



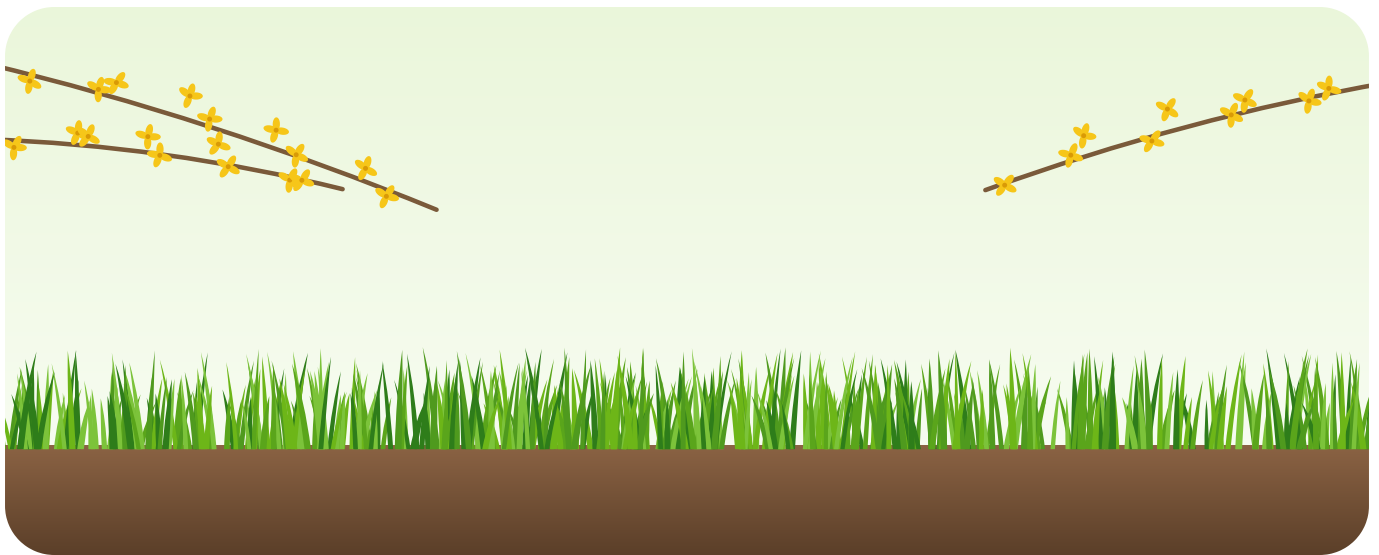
Nashville Aeration Co.

Let your lawn breathe.

Spring Lawn Guide · March–May

Spring. Wake it up right.

Weed prevention on time, a light hand with fertilizer, and the right first mows set your Nashville lawn up for summer. Here's what to do in March, April and May — for fescue, Bermuda and zoysia lawns.



55°F

Soil temperature at 2 inches that signals crabgrass preventer time. Forsythia blooms right around then.

½ lb

Nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft per spring feeding for tall fescue. Light is right in spring.

6–8 wks

Between your first and second crabgrass preventer applications.

01 • Month by month

Spring, month by month.

Tall fescue wakes up first. Bermuda and zoysia follow as the soil warms. Here's what each lawn needs, and when.

● TALL FESCUE

March

Wake-up month

- Start mowing when growth resumes. Keep it at **3–4 inches** and never cut more than a third of the blade.
- **Apply crabgrass preventer when forsythia blooms** (soil near 55°F). Water it in with about ½ inch within 1–2 days.
- **Feed lightly:** about ½ lb nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft, with at least 30% slow-release.
- Spray winter weeds like henbit and chickweed on days above 55°F, before they flower.

April

Green-up

- **Second light feeding:** about ½ lb nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft in early-to-mid April.
- Water only when you see drought stress: folded, bluish-gray leaves and footprints that stay.
- Spot-treat dandelions and other broadleaf weeds on mild days, following the label.
- Brown patch every summer? Plan a preventive fungicide starting in May.

May

Growing season

- **Second crabgrass preventer** application, 6–8 weeks after the first.
- **No more nitrogen until fall.** Warm, humid nights start brown patch season.
- Raise the mower toward 4 inches as heat builds.
- Nutsedge appears now. Treat it May–August with a sedge-specific product.
- When it's dry, water deeply — about 1 inch a week — early in the morning.

● BERMUDA & ZOYSIA

- Still dormant — tan is normal.
- **Crabgrass preventer at forsythia bloom.** Choose a product with little or no nitrogen.
- Once hard freezes are past, mow dormant Bermuda a bit lower and bag the clippings. Clearing dead growth helps the soil warm and speeds green-up.
- Run each sprinkler zone and fix broken heads before you need them.

- Green-up begins as the soil warms. **Hold off on fertilizer** until the lawn is fully green.
- Begin regular mowing: Bermuda **1–2 inches** (common Bermuda can go higher), zoysia **1½–2½ inches**.
- Zoysia: avoid scalping and early nitrogen — both encourage large patch disease.

- **First feeding:** Bermuda about 1 lb nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft in early-to-mid May. Zoysia mid-May to mid-June (no more than 2 lb a year in total).
- **Late May–early July:** the best window to core-aerate, and to dethatch if thatch is over ½ inch.
- Second crabgrass preventer, mid-to-late May.
- Plant or patch Bermuda from seed, sprigs or plugs May 1–June 30.



Watch the last freeze. Nashville's last spring freeze usually comes between late March and mid-April. Lower the mower on dormant Bermuda only after hard freezes are past — tender new growth can be injured by a late cold snap.

02 · Key topics

Get spring right.

The four decisions that shape how your lawn looks all summer.



Crabgrass preventer, done right

- **Timing:** apply when the soil at 2 inches has averaged about 55°F for several days — right as forsythia blooms. In Nashville, that's usually March. Get it down before the last forsythia blooms fall.
- **Water it in:** about ½ inch of rain or irrigation within 24–48 hours activates it.
- **Coverage:** one application lasts 12–16 weeks. A second application 6–8 weeks later carries you through summer.
- **Missed it?** Crabgrass killers work best on young plants, before they branch out.
- **Don't aerate or dethatch afterward.** Breaking the soil surface can open gaps in the barrier.



Seeding and weed preventers

- **Seeded last September or October?** A spring preventer is usually fine on schedule. Follow the label.
- **Seeding this spring?** Preventers stop grass seed too. Skip it on those spots, or use a seed-safe product such as mesotrione or siduron, per the label.
- **Spring seeding is a backup.** UT Extension warns spring seedlings often can't survive summer heat. Patch small areas in late February–March, and plan full aeration and seeding for fall.



Feed light, feed late

- **Tall fescue:** two light feedings, about ½ lb nitrogen each, in March and April. Heavy spring nitrogen pushes leaves over roots and fuels summer brown patch.
- **Bermuda:** first feeding after full green-up, usually early-to-mid May. **Zoysia:** mid-May to mid-June.
- **Read the bag:** $100 \div \text{the first number} = \text{pounds of product for 1 lb of nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft}$. For ½ lb, use half that.



Should you aerate in spring?

- **Tall fescue:** UT Extension prefers September, when seed can go down too. Spring coring can help a badly compacted lawn — do it before the crabgrass preventer goes down.
- **Bermuda & zoysia:** yes — late May through early July, while the grass is actively growing. Fertilize afterward to speed recovery.



Mowing heights

- Tall fescue** 3–4 inches (UT range 2½–5)
 - Bermuda** 1–2 inches; common Bermuda can go higher
 - Zoysia** 1½–2½ inches
- Never remove more than a third of the blade at once. Sharpen blades at least once a year — dull blades shred leaf tips.

03 • More tips

The details that add up.



Winter weeds hanging on

Henbit and chickweed flower in spring, then die out as it heats up. Spraying after they flower works poorly. Mow them to limit seed, and plan to control them in fall, when treatments work best.



Moles on the move

Moles are busiest in moist spring soil. UT Extension notes that grubs are only a small part of a mole's diet, so grub control alone rarely solves the problem. Traps set in active tunnels work best.



Water only when it asks

Spring rain usually covers it. When grass turns bluish-gray, leaves fold, or footprints stay, water deeply — about ½ inch at a time, early in the morning. Light daily sprinkles grow shallow roots.



Watch for spring dead spot

Round, dead patches that stay brown as Bermuda greens up are often spring dead spot, usually in lawns three to five years old. Treatment happens in fall, so note where the patches are now.

Your spring checklist

- ☐ Mower serviced and blade sharpened
- ☐ Crabgrass preventer down at forsythia bloom, watered in
- ☐ Second preventer application 6–8 weeks later
- ☐ Fescue: light feedings in March and April
- ☐ Bermuda and zoysia: first feeding after full green-up
- ☐ Sprinklers checked, broken heads fixed
- ☐ Bermuda and zoysia aeration planned for late May–early July
- ☐ Thin fescue areas noted for fall aeration and seeding

Avoid these spring mistakes

- ☒ Heavy nitrogen on fescue in spring
- ☒ Crabgrass preventer after forsythia drops its blooms
- ☒ Aerating or dethatching right after the preventer
- ☒ Fertilizing Bermuda before it's fully green
- ☒ Big fescue seeding projects in late spring
- ☒ Watering in the evening
- ☒ Scalping zoysia
- ☒ Mowing with dull blades

Based on University of Tennessee Extension publications PB1903, PB1576, PB1935, PB842, PB1303, W146, W159-H, W160-B, W160-F, W161-C, W161-F, W161-I, W161-M, W205, W260, W1359 and D141. Always follow product labels.



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