



# Your Yard

## Spring Shopping For Yard Equipment: Things To Know

(NAPS)—Warm weather is here, and you are ready to get outside and make your yard both beautiful and functional. Maybe you're aiming to have the best yard on the block, want to install an outdoor family room or outdoor office, or want to expand your space for entertaining. Perhaps your kids or pets could use a better space for play. Regardless of need, now is the time to get "backyard ready" for outdoor living this spring and summer. What tools do you need?

"Completing big outdoor jobs is always easier with help from outdoor power equipment," said Kris Kiser, President and CEO of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI). "The right mowers, trimmers, edgers, blowers, pruners, chainsaws and more can help you get the work done faster, and can help you safely maintain your yard." Here are some tips from Kiser to help you select the machinery you need to get the job done.

**Plan your needs.** Draw a sketch of your yard. Include any major features such as trees, bushes, an herb or vegetable garden, flower beds, lawn furniture, play or sports equipment, an outdoor patio, or bird bath. Note where maintenance may be required. Will bushes need to be trimmed back from your home or garage? Do you want to put in some flowering bushes or a tree? Are you planning to install a fence and more grass?

**Consider equipment needed.** Visit your garage or shed and find your lawn and garden tools and equipment. Get out your mower and other equipment. Look them over and make a list of what is needed or could be upgraded. Repair anything that needs attention or identify where a newer or better machine is required. If you have a large vegetable garden, you may need a cultivator or tiller. If you have a large lawn, an upgrade to a zero-turn mower might make mowing grass easier. A string trimmer might make caring for bushes or trimming grass near a fence line easier. A



### **A power hedge trimmer can help you have a neater garden.**

pole pruner can help trim back limbs that are too high to reach safely with a saw, and a leaf blower can clear leaves faster than a rake. Chain saws make quick work of tree work and more.

**Research equipment online before you buy.** Think about efficiencies of scale. The right equipment can mean more time for other activities and make doing yard work more enjoyable, too. Doing online research in advance will help you pick the right type and size of equipment needed for the job. Outdoor power equipment can be gas, solar, propane, electric or battery powered and technology is rapidly impacting product design. Today, there are even robotic lawn mowers available.

**Ask questions.** Talk with the staff at the store or ask online about the equipment. In the store, ask to pick up and hold equipment to determine its "fit" for you. Discuss safety features and ask about manufacturer fueling and care instructions. Find out how often equipment may need to be serviced.

**Make a plan for storage and maintenance.** Store your equipment in a cool and dry place. It also should typically be serviced at the end of the fall and the beginning of the spring. Put service dates on your calendar with a reminder. Find or download the owner's manual to have on hand, as well.

For more information, go to [www.opei.org](http://www.opei.org).