

Lawn & Shrubbery Maintenance Annual Schedule

Here's your **Chicago Area Lawn & Shrubbery Maintenance Annual Schedule**, organized **chronologically by season** for easy reference.

SPRING (March - May)

Late Winter - Early Spring (February - March)

- **Tree & Shrub Dormant Oil Spray** – Apply to trees and shrubs to control overwintering pests.
- **Tree Trimming (Deciduous Trees)** – Prune dormant trees before leaf-out (avoid pruning spring-blooming trees).
- **Soil Testing** – Conduct a soil test to determine pH and nutrient needs.
- **Lawn Dethatching** – If thatch is over ½ **inch**, remove it before the grass starts growing.

Early to Mid-Spring (March - April)

- **Crabgrass Preventer (Pre-emergent Herbicide)** – Apply when soil temperatures reach **50-55°F** (late March - mid-April).
- **Broadleaf Weed Prevention** – Apply pre-emergent for weeds like chickweed and henbit.
- **Mulching (Garden Beds & Trees)** – Refresh with **2-3 inches** of mulch to retain moisture and suppress weeds.
- **Shrubbery Maintenance** – Prune **summer-flowering shrubs** before they start growing.

Late Spring (April - May)

- **First Lawn Fertilization** – Apply **slow-release nitrogen fertilizer** in late April or early May.
- **Lawn Aeration** – If soil is compacted, core aerate before summer heat arrives.
- **Lawn Overseeding** – If needed, overseed thin areas before late May.
- **Spring Shrub Pruning** – Prune **spring-flowering shrubs (lilacs, forsythia, etc.)** after they bloom.

Lawn & Shrubbery Maintenance Annual Schedule

- **Final Tree Pruning** – Finish any necessary light pruning before summer growth.
 - **Perennial Dividing** – Divide overgrown perennials (hostas, daylilies, etc.).
-

SUMMER (June - August)

Early Summer (June)

- **Second Lawn Fertilization (Optional)** – Light feeding if lawn is healthy but needs extra nutrients.
- **Post-emergent Weed Control** – Apply herbicides for broadleaf weeds (dandelions, clover) in cool weather.
- **Shrub Maintenance** – Lightly prune shrubs and hedges (avoid heavy cuts).
- **Fungus & Disease Prevention** – Apply **preventative fungicides** if lawn diseases are common.

Mid to Late Summer (July - August)

- **Grub Control (Preventative Treatment)** – Apply grub preventer (Merit, GrubEx) in early July.
 - **Grub Control (Curative Treatment)** – If grubs are active, apply Dylox in August.
 - **Lawn Watering** – Maintain **deep, infrequent watering** (1 inch per week, early morning).
 - **Keep Mowing Height High** – Maintain grass at **3-4 inches** to prevent drought stress.
 - **Light Shrub Pruning** – Trim to maintain shape but avoid stress in hot weather.
-

FALL (September - November)

Early Fall (September)

- **Fall Fertilization** – Apply a **winterizer fertilizer** (high in potassium) to promote root strength.
- **Weed Control** – Apply **post-emergent herbicide** for broadleaf weeds like dandelions before winter.
- **Lawn Aeration** – Best time to aerate and improve soil drainage.

Lawn & Shrubbery Maintenance Annual Schedule

- **Lawn Overseeding** – Ideal time to seed for a thicker lawn in spring.
- **Tree & Shrub Pruning** – Trim **non-flowering shrubs** before dormancy.

Mid to Late Fall (October - November)

- **Final Lawn Fertilization** – Apply **last fertilization before winter** in late October - early November.
 - **Mulching (Final Layer for Winter Protection)** – Apply before first frost.
 - **Leaf Cleanup** – Remove fallen leaves to prevent mold and lawn suffocation.
 - **Winter Shrub & Tree Protection** – Wrap delicate shrubs with burlap.
 - **Perennial Cutback** – Trim back perennials that go dormant in winter.
 - **Final Lawn Mowing** – Mow to **2.5 inches** to prevent snow mold.
-

WINTER (December - February)

Early Winter (December)

- **Tree Protection** – Wrap young trees to prevent **sunscald** and **rodent damage**.
- **Final Lawn & Garden Cleanup** – Remove debris and store tools.

Mid to Late Winter (January - February)

- **Tree Trimming (Deciduous Trees)** – Best time for major pruning before spring growth.
- **Planning & Ordering Supplies** – Order seeds, fertilizers, and mulch for early spring.