

Your Yard

Checklist: The Right Equipment To Create The Yard Of Your Dreams

(NAPSI)—These days, many families are spending more time at home and “staycation-ing.” A beautiful landscape improves curb appeal and can increase your home value by as much as 17%, so investing in yard care can be a smart financial decision. An amazing yard extends valuable living space and helps you and your family de-stress and enjoy time outside.

The right lawn equipment can make yard work more pleasant. With a re-focus on staying home, now might be the time to invest in new equipment, which is more efficient, quieter, and more ergonomic than ever before. In addition, more power options are available including solar, battery/electric, propane or gasoline-powered equipment. There are even autonomous, robotic options available for mowing your lawn.

To help you decide on whether to update your yard equipment, here's a checklist from the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an international trade association representing manufacturers and suppliers of power equipment, small engines and battery power, utility and personal transport vehicles, and golf cars.

1. Plan your yard needs. Draw a sketch and include such major features as trees, bushes, a garden, flower beds, lawn furniture, play or sports equipment, or a patio. Note where maintenance is required. Will bushes need to be trimmed back? Do you want to install more flowering bushes or trees? Are you planning to add a fence and more grass



With the right equipment, taking care of your yard can be almost as delightful as relaxing in it.

for your pet and games?

2. Consider your equipment. Visit your garage or shed and find those forgotten lawn and garden tools. Make a list of what you need and what needs to be upgraded.

3. Consider upgrading or adding equipment. If you have a large garden, you may need a cultivator or tiller. If you have a large lawn, a riding or zero-turn lawn mower can make mowing easier. Alternatively, you can get a robotic lawn mower that mows autonomously. A string trimmer makes caring for bushes or trimming grass near a fence line easier. A pole pruner trims back limbs that are too high to reach safely with a saw, and a leaf blower clears leaves faster than a rake. A wood chipper turns branches into mulch. Mower attachments can aer-

ate your lawn or collect leaves.

4. Research online before buying. Think about efficiencies of scale. Equipment may be sized to handle a smaller job or a massive one, and tasks can be a little easier with some of today's ergonomic, super-charged equipment. Ultimately, your decision should be based on your needs. The right equipment can mean more time for other activities, and mean doing yard work is more enjoyable for you.

5. Ask questions. Talk with the staff at the store or ask online about the equipment. In the store, pick up and hold equipment to determine its “fit” for you. Discuss safety features and manufacturer fueling and care instructions. Find out how often equipment may need to be serviced.

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