

# IS THERE A RIGHT WAY TO RAKE YOUR LAWN?

*With fall in full swing, raking leaves is quickly climbing higher on the landscaping priority list. This season, however, has so far been a strange one. With bouts of heavy rain, heat waves, and sudden cold snaps, it can be hard to tell what's best for your lawn it comes time to rake up those pesky leaves.*

Today, we at Hively want to provide a few ways to know whether or not you should be raking your lawn. Weather, location, and even the type of equipment used can have a significant impact on the health of your lawn, both now and in the springtime.



## Are Leaves Beneficial to Your Lawn?

The answer to this is, it depends. A thick layer of large leaves is detrimental to your lawn's health because it acts like a blanket, blocking sunlight and air circulation from penetrating deep into your lawn's root system. A dusting of smaller leaves, on the other hand - such as those of dogwood, honey locust, or birch trees - decompose or blow away quickly, rendering them essentially harmless to your lawn without raking.



## When Does Raking Benefit Your Lawn?

While too many leaves can be a detriment to your lawn, there are right and wrong times to rake them. After heavy rain, for example, your lawn is very soft and saturated. Raking can easily rip up your grass roots, causing bare patches in the spring. However, lightly raking a damp - not saturated - lawn can be extremely beneficial to lawn growth; it increases air circulation, which can give the roots exposure to more sunlight. More sunlight means more nutrients, which leads to a greener lawn earlier in the spring.

## Which Rake is the Right Rake?

There are several different types of rakes that landscapers use depending on the condition of your lawn. The three most common are:

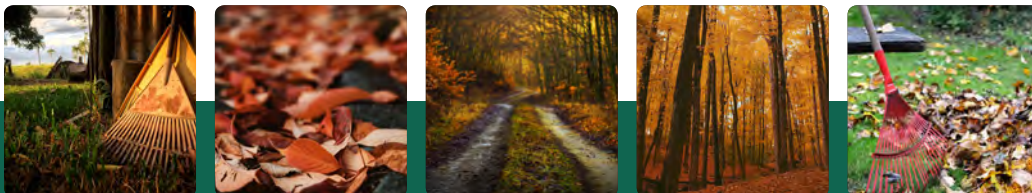
- **THATCHING RAKE**
- **BOW RAKE**
- **LEAF RAKE**



**THATCHING RAKES** are beneficial to pull up dry grass as well as the thatch – a layer of grass roots, shoots, and runners between the surface of the soil and roots of the grass. Excessive thatch in your lawn can lead to dead patches and suffocation of the healthy roots below. Thatching rakes have short teeth perfect for breaking up the thatch without harming the grass roots below it.

**BOW RAKE** teeth are even shorter than thatching rake teeth, so it will only rake up leaves and dry grass sitting at the soil level. Bow rakes are also perfect for fixing matted patches of your lawn, which can be caused by snow piles sitting on the grass all winter long. This makes bow rakes a perfect rake to keep on hand for both fall and springtime use.

**LEAF RAKES** are the lightweight, flexible rakes that we picture when we think of raking leaves. A leaf rake will pick up all the leaves and twigs from winter without disturbing the soil beneath. If your lawn is already in good shape, a leaf rake may be the only rake you need for the season.



*Raking leaves can be a tedious chore, but understanding the benefits and putting them to action can help you easily build a healthier, greener lawn come spring. However, if you would prefer to leave the lawn maintenance to the professionals, the experienced team at Hively is just a phone call away. We look forward to hearing from you!*