

Prepare your Grasshopper for the mowing season

Spring Preparation Tips provided by The Grasshopper Company



Warmer and longer days are a signal that the spring mowing season is just around the corner. These general maintenance guidelines are intended to help you get peak performance and endurance from your mowing equipment throughout mowing season.

Grasshopper recommends keeping a maintenance log to ensure proper timing of maintenance procedures. Consult all equipment service manuals for specific procedures, schedules and replacement parts lists. Use only Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) replacement parts, as OEM parts are designed to work in conjunction with specific systems.

Cleaning – Thoroughly clean all accessible points and remove dried grass and dirt from crevices; a lightly oiled shop towel will help remove stubborn deposits. Use low-pressure air to blow debris from the engine and transmission areas, and remove clippings and debris from electrical components. If the mower is washed, use low-pressure water only. Blow off standing water with low-pressure air and allow the mower to dry completely before use. Apply wax to help keep dirt and debris from sticking to the exterior while mowing.

Plugs – Clean spark plugs and replace, if necessary.

Engine Oil – Drain oil, and replace oil filter, if necessary, to ensure maximum protection and engine life. Use only an OEM-approved filter. Wipe oil filter seat clean for a tight seal. Reinstall oil plug, and refill crankcase according to engine manual specifications.

Hoses – Check hydraulic hoses for leaks or signs of wear. Use extra caution when servicing systems that utilize separate pumps and wheel motors and high-pressure lines to avoid injury.

Air Filter – Remove and clean the pre-filter or pre-cleaner. Gently tap the filter by hand to remove dust and debris. For oiled-foam pre-cleaners, wash thoroughly and apply a light coating of oil. **DO NOT remove inner air filter** except to replace with a new filter according to engine manufacturer specifications. Never reinsert a previously used inner filter as it could compromise the seal between the filter and engine intake. Clear debris from the inside of the filter housing and wipe out with a clean, damp cloth. Check that all fittings and clamps seal tightly, and replace if necessary.

NOTE: Do not use compressed air to clean the pre-filter or pre-cleaner. Compressed air can tear the filter paper, increasing the potential for larger particles pass through the engine intake and cause major engine damage.

Fuel – Replace fuel filter, drain leftover fuel and refill with fresh fuel. Use a fuel stabilizer like STA-BIL[®] all year to preserve fuel freshness and prevent gumming in the carburetor.

Electrical – Check wiring harnesses and visible wiring for damaged casings and repair or replace if needed. Inspect fuse panel and replace fuses as necessary.

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Cooling System – For air-cooled engines, remove debris from air intake screen and from around cooling fins. For liquid-cooled engines, remove debris air intake screen and thoroughly clean radiator fins using Grasshopper’s low-pressure Radiator Cleaning Wand. Test coolant to assess the freezing point, and flush if necessary. Refill radiator with a **premixed** 50/50 solution of anti-freeze and water (freezing point -34° F [-36° C]).

NOTE: Contact an authorized Grasshopper servicing dealer for coolant testing. Since 2000, Grasshopper has used extended-life coolant on liquid-cooled Kubota engine models, which does not require as frequent flushing and replacing. Refer to the owner’s manual for engine manufacturer recommendations for coolant replacement.

Transmission – Refer to the owner’s manual before servicing the transmission or changing filters and fluid. Inspect cooling fans for mobility, and remove any “baked on” obstructions. Inspect nuts, bolts and linkage for snug fits. Wipe off entire filter area before servicing filters and fluid. Replace with OEM-specified filter, and refill with OEM-specified fluid only. Transmission fluid change intervals for Grasshopper mowers range from 300 to 1,000 hours with specially formulated CoolTemp Hydro-Max™ fluid.

Lubrication – Thoroughly clean all grease fittings and lubricate with SAE multi-purpose grease. Apply only the appropriate amount of grease as specified in the owner’s manual, as too little or too much grease can damage to fittings, seals and bearings. **Do not over-grease.** Excess grease attracts particles that can increase friction and cause overheating, premature wear and component failure. Use a disposable shop towel to wipe off any excess grease before use.

Mowing Deck – Check that all baffles and shields are installed properly. Make sure pulleys and idlers are clean, and check for any loose or noisy bearings. Adjust deck belt tension springs as needed. On a level surface, measure the height and angle on all sides, and adjust if necessary. Consult owner’s manual for proper deck angle to ensure optimal mowing quality.

Belts – Check drive belts, mule belts and deck belts for wear, and replace any worn, torn or warped belts. Kevlar®-type cord belts are designed to perform throughout multiple seasons in flat-plane deck designs, such as with Grasshopper mower decks.

Blades – Sharpen blades regularly, and check for balance and levelness. Do not straighten bent blades or add weight to blade tips; bent or altered blades will affect airflow and diminish cut quality. Discard and replace with OEM-specified replacement blades.

Tires – Over- or under-inflated tires can have a substantial effect on traction and quality of cut, including levelness of cut and longevity of blades. Never inflate to the pressure embossed on the tire. Instead, consult your owner’s manual for recommended tire pressure. Check tire pressure with a low-pressure gauge (available from Grasshopper).

For more information or to contact a Grasshopper service technician, visit grasshoppermower.com.