carburetor. At the end of the season, run the mower to empty the tank, or add fuel stabilizer to the tank to winterize your mower.*
- *Use a fuel system revitalizer if stale fuel prevents your mower from starting.*
- *If you don't want to sharpen the blade, just buy a replacement. Or, check your local Ace for sharpening services.*

For more helpful tips and advice, visit your neighborhood Ace and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest and Google+.

NOTE: Always follow manufacturer's recommended safety precautions and instructions for the products you use.

