

WINTERIZING YOUR MOWER

1. **Fuel system:** Install fuel stabilizer if your tank is over half full. This will keep the octane level from dropping and causing hard start. Low octane rating also causes carbon build up internally due to unburned gas. If your tank is below half full, drain completely. After the tank is finished draining, start engine and allow engine to run so gas will be removed from carburetor and fuel lines. This will keep the ports and passages of carburetor clean.
2. **Engine oil:** Replace engine oil. Run unit for short period of time after changing to make sure oil level is correct. Add if not full to get proper level.
3. **Disconnect battery:** If your unit has electric start, disconnect battery cables so power will not be drained during storage. May require a 1 hour charge at the beginning of season to ensure full strength when needed.
4. **Replace spark plug:** Remove spark plug and add small amount of oil (SAE30, 1 oz.) into cylinder to help with dry start condition. A child's medicine syringe works great for small opening and measuring amount of oil. Rotate engine a few times to make sure oil is spread adequately. Install new spark plug.
5. **Service air filter:** Foam air filters can be cleaned with soapy water if not deteriorated. Replace if coming apart. If it is a paper element, most need to be replaced. Blowing a paper element clean with air pressure from compressor can damage the paper. A small hole can lead to dirt ingestion and cause serious damage if not replaced.
6. **Blade condition:** Sharpen blades to keep a nice clean cut. Dull blades do not cut the grass evenly and are out of balance. The blade will beat the grass and will cause damage resulting in less healthy grass. Vibration will cause damage to deck over an extended period.
7. **Tires or wheels:** Check tire pressure and set to factory spec. Low tire pressure can cause uneven cut, makes mower hard to maneuver and can scalp the ground. Also causes tracking problems.
8. **Clean unit:** Wash unit so grass is not sitting on deck or underneath. Grass will hold moisture and can ruin a new mower. Paint will peel away and expose metal allowing rust to start. Also causes wear to components that are rubbing against debris such as belts, pulleys and springs. Grass will also trap debris such as sticks, pine cones and sycamore balls that could do damage to drive belts as well. After cleaning, run unit for 5 minutes with blades engaged. This will disperse any moisture around areas that were washed.
9. **Storage:** Storing your equipment in a dry area will also help maintain the unit. A tarp can be used but must be secured so as not to blow off allowing elements to make contact.
10. **Throttle control:** Spray some lubricant (WD-40) in throttle cable housing and work lever. This will keep cables from seizing. If equipped with choke lever, repeat process.
11. **Lubrication:** Greasing all fittings as specified by manufacturer will also help ensure mower optimum performance. Moisture can build and allow rust to start. This will cause premature wear because rust will act like sandpaper.

