

# The American love affair with the lawn



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The American yard is legendary. Consider the classic image of the American home with a front yard and a back yard, surrounded by a white picket fence...

likely to see a picnic table, *lawn chairs* and often a barbecue grill for weekend *cookouts*.

But don't believe that Americans spend all their weekend time relaxing there. The truth is, much of the time spent by adults in the back yard is spent on yard work.

It takes a lot of grass *seed*, *fertilizer* and *weed killer* to keep a green lawn pretty. *Dandelions* and *crabgrass* are the

enemies of *suburban* dads, who feel obliged to eliminate them. Fertilizer and water make grass grow, and then it must be cut. Once a week, out comes the lawnmower. The bigger the yard, the bigger the lawnmower... and if it's a riding lawnmower, *so much the better!*

Hedges and bushes must be *clipped* and *trimmed*. The clippings and grass

cuttings left by the mower are gathered up and *stuffed* into big bags. They will be put out with the *garbage* to be *picked up* and taken away.

In the *fall*, the shade trees drop their *leaves*. They can't be left on the lawn! They must be *raked up* and put into bags too.

A recent *trend* in American lawn *care* is that more people are planting native ground covers, which require less water and chemicals, instead of grass. It's also more common to install a water-saving automatic watering system and more and more people are *mulching* and *composting* yard waste instead of sending it to the *landfill*.

Lawn care is still the number one gardening activity in the United States. Each year Americans spend more than six billion dollars on their lawns. A figure to consider while grilling hamburgers on the barbecue on a Saturday afternoon, after, of course, all the planting, fertilizing, weeding, cutting, trimming, and raking is done! ■

## Everything just so

**T**HE DESIRE FOR a 'real American yard' can be seen across the length and *breadth* of the United States. Traditionally, the front yard is meant to *welcome* visitors and announce, 'the people who live here are good citizens'. It's often a *swathe* of grass, maybe with a tree, *bushes* or a *flowerbed*. It's sometimes *bordered* by a small *fence* but rarely enclosed by a wall. The owners want to *show it off*, not hide it!

The back yard is quite different – it's private space. A back door typically opens to the back yard, perhaps onto a patio. Then there is the *lawn*, another *expanse* of green. It may be bordered by flowerbeds and *surrounded* by a tall fence or *hedge*.

Many American families spend summer weekends in their back yards. Children play on swing sets, with *swings*, things to climb on and a *slide*. If there is a large tree in the yard, there may also be a tree house. *Shade* trees are highly desirable. Under the shade tree one is

<i>breadth</i>	une largeur
<i>to welcome</i>	accueillir
<i>swathe</i>	une bande
<i>bush</i>	un arbuste, un buisson
<i>flowerbed</i>	une platebande
<i>to border</i>	entourer
<i>fence</i>	une barrière
<i>to show off</i>	faire étalage, frimer
<i>lawn</i>	une pelouse
<i>expanse</i>	une étendue
<i>to surround</i>	entourer
<i>hedge</i>	une haie
<i>swing</i>	une balançoire
<i>slide</i>	un toboggan
<i>shade</i>	une ombre
<i>lawn chair</i>	une chaise longue
<i>cookout</i>	un barbecue
<i>seed</i>	une semence, une graine
<i>fertilizer</i>	un engrais
<i>weed killer</i>	un désherbant

<i>dandelion</i>	un pissenlit
<i>crabgrass</i>	une mauvaise herbe
<i>suburban</i>	de banlieue
<i>lawnmower</i>	une tondeuse à gazon
<i>so much the better</i>	tant mieux
<i>to clip</i>	couper
<i>to trim</i>	tailler
<i>to stuff</i>	bourrer
<i>garbage</i>	une poubelle
<i>to pick up</i>	ramasser
<i>fall</i>	automne
<i>leaf</i>	une feuille
<i>to rake up</i>	ratisser
<i>trend</i>	une tendance
<i>care</i>	un soin
<i>to mulch</i>	couvrir
<i>to compost</i>	faire du compost
<i>waste</i>	les déchets
<i>landfill</i>	un enfouissement des déchets