

# Lawn Aeration

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

Provided by:

**Cliff's  
LAWN AND GARDEN  
EQUIPMENT**

**905-844-4304**

### **What is lawn aeration?**

Aeration is the process of mechanically poking thousands of holes in the soil. This allows water, oxygen and nutrients to better penetrate to the roots of your grass. This also causes roots to go deeper, making the lawn more resistant to drought and disease

### **How to aerate a lawn?**

You can rent motorized aerator machines. The best aerator is one having hollow tines (spoons) which pull up plugs of earth as the machine travels along. Use a criss-cross pattern. Examine a square foot area of the lawn; it should have at least 12 holes in it.

### **When to aerate?**

A lawn can be aerated at any time the ground is not frozen but should not be done when it is extremely hot and dry. Heavy traffic areas will require aeration more frequently. The best times to aerate are in the spring and early fall when soils are naturally moist and grass is growing quickly. Lawns should be thoroughly watered the day before aerating so plugs can be pulled more deeply and easily. **Note: Mark all under ground lines before aerating so those lines will not be damaged.**

### **What does it accomplish?**

Signs of compaction include grass that seems to be off-colour, thinning and shows signs of stress in high temperatures. Aerating reduces soil compaction and helps control thatch in lawns while helping water and fertilizer move into the root zone. This improves the lawn's overall health, thus reducing the susceptibility to disease and insect damage.

Do you aerate newly seeded grass or sod?

No. Sod should not be aerated for at least 12 months. Newly seeded lawns usually can be aerated in the second full season of growth.

### Benefits of aerating:

- Improves air exchange between the soil and the atmosphere
- Enhances soil water uptake
- Improved fertilizer uptake and use
- Reduces water runoff and puddling
- Improved turf grass rooting
- Reduces soil compaction
- Enhanced heat and drought stress tolerance
- Improved resiliency and cushioning
- Enhances thatch breakdown

Is it good to fertilize after aerating?

Yes. Fertilizing immediately **after** aeration will achieve the best return your fertilizer investment, as it will more easily get to the root structure at this time.

Can I Overseed after aeration?

Yes. If your lawn has areas where the stand of grass is thin, then broadcast seeding 1-2 weeks after aeration will improve germination, as the seeds will intermix with the deterioration of plugs and have direct access to non-compacted soil in the holes in the turf.

What is the difference between a "Core" aerator and a "Spike" aerator?

The hollow tines (sometimes called "spoons") of a core aerator plunge into the ground and pull up a large plug of earth. Spike aerators insert narrow, solid rods into the earth. Studies have shown that core aerator increased deep rooting and water extraction. The spike aerator showed no effects on grass health, it tends to compact the soil below and on either side of the hole it makes. It also glazes the side of the hole as it withdraws, making penetration of air and nutrients more difficult