WEEDS

Get used to having some weeds. Walking on dandelions is better than walking on toxic chemicals. Where you need to remove them use boiling water, horticultural vinegar, citrus oil, or hand weed. Out compete weeds with grass seed. Corn gluten may work as a pre-emergent.

INSECTS

Many are actually beneficial, but some are nuisances.
Grubs- use milky spore or beneficial nematodes.

PROTECT THE SOIL

Avoid blowers. They blow away the nutrients and beneficial bacteria in the top layer of soil.

THATCH

Thatch results from stems and roots that decompose. It usually occurs on turf that is heavily fertilized, compacted, acidic and poorly drained. Thatch is not caused by leaving clippings. Core aeration often relieves thatch.

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To protect our drinking water

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GOALS

Managing lawn without synthetic pesticides, weedkillers or fertilizers to protect our drinking water and our families' health. Educating ourselves and our friends and neighbors who share our watersheds to do this, too.

AERATE

Core aeration in the fall allows oxygen to penetrate the lawn. This is important for the grass roots, and also the beneficial bacteria. It also lets the grass roots spread.

LET GRASS GROW TO 4"

Mow when grass gets to 4" and bring it down to 3". This lets the roots grow long because the roots mirror the shoots. Long roots make grass more drought resistant and help it absorb runoff.

LEAVE CLIPPINGS

They return nutrients, cool the soil, and help retain water. They don't cause thatch!

BE COMPETITIVE

Outcompete weeds with grass seed.
In early spring seed bare spots, repair again in early fall. Overseeding your lawn by broadcasting a small amount of grass seed prevents weeds from getting a foothold.

NUTRITION

Let plants add the nutrition, not fertilizers! Legumes like clover have bacteria on their roots that take nitrogen from the air and make it available to plants. Add some clover to your lawn.

FERTILIZE-NOT!

An established lawn gets all of the nutrition it needs from leaving the clippings and adding a little clover.
If you are concerned, test your soil and make adjustments.
Compost or compost tea are wonderful supplements for a lawn.
The pH should be between 6 and 7.

STARTING A LAWN

If you are starting out, test the soil. If the Nitrogen or Potassium is low you can replace it with certified organic supplements in the fall when the roots grow. Organic supplements need to be put down when soil microbes are active, that is when it is greater than 65 degrees, August 15- September 25.

Compost or compost tea is an ideal way to enrich the soil when it does need extra nutrients.

PLANT SEED IN FALL FOR BEST ROOT GROWTH

CHOOSE THE RIGHT GRASS FOR YOUR CLIMATE

Speak with your local cooperative extension or professional to choose a balanced mix best for your area.

GO NATIVE!

Consider replacing lawn in shade or wet areas where grass doesn't grow well with native groundcovers or shrubs.

In areas that aren't used for walking and playing consider growing a meadow or planting native plants.

WATER

Established lawn doesn't need water except during droughts. Then about 1" in the early a.m. Expect a lawn to go dormant in the heat of the summer.

Germinating seeds need water until they become established. Enough to keep them moist, but not to puddle.