

# Common Aeration Questions

## 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: Is core aerating effective in improving all species of turf grass?

**A:** Yes, both cool season (i.e. Kentucky Bluegrass) and warm season grasses (i.e. Bermuda Grass) can be greatly improved.

## Q: Will spiking do the same thing?

**A:** No. While spiking will put holes in the turf, it actually compacts the soil rather than removing the core. While there are often short-term benefits, in the long term this is counterproductive.

## Q: When should I aerate?

**A:** For cool season grasses such as Bluegrass, Bentgrass, Rye Grass and Fine Leaf and Tall Fescue, spring (March-May) and fall (August-November) are best. For warm season grasses such as Bermuda, Buffalo, St. Augustine, late spring and summer after spring green up (May-July) is preferred.

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

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

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

**A:** No. Aeration needs to be a continual part of a 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 years.

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

**A:** Generally, cores every 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 5/8" diameter.

## Q: How long will it take for the cores to disappear?

**A:** Depending on weather, soil conditions, watering and mowing frequency, the cores will break down and disappear in about two weeks. This process will add nutrients to your lawn. Raking up the cores reduces aeration effectiveness.

## 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 often are less effective.

## Q: How wet should a yard 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 yard 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 aeration be done 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 newly seeded grass or sod be aerated?

**A:** No. Sod 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 sodding 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 yard to avoid damage caused by the tines.

## Q: When should an aerated lawn be fertilized?

**A:** Fertilizing immediately after aeration will achieve the best return on your fertilizer investment.

## 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: Is reseeding after aeration a good practice?

**A:** Yes. If a lawn has areas where the stand of grass is thin, broadcast seeding, 2-4 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: When should I apply preemergent for weeds?

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

## 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.

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Chains, cables, wheels and bearings carry a one-year warranty.

All warranty claims must be in writing and include model number, serial number and date put into service. Contact the factory for additional information.[www.sourceonex.com](http://www.sourceonex.com)

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