

Another useful tip from Power Equipment Warehouse...

CHOOSING THE RIGHT LAWNMOWER

Mowing the lawn shouldn't be a chore. There are plenty of reasonably priced mowers available at Power Equipment Warehouse that will help make your lawn mowing easier.

Consider these items before choosing a new lawn mower:

- How big is your yard?
- How is the terrain, rough, or fairly smooth?
- Do you have a lot of trimming? (Flower beds and trees)
- Do you have a lot of leaf clean-up?
- Can you put your yard debris out for the garbage man, or do you have an area where you compost or can empty the bag?
- Is your yard flat or on a hill?
- Do you want to mulch, bag or side discharge the clippings?
- If you are considering purchasing a riding mower will it only cut the grass or do you want other options like pushing or blowing snow, tilling, pulling a yard cart, etc.
- Do you need an electric start lawn mower?
- Do you need a self-propelled lawn mower?
- Do you want to walk or ride?
- How much time can you devote to cutting the grass each week without getting tired of it?
- Do you have a gate or shed doorway to get through? If so, how wide is the opening?
- THIS IS A BIGGIE: Can the store you purchased it from fix it or do they have to send it out?

Walk Behind Mower Considerations:

Some consumers enjoy cutting the yard and look at it as a way to get in some extra exercise. That's great! No matter what size your yard is, it is your decision. Most consumer walk behind mowers are between 5 and 7 HP. If the yard isn't too big, you can probably get by with a push mower, but self-propelled is always nice. Always remember, you don't want a front wheel drive self-propelled lawn mower that has a rear bag. In a situation like this, the operator assumes the weight of the grass because the power is in the front of the mower and the weight is in the back. If you use a rear bag and are considering a self-propelled mower make sure it is rear wheel drive. Ease of starting is definitely important. Consider if you have any wrist, elbow, shoulder, neck, back or heart problems. If you do, electric start is the way to go; most electric start mowers have a battery similar to your car. The initial charge is important, and you shouldn't have to recharge during the mowing season unless you haven't used it for awhile. Mowers usually last about 7 years or more, and a feature like electric start cannot be added to a recoil start mower. Look for the position of the recoil too. All mowers must have safety features that either shut off the entire mower, or a blade clutch that shuts off the blade when you release the handle. If the recoil is mounted on the engine and you have to hold the handle at the back of the mower this is not going to be an easy start.

Most mowers are 4-cycle now (separate oil and gas). If you have a steep hill and it takes a fair amount of time to cut it you should purchase a mower with an Overhead Cam or Overhead Valve engine, this allows oil to be pumped through the engine at all times. The material the deck is made of is important too. Steel, Aluminum, or Poly-Resin decks are all good. Steel is typically lighter but will eventually rust; Aluminum is a little heavier but resists corrosion, and Poly Resin decks are usually light and corrosion resistant but are only found on higher end mowers. Some mowers offer 3-in-1 features that will mulch, bag and side discharge. This feature gives you a lot of flexibility, especially for leaf clean-up. Mulch up the leaves when they are nice and dry, put the bag on and suck them up! Your lawn will look like a freshly vacuumed carpet when you are finished. Don't forget to consider EVERYONE who will use the mower. Ladies, men, teens; make a good choice for everyone involved.

Riding Mower Considerations:

Most homeowners with large mowing areas will opt for the new Zero Turning Radius mowers. These mowers range in horsepower from 17HP and up, and usually with a 42" mowing width, and if you are currently using a lawn tractor, will typically reduce your mowing time by 50%. Trimming is not an issue with a ZTR. These units can turn on a dime and trim right up to the edge of just about anything. Most brands of ZTR's offer bags (depending on mower deck size), can tow a cart, and some even have the ability to add a snow blade. Most consumers can get used to the operation of these mowers within the first one to three mowings. If you

have to put the debris out for your garbage man, you may want to consider a unit with two or three separate bags. If you have an area for compost, or can dump the debris into a wooded area, dump from the seat bags are a great option. No need to touch the debris if you don't have to! Ask if a mulch kit can be installed. If it can, be sure if you need to remove it for other debris handling (such as bagging leaves) that it can be done simply and easily without too much hassle. Almost all riding mowers today are electric start, but double check. Who wants to be pulling a 17HP engine when it's 90 degrees outside? Check the safety of the unit if you have to cut on a hill. ROPS (Rollover Protection Systems) are a must in areas like this. Remember to consider storage and gates. If you have a shed door or gate to get through measure the widest point of the mower and be sure you have a little extra clearance (don't forget to consider the bagging system when taking this measurement).

Check the comfort of the seat and leg room. If you spend a long time on your mower you may want to consider a suspension seat; boy are they comfortable. It's like sitting in your easy chair while mowing the lawn!

Is the mower noisy? Most people wear hearing protection while cutting the grass. Look for ear protection that cancels out noise, some can even plug into your iPod, iPhone or other MP3 player.

Maintenance isn't fun whether it's a walk-behind mower or a riding mower. Be sure you can easily get to the oil filter and air cleaner, and be sure it's easy to fill the gas tank and check the oil too! Purchase your lawn and garden equipment from a Professional Servicing Dealer. They are the experts. Quality brands backed by professional parts and service departments are all the things that you should look for in a power equipment dealer. Let's face it you wouldn't purchase a vehicle from a dealer with poor service history, or no service ability at all. Lawn and Garden equipment gets a work out and it will eventually need repairs, be sure you have a reliable parts and service source for your valuable purchase. Remember, before performing ANY maintenance please disconnect the spark plug wire.

More questions? Call one of the friendly associates at Power Equipment Warehouse at 1-800-769-3741. We're here to help!