



Your Yard

Beyond Mowing: Checklist for a Healthier Yard

(NAPS)—Don't put away your lawn equipment just yet. Fall isn't just about admiring the colors and taking care of the leaves; it's also a critical time for yard care. The TurfMutt Foundation, which advocates for the care and use of yards, parks, schoolyards and other green spaces, urges homeowners to get outside and start preparing their yards for the seasons ahead.

"Fall is the secret to a successful lawn," said Kris Kiser, President and CEO of the TurfMutt Foundation. "What you do in your yard this season will pay off with a greener, healthier yard next spring. By taking a few simple steps, you can set up your yard for a stunning comeback just in time for next year's backyarding season."

The TurfMutt Foundation shares this fall checklist to ensure our yards—and the planet—stay healthy:

- **Aerate the Soil:** Aerating creates small holes that let air, water and nutrients reach the roots, making them stronger to withstand the winter. This is especially important in compacted, high-traffic areas.
- **Mow at the Right Height:** Keep mowing until the first hard frost. For the final cut, lower your mower blade to about two inches. A shorter cut helps prevent mold and allows the grass to dry out quickly in the spring.
- **Overseed:** Fall is a favorable time to overseed to fill bare spots and make your lawn more resilient. The combination of the warm soil, cool air, and moisture in autumn helps seeds germinate.
- **Mulch Leaves:** Instead of bagging your leaves, consider mulching them with your mower. Mulched leaves return valuable nutrients back into your lawn, acting as Mother Nature's fertilizer.
- **Think About Wildlife:** Nature starts at your back door. Limit deadheading and trimming to provide food and shelter for local birds, insects, and other wildlife that rely on our yards during the colder months.



Mulligan the TurfMutt says homeowners should leave leaves on the lawn to make mulch.

- **Plant Bulbs for Spring:** Before the ground freezes, plant spring-blooming bulbs such as daffodils and tulips that will add a burst of color to your yard in the spring. Use the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map to find the best native bulbs for each area: <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>.

For more "backyarding" ideas and activities to engage kids in the green space around them this fall and beyond, visit www.turfmutt.com.

About the TurfMutt Foundation

TurfMutt was created by the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute's (OPEI) TurfMutt Foundation and has reached more than 70 million children, educators and families since 2009. The Foundation is title sponsor of "Lucky Dog," the Emmy Award-winning CBS broadcast television show in support of dog rescue and rehabilitation. Both TurfMutt spokesdogs have been rescue dogs, and Mutt Mulligan is a cast character on the show, where her "Mulligan Minute" segments teach viewers about the benefits of green space. Championed by Mulligan the TurfMutt, and through education partners such as Scholastic, Discovery, Weekly Reader, and the USBGC Global Learning Lab, TurfMutt has taught students and teachers how to "save the planet, one yard at a time." More information at www.TurfMutt.com.