

How To Buy A Reel Mower

8 Things To Know Before
Throwing Down Your Hard Earned Money!



A Little Something More... Buyer's Guide

Legal Stuff

This book is copyright A Little Something More.

You may distribute the digital file on the Internet without charge by itself or as a bonus included with other products. You may not sell this book, nor may you distribute it in print form. You may not change, alter or edit the content in any way, shape or form.

While reasonable attempts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this publication, the author does not assume any responsibility for errors, omissions or contrary interpretation of this information.

The author does not assume any responsibility or liability whatsoever for what you choose to do with this information.

Use this information at your own risk.

Reel mowers have been around for a hundred years. In the late 1950s and early 60s, reel mowers got tossed in the corner of the garage and everybody started using new gas powered rotary mowers.

However, reel mowers have once again become popular. A few of the reasons why include:

- **Reel Mowers Are Green** - They don't pollute. No clouds of engine exhaust and no noise. The EPA estimates that standard gas powered lawn mowers emit as much fumes and exhaust in a year as a new car driving five-hundred thousand miles.
- **Low Maintenance** - Reel mowers don't require gasoline, oil, belts, spark plugs, filters, battery charging or electrical cords plugged in to your house. A little squirt of lubrication every now and then is about all that's needed.
- **It Just Goes** - You don't have to worry about the engine starting or breaking down. You push it and it goes.
- **They Are Quiet** – Reel mowers aren't silent, but they are really, really quiet! You can mow any time, early in the morning or late in the evening, and not worry about disturbing your neighbors. You can even listen to music or talk on the phone while mowing.
- **Good Exercise** – Reel mowers are human powered machines. Breathe fresh air and do a little walking while improving your balance and flexibility at the same time. All good!
- **Cut Like Scissors** - Reel mower blades spin perpendicular to the ground (rotary mower blades spin parallel to the ground) and cut grass like scissors. Dull rotary mower blades tear grass apart instead of cutting it.
- **Safety** – Reel mowers are generally safer than rotary lawn mowers. Reel mower blades stop spinning when you stop walking. They don't throw rocks, sticks or other debris and are quiet enough so you can hear what's going on around you.

If you never thought a reel mower was for you, think again...

- It's good for your budget!
- It's good for your health!
- It's good for the health of your lawn!
- And it's good for the health of the planet!

What To Look For When Buying A Reel Mower

For the longest time a reel mower was a reel mower. The standard reel mower mower hasn't changed for more than a hundred years, but that's not the case any longer. New designs combined with new technologies provide more options and features to choose from. These are a few important things to keep in mind when choosing a reel mower:

- Performance
- Cutting Power
- Cutting Height Adjustment
- Pushing Ease
- Ability to Edge and Maneuver
- Ability to Cut All Types of Grass
- Comfort and Ergonomics
- Grass Clippings

If you buy the first reel mower you see based on price alone you're setting yourself up for disappointment. Stick with me here while I explain each of the items above as they relate to a mower you might be considering.

What Is Reel Mower Performance?

When someone says, "My reel mower performs great!" What they mean is their reel mower cuts easily through whatever type of grass they are mowing, they don't have to sharpen blades every other week and the mower pushes with ease while efficiently cutting grass.

Push a reel mower. When you do you'll hear the familiar *chik, chik, chik, chik* sound 99% of all reel mowers make. That sound is the spinning blade hitting the horizontal cutting bar. Standard reel mowers are made to work that way. Every time the blades make contact they

get a little duller. Dull mower blades reduce mower performance. Newer mowers have cutting systems designed so blades don't touch, reducing friction and wear.

Mower weight has a lot to do with performance as well. The mower needs to be heavy enough to go through tall grass but not so heavy that it can't be pushed. Reel mowers built 50 years ago were notoriously heavy. Now days, mowers are built using lighter and stronger materials making them easier and more efficient to operate.

Bottom line, a reel mower that performs well is fun to use!

Enough Power To Cut My Yard?

Cutting power refers to how easily a mower cuts through small sticks, twigs, weeds, dense grass or any other item that would normally jam a reel mower.

Older reel mowers jam almost every time they try cutting anything besides grass and really, really small weeds and twigs. When a standard reel mower jams... it stops... right now! And if you have any kind of momentum going when it jams, you get a nice big jolt to boot. Not fun!

Naturally you want your mower to have as much cutting power as possible and you want to generate that power as efficiently as possible as well.

Cutting power is a result of sharp blades and kinetic energy. We know what sharp blades are, the sharper the better. Kinetic energy is the energy of motion and you want your spinning blades to have as much kinetic energy as you can reasonably get. That means you want a reel with a minimum of five substantial steel blades. The reel of blades store energy as they spin which translates into cutting power.

Sufficient cutting power gets you through those rough spots more easily with less effort.

Can The Cutting Height Be Adjusted Easily?

Today most standard reel mowers use the same familiar wheel/cutting height adjustment system used on most powered walking mowers. Each wheel is adjusted individually by placing a lever into one of several different slots that lock the wheel into position at a predetermined height.

Anyone who has ever adjusted wheel/cutting height on a mower with the lever system knows it can be difficult. The adjusting mechanism *on each wheel* can get plastered and gunked up with grass clippings and mud needing to be chipped away before any adjustments can be made. In extreme situations a hammer or pry tool is required to get the wheel moved to the proper height.

Some manufacturers have developed new and much improved cutting height adjustment mechanisms enabling adjustments to be made quickly and with a lot less effort.

One other consideration to think about is the range of cutting height adjustment. Most standard reel mowers can be adjusted to cut from 1 to 3 inches in height. Some of the newer reel mowers extend the cutting height adjustment range from 1 to 4 inches.

An extra inch may not seem like much but it can be quite a big deal. If your grass is high, having the ability to cut an inch higher means you will use 10 times less effort cutting the grass higher than cutting it lower.

Extended cutting height adjustment range is good.

Is It Easy To Push?

The ease with which you can cut grass with any mower (reel or gas powered) pretty much depends on how much grass you are trying to cut at one time. Typically, you should never try to cut more than 1/3rd of the grass at a time. This is better for both you and your grasses

health. Set any mower too low (try to cut too much at once) and it's not very easy (or fun) to push. Set it too high and it pushes super easy but nothing gets cut. Set it just right, the mowing resistance is light and it cuts grass like crazy!

Older reel mowers were not easy to push. They weighed a ton, there was a large amount of friction generated by the gearing mechanism and the concept of 'user comfort' never crossed the mind of the company building them 60 years ago.

The ideal reel mower weighs just the right amount, is geared properly and is built out of long lasting, maintenance free materials.

What About Edging and Maneuvering?

Wheels on standard reel mowers are attached to the outside of the reel. This design hasn't changed in 100 years. Wheels attached to the outside of the reel prevent standard reel mowers from getting close to anything, making edging impossible.

Having wheels attached to the outside of the reel also allows the wheel to mash uncut grass into the turf as you make each pass. This causes problems with some types of grass that don't bounce back up right away creating narrow strips of uneven grass in your lawn after each pass.

The newest mowers have a unique design that places the main mower wheels *behind* the reel allowing you to edge right up next to any object. Having the main wheels behind the reel also avoids mashing any grass down into the turf before being cut preventing the narrow strips of uneven grass mentioned above.

Reel mowers all maneuver more or less the same. When you want to turn the mower you raise the front wheels and spin the mower on it's back wheels. They all turn the same.

Will It Cut All Types of Grass?

Many reel mowers struggle when cutting some types of grasses, especially tough southern varieties like Bahia, St. Augustine and Zoisia. The cutting systems on some of the newer mowers seem to handle the more difficult grasses with more ease.

Is It Comfortable And Easy To Use?

If you look closely, most standard reel mowers available today seem to lack convenience features found on newer walk-behind mowers like simple height adjustment and ergonomic handles.

Handles on older reel mowers were attached at one place and were non-adjustable. Didn't matter how short or tall you were, you got to push with the handle in one position which didn't always provide much joy for the person doing all the pushing. Speaking of the handle, it was a classic T-handle made out of oak. The word 'ergonomic' hadn't been invented yet when these things were made!

The biggest ergonomic improvement in standard reel mowers built in the past twenty years is the ability to adjust handle height with some effort. Not much else has changed.

The newest reel mowers have ergonomic handles designed to allow you to place your hands in several different positions on the handle while pushing. The handles are covered in thick foam for improved grip and comfort.

It is very easy to adjust handle height on the newest mowers. Handles can be adjusted super low for very short people up to a comfortable position for a very tall person.

Likewise, the newest models make it super easy and quick to adjust cutting height.

Finally, reel mowers aren't silent, but they are a lot quieter than gas powered mowers. And

some of the newer reel mowers are really, really quiet. There is no noise and no fumes. Using a reel mower it's possible to cut grass and talk on the phone or listen to music. And the neighbors will absolutely love it when you cut grass early in the morning without disturbing them.

How Are Grass Clippings Handled?

Standard reel mowers discharge or throw grass clippings directly behind the cutting reel... right in the path where you are walking.

Normally this isn't a big deal. However, when grass is damp or high it's a big pain. Wet grass clippings fly up and stick all over your pants or bare legs if you're wearing shorts. If the grass is high it leaves a 'hay row' of messy grass clippings behind the mower you have to wade through.

Not fun!

The latest reel mower designs have a truly unique way of handling grass clippings. The newest designs *throw grass clippings forward in front of the mower*. Discharging clippings in front of the mower keeps grass from getting all over you or having to walk through rows of deep grass clippings. Another major benefit a forward discharge reel mower provides is the freshly cut clippings go through the mower immediately a second time getting mulched, leaving your yard looking better than ever.

Definitely check how grass clippings on any potential new mower are handled and give the new designs some serious consideration.

Resources and Reviews

I just completed a comprehensive review on one of the new design reel mowers. Click the link below to read it:

[CLICK HERE NOW TO READ MY REEL MOWER REVIEW](#)

Useful Links

Here are links to several popular reel mowers with reviews:

- [Scotts 20-Inch Classic Push Reel Lawn Mower](#)
- [American Lawn Mower 16-Inch Bent Reel Mower](#)
- [Great States 18-Inch Deluxe Push Reel Lawn Mower](#)
- [Brill Razorcut 38 15-Inch Reel Push Lawn Mower](#)
- [Gilmour 20-Inch Reel Mower with Grass Catcher](#)
- [Fiskars 18-Inch 5-Blade Momentum Push Reel Lawn Mower](#)

Thank you for reading

**“How To Buy A Reel Mower: 8 Things To Know before Throwing
Down Your Hard Earned Money”!**

I certainly hope you enjoyed this guide and learned a little something more from it.

If you have any questions about reel mowers, comments about this buyer's guide (if you loved it I'd love to get a testimonial from you) or my Blog, please feel free to contact me at:

Blog: www.alittlesomethingmore.com

Email: bruce@alittlesomethingmore.com

Interested in learning about more cool stuff you've never heard about? Please visit [A Little Something More](#) for articles and ideas that will make your day a little more intelligent, delightful and rewarding.