

# Seasonal Maintenance Check-list

## Homeowners Guide

Yard work happens all season long, and of course it can always be more sustainable. Here we have a list of many ways to maintain your yard with an Eco-conscience approach. It's organized by season, with Spring focused on setting-up for the season, Summer focused on maintenance, and Fall focused on closing up for Winter. However these tasks can of course be performed at any point during the year.

### Spring

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tree Droppings</b>	Sweep or move any fallen seeds, nuts, or berries, from sidewalks and other high trafficked areas to planted beds.	<b>Why?</b> Moving these seeds gives them a better chance of sprouting instead of being stepped on, which helps support the local wildlife, and keeps your paths looking nice.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Mulch</b>	Use only organic mulch applications or the alternative "Green Mulch" approach. This is when densely-growing native plants are used for ground coverage in place of traditional wooden mulch.	<b>Why?</b> Mulch has a large impact on soil health, so it's important to avoid harsh additives found in non-organic options, and using "Green Mulch" is an easy and effective alternative, that requires less yearly labor and costs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Mulch Placement</b>	Be sure to keep mulch rings 2ft. away from the base of trees and spread in an even flat layer. Make sure to avoid creating "Mulch Volcanoes".	<b>Why?</b> Having mulch too close to tree trunks can attract pests, impede root growth, and lead to root rot among other plant diseases.

### Summer

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Invasive/Unwanted Plants</b>	Prune off the heads of any invasive or unwanted plants before they go to seed.	<b>Why?</b> Preventing these plants from going to seed greatly stops the spread of their growth.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Re-invest Clippings</b>	Recycle weeds, yard clippings, and any unwanted plants back into your yard by turning them into mulch. Remove any seeds from unwanted plants to prevent further growth.	<b>Why?</b> It's always best to utilize materials from your yard instead of treating them as waste. This is also a good opportunity to prevent further growth of unwanted plants.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Shrub Maintenance</b>	Try to maintain their natural shape and preserve blooms, berries, etc. Avoid shearing shrubs into "green meatballs".	<b>Why?</b> It's important to preserve blooms and berries because they support local wildlife and pollinators.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Mowing</b>	Mow <u>at MOST</u> once every two weeks. Try to mow only to keep below 10in. height, if defined in Code. Leave grass clippings where they land. Allow low-growing flowering plants to live in the lawn.	<b>Why?</b> Reduced time between mowings supports pollinators, birds, and other beneficial insects. The clippings should be left behind because they provide nutritional benefit back to the lawn and this reduces the amount needless yard waste.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Watering</b>	Water all yard elements only as needed. Use soaker hose drip irrigation instead of traditional sprays.	<b>Why?</b> Drip irrigation systems are more efficient at watering plants while conserving water.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Fertilizer Use</b>	Use fertilizer very minimally, or consider going "Pesticide-Free"! Be sure to use approved formulations and methods. More information can be found at Belmar.com.	<b>Why?</b> Some fertilizers contain excessive levels of Nitrogen and Phosphorus. This can leech into neighboring water systems during rainfall and disrupt the balance of local ecosystems.

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<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Integrated Pest Management (IMP)</b>	
	IPM uses targeted prevention, monitoring, and a combination of other non-toxic methods to manage pests. More information can be found at Belmar.com.	<b>Why?</b> The goal of IMP is to use the least toxic options first, in order to minimize risks to human health and the environment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Green Equipment</b>	
	Use only electric or hand-driven equipment. NO gas powered equipment.	<b>Why?</b> Using electric equipment avoids creating air-pollution and is more energy efficient.

### Fall

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Let the Yard Rest</b>	
	Leave Yard Cleanup until Spring, when air temperatures are above 50°F.	<b>Why?</b> Lots of pollinators hibernate through the winter, and disrupting the yard too early can mess with their hibernation cycles.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Leave the Leaves</b>	
	Generally, leave the leaves where they fall, and feel free to mulch them right into your lawn. If necessary to remove them from trafficked areas, move them to planted beds.	<b>Why?</b> The natural decomposition of leaves supports soil health and insect hibernation. Disposal of leaves only creates more needless yard waste.

### Year-round

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Composting</b>	
	Maintain a compost bin, or just a compost pile in an unobtrusive location.	<b>Why?</b> Composting is a great way to divert food waste away from the landfill.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Re-invest Branches</b>	
	You can use fallen or trimmed branches to build things around your yard like edging for garden beds or walkways, natural fence lines, wildlife habitats, or just chipped-up and used as mulch. Anything you like!	<b>Why?</b> It's always best to utilize materials from your yard instead of treating them as waste. This also helps trim the cost of yard materials required for annual maintenance.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Other :</b>	