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Don't just park it – follow these tips to prep mower for winter

Print (http://blog.cleveland.com/insideout_impact/print.html?entry=/2013/10/dont_just_park_it_-_follow_the.html)
 (<http://connect.cleveland.com/user/jwashing/index.html>) By Julie Washington, The Plain Dealer
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Admit it -- it's a relief to mow your lawn for the last time this year. But don't just park your mower in a corner of the garage – or worse, the yard – and forget about it until spring. Take time to properly prepare your lawn mower for winter storage; you'll be rewarded with a better-running mower come spring.

Here are some tips from **RepairClinic.com** (<http://repairclinic.com/>), a online store for replacement parts for home appliances:

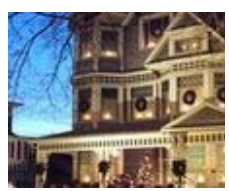
Use soap and water to clean grass and debris from the mower's deck and undercarriage.

Spray a degreaser on oil stains. Let it sit for 15 minutes before wiping it with a clean cloth.

Check for bends, dents or other damage on the blades. Replace damaged blades; they can be a safety hazard.

Have the blades sharpened. Dull blades tear the grass instead of cutting it cleanly.

Clean the fuel cap and replace the spark plug. When carbon builds up on a spark plug, its performance suffers and the engine has to use more fuel. Only buy the



Full House: Julie Washington on <http://www.cleveland.com/insideout/index.html>



PDiy: Do-it-yourself tips (<http://topics.cleveland.com/tag/pdiy/post>)

manufacturer's recommended spark plug.

Spray lubricant on any bare metal parts to prevent rust.

Clean or replace the air filter. Replace the fuel filter. Oil should be replaced at least once per season.

Add fuel stabilizer to prevent carburetor clogging. Read the owner's manual for instructions on how to leave fuel in the engine during storage.

Here are some helpful links:

Instructions on fuel stabilizers from **Home Depot**. (<http://ext.homedepot.com/.../from-the-forums-how-do-i-prep-my-lawn-mower>)

Lawn-Boy (<http://www.lawn-boy.com/advice/articles/Winter%20Storage%20Tips.pdf%C3%A2%C2%80%C2%8E>) explains how to remove gas from a lawn mower with a siphon pump

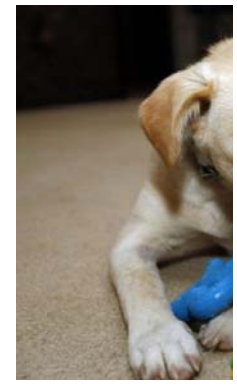
Briggs & Stratton (<http://http://www.briggsandstratton.com/us/en/support/maintenance-how-to/riding-mower-engines/putting-your-lawn-mower-to-rest-for-winter>) has advice on how to remove the battery for winter storage.



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Fall maintenance reduces the likelihood of engine failure when you need the lawn mower again.

SHNS



Ask Dog Lady (http://www.cleveland.com/insideout/insideout/ask_dog_lady)

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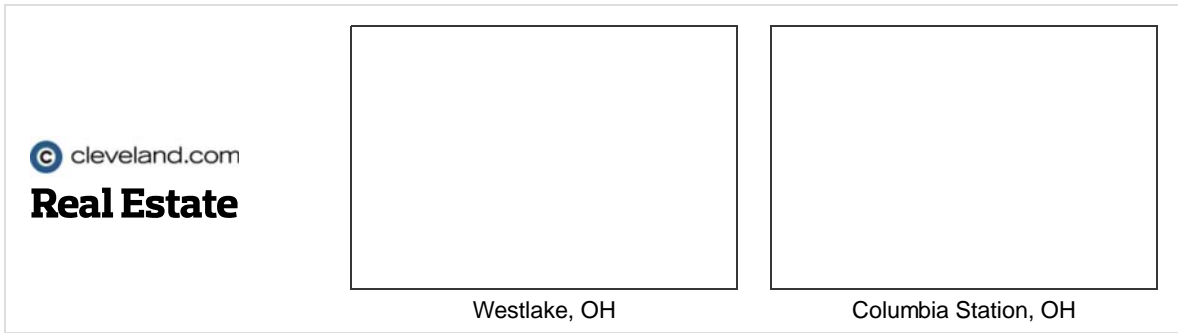


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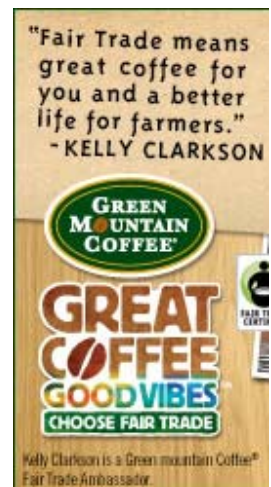
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