

# Aerate your Lawn the easy way with a Plugger

## Frequently asked Questions on Lawn Aeration

### Q: What is core aeration?

A: In simplest terms, it is the process of making finger sized holes in your lawn and depositing the removed material on the surface to break down. This allows fertilizer, water and oxygen to get to the roots where healthy grass originates.



### Q: How do I know if my lawn needs aeration?

A: Known clay soils, heavy traffic, more than ½" of thatch, standing water after irrigation or rain, or lawns that brown easily in heat are all excellent candidates. In reality, any lawn, healthy or not, will benefit from annual aeration.

### Q: When should I aerate?

A: Any time from September to May

### Q: How often should my lawn be aerated?

A: In areas where the soil has a high clay content, compaction and thatch build-up is more prevalent and aeration should be done twice a year. In areas of more sandy or loamy soils, annual aeration will result in continued healthy lawns and improved irrigation and fertilizing efficiency.

### Q: When will I see positive results in my lawn?

A: Depending on the turf conditions, your visual results may or may not be immediate from a single aeration. Subterranean root growth and overall health and stress tolerance will however begin to improve almost at once. Even in the toughest conditions aeration in combination with an appropriate fertilizing, irrigation and weed control programme will show dramatic visual results in the second year after a second or third aeration.

### Q: Will aeration make my grass grow faster?

A: **Yes** . Healthy grass will grow faster and thicker. If you hate to mow lush green grass, aeration, fertilizing and watering are counterproductive.

### Q: Is aeration a one-time fix that can be discontinued when my lawn has improved?

A: **No** . Aeration needs to be a continual part of your lawn care plan just like fertilizing, weed and pest control, irrigation and mowing. In some cases aeration can be reduced from twice a year to once a year after a couple of seasons.

### Q: How deep and how many cores are required for effective aeration?

A: Generally, cores 4" - 6" and from 2" - 3" deep will give best results. It is commonly accepted that the deeper and the closer together the better. The cores left in the yard will usually be about 1/2" diameter.

**Q: How long will it take for the cores left in my lawn to disappear?**

A: Depending on weather, soil conditions, watering and mowing frequency, the cores will break down and disappear in about one week. This process will add nutrients to your lawn. Of course, you can rake up cores but it is more beneficial to break them up and leave them on the surface.

**Q: Can I aerate myself?**

A: Aeration can be done by any homeowner that has a "do-it-yourself" attitude. Hire Shops rent petrol powered walk behind aerators. Many homeowners prefer to have a lawn care professional to look after this job for them.

**Q: How much does aeration cost?**

A: Cost varies depending on location. Generally rental cost ranges from £30 to £60 per day. It will usually take 1 hour to do a 15,000 sq ft residential lawn. Lawncare Contractors vary - ask for a quotation.

**Q: Is it important to aerate close to obstacles such as driveways, sidewalks and plantings?**

A: **Yes** . Often these are the places where compaction is most prevalent, where weeds often invade and where irrigation systems can be less effective.

**Q: How wet should my lawn be for best aeration results?**

A: Dry ground reduces the depth of cores and aeration effectiveness. Wet, muddy soil allows deep aeration but at the expense of crusting the soil in the hole, reducing access to the roots and making cores left in the lawn a muddy mess that does not break down as fast. Normally, aerating 24 hours after a 1/2" rain or normal watering is best.

**Q: Should I aerate during times of drought or high heat?**

A: **No**. During this time, the grass growth is less active and aeration could increase the invasion of weeds and possibly increase the rate of water evaporation.

**Q: Should I aerate newly seeded grass or turf?**

A: **No**. Turf should not be aerated for at least 12 months. Newly seeded lawns usually can be aerated in the second full season of growth. Multiple pass aeration prior to seeding or turfing is a good way to prepare the soil.

**Q: Can aerator tines damage sprinkler heads or other items in the lawn?**

A: **Yes**. You **must** flag all items in the lawn to avoid damage caused by the tines.

**Q: When should I fertilise?**

A: Fertilizing immediately **after** aeration will achieve the best results as it will get down to the root structure quickly.

**Q: Will my lawn require more fertilization after aeration?**

A: **No.** The same amount of fertilizer will give quicker and more long lasting results as it will get to the roots where real health occurs.

**Q: When should I apply preemergent for weeds?**

A: Preemergent is best applied after aeration to reduce the chance of weed invasion in the lawn while grass is spreading to the cored holes. Do not apply preemergent if you intend to overseed.

**Q: Is reseeding after aeration a good practice?**

A: **Yes.** If your lawn has areas of thin grass, 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. In this area, multiple passes with the aeration equipment will dramatically improve soil conditions leading to better overseeding results.

**Q: Do I need to dethatch (power rake) in addition to aeration?**

A: Only in case of extreme thatch is this necessary. Power raking only removes thatch but does not improve compaction. Aeration does both in one operation.

**Q: Should I water after aeration?**

A: **Yes.** Water helps breakdown the cores left in the yard and is particularly effective on the newly exposed root system.

**Q: How deep?**

A: Will usually be about 1/2" diameter