Let’s make your lawn better and
Let’s do it organically!

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Rooting DC
Lawns in the DMV are usually pretty small, so we’ve got to make the most of our green space!
Two Options

1. Blow it up!
2. Improve the existing lawn
Blow It Up

• If the lawn is more dirt than grass
• If weeds are the predominant vegetation
• If it feels like concrete when you walk on it
• If it has terrible drainage with big puddles after rain storms

• BTW – Not all yards are meant to be lawns, if you have a ton of shade, packs of dogs digging everything up and/or don’t like cutting grass consider other options for your yard!
Blow It Up – What to do

• Get a soil test, let’s know our baseline
• Kill off the existing grass with tarps if you have time
• Rake out 2-3 inches of compost and till it into the soil
• Rake the soil out, removing any stones or roots. Break up any big clumps with your hands
• Seed heavily with good grass seed. Cool weather grasses like fescue, rye grass, and blue grass are popular here
• Follow watering instructions for the seed
• Once established, mow the grass at highest level your mower will go, this helps block out weeds
• Re-seed bare spots
Improve the existing lawn

- If the lawn is generally grass
- If weeds seem manageable
- If it has at least decent drainage
- You don’t want to deal with work and expense that goes into a full lawn reboot
Improve the Existing Lawn – What to do

• Get a soil test, let’s know our baseline
• De-thatch the lawn with a thatch rake to get rid of dead grass
• Use a core aerator to relieve soil pressure
• Top Dress with ¼” to ½” of good compost
• Seed heavily with good grass seed. Cool weather grasses like fescue, rye grass, and blue grass are popular here
• Follow watering instructions for the seed
• Once established, mow the grass at highest level your mower will go, this helps block out weeds
• Re-seed bare spots
FYI – Thatch Rake
Grasscycling will not cause thatch issues!
FYI – Core Aerator
Reduces soil compaction

Improves fertilizer absorption & use

Enhances water absorption & use by soil

Increases oxygen movement between the soil & atmosphere

Before

After
Organic Lawn Maintenance

- Get a soil test every 1-2 years
- De-thatch the lawn with a thatch rake to get rid of dead grass every fall
- Use a core aerator to relieve soil pressure every fall
- Top Dress with ¼” to ½” of good compost every fall
- Overseed with good grass seed every fall
- Mow your grass at highest level your mower will go, usually 2-3 inches. Keep your blades sharp
- Practice grass cycling, don’t bag those clippings!
- Water your lawn deeply less frequently, instead of daily short waterings
- Apply fertilizers if needed (hopefully not), follow directions
Benefits of Organic Lawn Care

Organic vs. Inorganic

Organic Ingredients:
- Manure
- Compost
- Bone meal
- Feather meal
- Alfalfa meal
- Burned eggshells
- Urea
- Fish emulsion

Inorganic Ingredients:
- Ammonium sulfate
- Potassium nitrate
- Superphosphate
- Potassium chloride
- Potassium sulfate

3 million tons of inorganic fertilizer is applied to American lawns every year. This means greater potential for toxic runoff in our communities.

*Some states do not allow application of fertilizers containing phosphorus. Therefore, it’s imperative to double-check state regulations.
Questions?

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