

When to Start Planting Flowers for Spring: A Complete Gardener's Guide

Knowing when to start planting flowers for spring is the key to a vibrant, colorful garden that thrives all season long. Plant too early and frost can kill young plants; wait too long and you may miss peak bloom time. The right timing depends on **your climate, flower type, and local frost dates.**

In this guide, you'll learn exactly **when to plant spring flowers**, how to plan around frost, and tips to ensure healthy growth from day one.



Why Timing Matters When Planting

Spring Flowers

Spring flowers are sensitive to temperature and soil conditions. Planting at the wrong time can lead to:

- Stunted growth
- Frost damage
- Poor blooming
- Root rot from cold, wet soil

By planting at the proper time, flowers establish strong roots, resist disease, and bloom at their fullest.

Understanding Frost Dates and Hardiness Zones

Know Your Last Frost Date

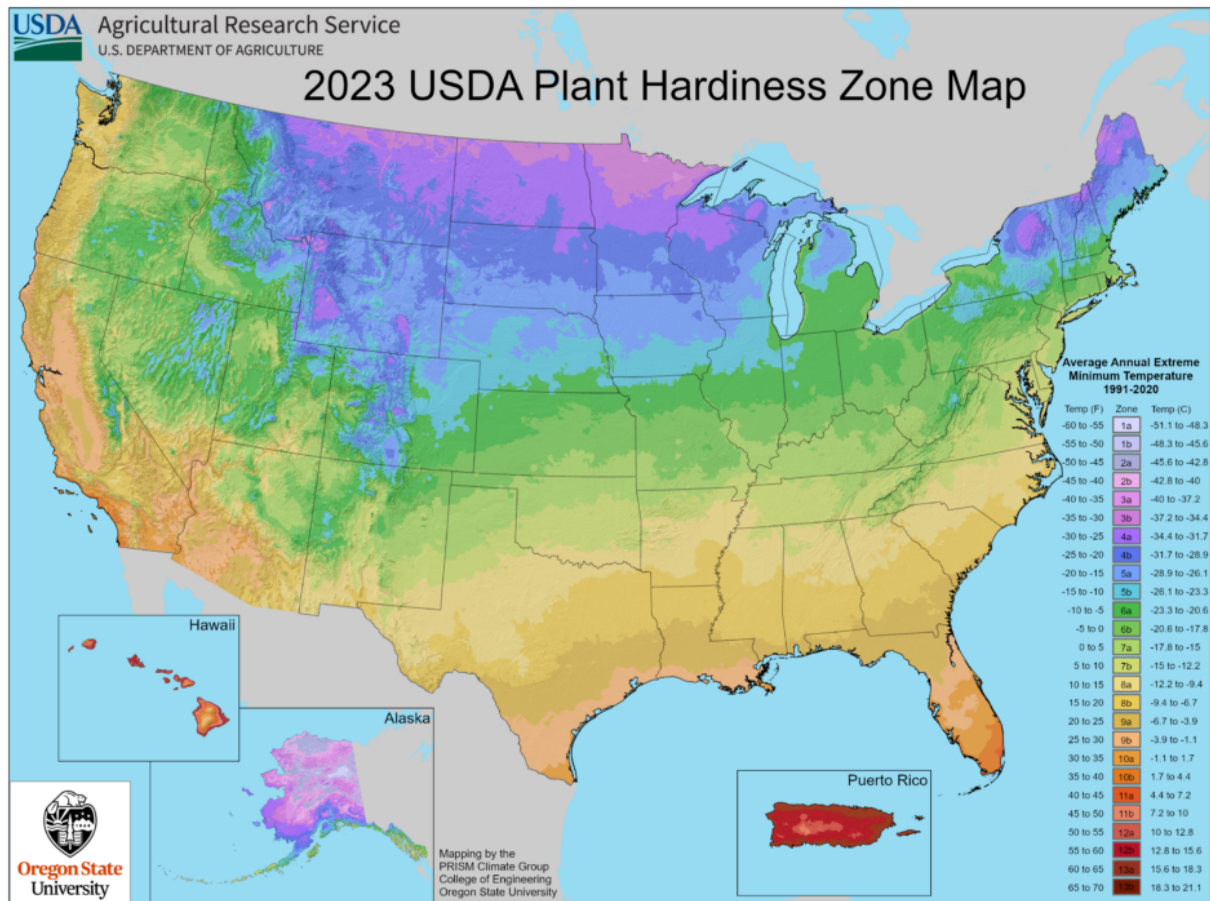
The **average last frost date** is the most important factor when deciding when to plant. This date marks when overnight temperatures are unlikely to drop below freezing.

- **Cool-season flowers** can be planted *before* the last frost
- **Warm-season flowers** should be planted *after* the last frost

Use USDA Plant Hardiness Zones

Hardiness zones are based on average minimum winter temperatures and help determine which plants will thrive in your region.

- Northern zones (3–5): Later planting dates
- Central zones (6–7): Mid-spring planting
- Southern zones (8–10): Earlier spring or even late winter planting



When to Plant Different Types of Spring Flowers

□ Spring-Blooming Bulbs (Plant in Fall)

These flowers bloom in early spring but must be planted months earlier.

Examples:

- Tulips
- Daffodils
- Crocuses
- Hyacinths

Best planting time: Fall, 6–8 weeks before the ground freezes

☐ Cool-Season Flowers (Early Spring)

These flowers tolerate cold temperatures and light frost.

Examples:

- Pansies
- Snapdragons
- Sweet peas
- Violas
- Calendula

Best planting time:

- 4–6 weeks before the last frost
 - When soil can be worked and daytime temps reach 50°F (10°C)
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☐ Warm-Season Flowers (After Frost)

These flowers thrive in warmth and will not survive frost.

Examples:

- Petunias

- Zinnias
- Marigolds
- Cosmos
- Sunflowers

Best planting time:

- 1–2 weeks after the last frost
- When soil temperatures reach 60°F (15°C) or higher



Starting Flowers Indoors for an Early Advantage

Starting seeds indoors allows flowers to bloom earlier and grow stronger before transplanting.

Flowers Commonly Started Indoors

- Petunias
- Begonias
- Lobelia
- Geraniums

When to start:

- 6–10 weeks before the last frost date

Tips for success:

- Use seed-starting mix
 - Provide bright light (grow lights work best)
 - Harden off seedlings before planting outdoors
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Regional Spring Planting Guide

Northern Climates

- Start seeds indoors: February–March
- Transplant outdoors: Late April–May

Moderate Climates

- Direct sow cool flowers: March
- Warm flowers: April

Southern Climates

- Cool flowers: Late winter
 - Warm flowers: Early spring
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Soil Preparation: Don't Skip This Step

Healthy soil ensures healthy flowers.

Before planting:

- Remove weeds and debris
- Loosen soil 8–12 inches deep
- Add compost or organic matter
- Ensure good drainage

Soil temperature is just as important as air temperature—cold soil slows root growth.

Common Spring Flower Planting Mistakes to Avoid

- ☐ Planting before the soil warms
- ☐ Ignoring frost forecasts
- ☐ Overwatering young plants
- ☐ Skipping hardening-off
- ☐ Planting sun-loving flowers in shade

Avoiding these mistakes can dramatically improve bloom quality.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I plant flowers as soon as spring starts?

Not always. Early spring weather can still bring frost. Always check your last frost date.

What flowers can handle frost?

Pansies, violas, snapdragons, and sweet peas tolerate light frost.

Should I use mulch in spring?

Yes. Mulch helps regulate soil temperature and retain moisture.

Final Thoughts: When Should You Start Planting Flowers for Spring?

The best time to plant spring flowers depends on **flower type, frost dates, and local climate**. Cool-season flowers can go in early, while warm-season varieties must wait until frost danger passes. With proper planning, soil preparation, and timing, your spring garden will reward you with months of color and growth.

Lawn Care Tips After Winter: With and Without Chemicals

Winter can be tough on your lawn. Snow, ice, freezing temperatures, and foot traffic often leave grass compacted, patchy, and vulnerable to weeds and disease. As spring approaches, proper lawn care helps restore healthy growth and sets the foundation for a lush yard throughout the growing season. Whether you prefer traditional chemical treatments or more natural methods, understanding both approaches allows you to choose what works best for your lawn and lifestyle.



Assessing Winter Damage

Before applying any treatments, start with a thorough inspection of your lawn. Look for:

- Bare or thin patches

- Compacted soil
- Snow mold or fungal growth
- Excess thatch
- Early weed emergence

Remove debris such as leaves, sticks, and dead grass to improve airflow and sunlight penetration. Early assessment helps determine whether your lawn needs aeration, fertilization, reseeding, or pest control.

Lawn Care After Winter Using Chemicals

Chemical lawn care products are widely used for their fast, predictable results. When applied correctly, they can quickly revive stressed lawns.

1. Pre-Emergent Weed Control

Applying a pre-emergent herbicide in early spring prevents weeds like crabgrass and dandelions from germinating. Timing is critical—apply when soil temperatures consistently reach about 50–55°F.

2. Synthetic Fertilizers

Chemical fertilizers provide nutrients in a readily available form, especially nitrogen for green growth. A balanced spring fertilizer encourages quick recovery from winter dormancy.

Tip: Avoid over-fertilizing, which can burn grass and promote shallow root growth.

3. Fungicides and Pesticides

If snow mold or insect damage is visible, targeted fungicides or pesticides can stop problems from spreading. Spot treatment is often more effective—and safer—than blanket application.

4. Soil Amendments

Chemical soil conditioners and pH adjusters can rapidly correct deficiencies, especially in lawns with known soil issues.

Pros of Chemical Methods

- Fast results
- Precise nutrient control
- Effective against severe weed or pest problems

Cons

- Potential environmental impact
- Risk of runoff or overuse
- Can reduce beneficial soil organisms over time

Lawn Care After Winter Without Chemicals (Organic & Natural Methods)

Natural lawn care focuses on building long-term soil health and resilience. While results may take longer, this approach is eco-friendly and sustainable.

1. Aeration

Core aeration relieves soil compaction caused by snow and foot traffic. It improves oxygen flow, water absorption, and root development—essential after winter stress.

2. Compost and Organic Fertilizers

Applying compost or organic fertilizers (such as composted manure or plant-based blends) enriches soil with slow-release nutrients and beneficial microbes.

3. Overseeding

Reseed thin or bare areas with grass varieties suited to your climate. Overseeding improves lawn density, naturally crowding out weeds.

4. Natural Weed Control

Hand-pulling, mulching, and maintaining thick turf are effective weed-prevention strategies. Corn gluten meal can also act as a natural pre-emergent when applied correctly.

5. Soil Health Focus

Healthy soil grows healthy grass. Practices like topdressing with compost, maintaining proper mowing height, and deep, infrequent watering strengthen roots and reduce future problems.

Pros of Organic Methods

- Environmentally friendly
- Improves long-term soil health
- Safer for pets and children

Cons

- Slower visible results
 - Requires consistency and patience
 - May not control severe infestations quickly
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Blended Approach: The Best of Both Worlds

Many homeowners choose a hybrid strategy—using chemicals sparingly while prioritizing organic practices. For example:

- Use aeration and compost annually
- Spot-treat weeds instead of blanket spraying
- Apply slow-release fertilizers when necessary

This balanced method reduces environmental impact while maintaining reliable lawn performance.

Final Tips for Spring Lawn Success

- Start early, but don't rush—soil temperature matters more than calendar dates
 - Mow high to encourage deeper roots
 - Water deeply but infrequently
 - Adjust your approach based on lawn response
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Conclusion

Post-winter lawn care is about recovery, prevention, and preparation. Chemical treatments offer speed and precision, while organic methods promote long-term health and sustainability. By understanding both approaches, you can tailor a lawn care plan that fits your goals—whether that's rapid green-up, eco-friendly maintenance, or a thoughtful combination of both.



Portable Generator Maintenance: Keep It Ready When You Need It Most

A portable generator can be a lifesaver during power outages caused by storms, grid failures, or remote jobsite needs. However, a generator that sits unused for months—or years—can fail at the exact moment you rely on it. Proper maintenance ensures your generator starts easily, runs safely, and delivers reliable power when it matters most.

This guide walks through essential portable generator maintenance steps, from routine checks to seasonal preparation.



Why Generator Maintenance Matters

Portable generators are mechanical engines, and like any engine, they degrade over time without care. Common problems such as stale fuel, dead batteries, clogged carburetors, and low oil levels are responsible for most generator failures.

Regular maintenance:

- Prevents costly repairs
 - Extends generator lifespan
 - Ensures safe operation
 - Provides peace of mind during emergencies
-

Routine Maintenance Checklist

1. Check and Change the Oil

Oil lubricates engine components and prevents overheating.

- Check oil levels before each use
- Change oil after the first 20–30 hours (new units)
- Replace oil every 50–100 hours or at least once per year

Tip: Always use the oil type recommended by the manufacturer.

2. Inspect and Replace the Air Filter

A dirty air filter restricts airflow and reduces engine efficiency.

- Inspect the air filter every few months
- Clean foam filters with soap and water
- Replace paper filters if dirty or damaged

Clean air ensures smooth starts and optimal performance.

3. Maintain the Fuel System

Fuel issues are the **number-one cause of generator failure**.

Best practices:

- Use fresh fuel (no older than 30–60 days without stabilizer)
- Add fuel stabilizer if storing fuel long-term
- Run the generator dry or shut off the fuel valve before storage
- Drain the carburetor if the unit will sit unused for months

For propane or dual-fuel generators, inspect hoses and connections for cracks or leaks.

4. Inspect the Spark Plug

The spark plug ignites the fuel-air mixture.

- Remove and inspect annually
- Clean light carbon buildup
- Replace if worn, corroded, or fouled

A healthy spark plug ensures reliable starting.

5. Test the Generator Regularly

Even a well-maintained generator should be run periodically.

- Start and run the generator every 1–3 months
- Let it run for 10–15 minutes
- Plug in a small load (light or tool) to verify power output

This keeps internal components lubricated and confirms operational readiness.

Electrical and Safety Checks

6. Inspect Cords and Outlets

Damaged cords or outlets can cause unsafe operation.

- Check extension cords for cracks or fraying
 - Ensure outlets are clean and secure
 - Replace damaged components immediately
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7. Verify Grounding and Carbon Monoxide Safety

- Confirm grounding instructions per manufacturer guidelines
- Never run a generator indoors or in enclosed spaces

- Store carbon monoxide detectors with fresh batteries nearby

Safety maintenance is just as important as mechanical upkeep.

Battery Maintenance (Electric-Start Models)

If your generator has an electric start:

- Inspect battery terminals for corrosion
- Charge the battery every few months
- Replace weak or failing batteries every 2–3 years

A dead battery can render an otherwise functional generator useless.

Seasonal and Long-Term Storage Tips

Preparing for Storage

- Clean dirt, oil, and debris from the unit
- Change oil before long storage periods
- Drain fuel or add stabilizer
- Store in a dry, well-ventilated location

Preparing for Storm or Outage Season

- Top off fresh fuel supply

- Perform a test run under load
 - Check oil, filters, and spark plug
 - Stage extension cords and transfer equipment
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Keep a Maintenance Log

Tracking service intervals prevents missed maintenance.

Record:

- Oil changes
- Fuel stabilizer additions
- Battery replacements
- Test run dates

A simple log ensures consistency and reliability.

Common Generator Maintenance Mistakes to Avoid

- Letting fuel sit untreated for long periods
- Skipping test runs
- Overloading the generator
- Ignoring manufacturer maintenance schedules
- Running the generator without checking oil

Avoiding these mistakes dramatically improves dependability.

Conclusion

A portable generator is only as reliable as its maintenance. Regular inspections, clean fuel, periodic testing, and proper storage ensure your generator is ready to perform when power is lost. With just a little routine care, you can avoid unexpected failures and ensure dependable backup power when you need it most.

How to Clear Ice Dams From a Roof Safely and Effectively

Ice dams are a common winter problem in cold climates. They form when snow melts on the warmer upper sections of a roof, flows downward, and refreezes at the colder eaves. Over time, ice dams can trap water behind them, leading to roof leaks, insulation damage, mold growth, and damaged gutters. Knowing how to safely remove ice dams—and when to call a professional—can help protect your home and prevent costly repairs.

What Causes Ice Dams?

Ice dams typically form due to uneven roof temperatures caused by:

- Heat escaping from the attic into the roof
- Poor insulation or inadequate ventilation
- Snow accumulation combined with freezing temperatures

When the upper roof surface is warm, snow melts and runs toward the edge, where colder temperatures refreeze the water and create a dam. As the ice thickens, melting snow has nowhere to drain, forcing water under shingles and into the home.

Important Safety Considerations

Clearing ice dams can be dangerous. Before attempting removal:

- Avoid climbing onto icy or snow-covered roofs
- Use non-damaging tools—never sharp metal objects
- Do not chip ice aggressively, as this can damage shingles and roofing materials
- Wear slip-resistant footwear and insulated gloves
- Stay clear of falling ice and snow

If conditions are unsafe or the ice dam is extensive, professional removal is the safest option.

Safe Methods to Remove Ice Dams

1. Remove Excess Roof Snow

Removing snow reduces the amount of meltwater feeding the ice dam.

How to do it:

- Use a roof rake with a long handle from the ground
- Pull snow downward—never sideways

- Clear several feet above the roof edge if possible

Roof raking is most effective when done early, before ice dams fully develop.

2. Create Drainage Channels in the Ice

Creating small channels allows trapped water to escape instead of backing up under shingles.

How to do it:

- Fill old socks or pantyhose with calcium chloride ice melter (not rock salt)
- Lay them vertically across the ice dam, extending over the roof edge
- The calcium chloride melts through the ice, forming a drainage path

Important:

Never use sodium chloride (rock salt), as it can damage roofing materials, plants, and metal components.



Socks filled with ice melt (NOT rock salt) can be effective against ice dams.

3. Use Low-Pressure Steam Removal

Steam removal is one of the safest and most effective professional methods.

Why it works:

- Steam melts ice without damaging shingles
- It removes the dam while preserving roofing materials
- It prevents further water intrusion during removal

This method requires specialized equipment and is best performed by experienced professionals.

4. Improve Temporary Attic Cooling

Lowering attic temperatures can slow ice dam growth until removal is possible.

Steps you can take:

- Close attic hatches tightly
- Seal obvious air leaks near attic access points
- Maintain airflow through existing vents

While this will not remove existing ice dams, it helps prevent them from worsening.

Methods to Avoid

Some ice removal methods can cause serious damage or injury and should not be used:

- Chipping ice with hammers or axes
- Using open flames or heat guns
- Pouring hot water on the roof
- Applying rock salt directly to shingles

These approaches can crack shingles, harm roofing underlayment, and increase the risk of leaks.

When to Call a Professional

You should contact a professional if:

- Ice dams are large or extend far up the roof
- Water is leaking into your home
- The roof is steep or difficult to access
- You are uncomfortable working from ladders or slippery ground

Roofing and ice dam specialists have the equipment and experience to remove ice safely without increasing damage.

Preventing Ice Dams in the Future

Long-term prevention is just as important as removal.

Improve Attic Insulation

Proper insulation prevents heat from escaping into the roof and melting snow.

Seal Air Leaks

Seal gaps around attic hatches, light fixtures, and vents to reduce warm air leakage.

Upgrade Attic Ventilation

Balanced intake and exhaust ventilation keeps the roof surface cold and consistent.

Install Ice and Water Shield

This protective membrane under shingles along the eaves helps

prevent leaks if ice dams do form.

Conclusion

Clearing ice dams requires patience, proper tools, and a strong focus on safety. Ground-based snow removal, calcium chloride channels, and professional steam removal are the safest ways to address the issue. Just as important, addressing insulation and ventilation problems can help ensure ice dams don't return next winter.

How to Reheat Steak Without Overcooking It

By Gage Hanson

Warm, freshly-cooked steak is delicious. Cold, leftover steak not quite as much. However, there are a few methods of reheating steak that makes it almost as good as the original. These methods are all relatively quick and easy so you can enjoy your steak without too much of a drop-off because of time. Here is how to reheat steak without overcooking it.

Reheat Steak Just How You Cooked It

One of the best ways to cook steak off of the grill is using both your oven *and* stove top. So why can't you re-cook it the same way? The truth is, you can! You can reheat your steak without overcooking it by putting it in the over

and then cooking it again in a skillet.

First off, you will want to put your leftover steaks on a baking sheet. Turn the oven to 250-degrees and cook the sheets until they reach 110 degrees on the inside using a probe thermometer. This is going to take around 30 minutes for a standard 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch steak, but you will want to adjust the time depending on the thickness and size of your steak. Depending on the situation, you should check the steak's earlier for smaller ones and you can leave them in for a bit longer with thicker steaks.



Using an oven and a skillet, you can reheat steak without overcooking it

After your steaks have reached the right temperature, you will have to remove them from the oven and prepare the skillet. Heat one tablespoon of oil on high in the skillet until the oil just barely starts to smoke. At this point, place the steaks in the skillet and sear both sides for 1-2 minutes until they are crispy. Remove the steaks from the skillet and let them cool briefly. Your steaks will have the consistency and taste of freshly cooked meat and should be roughly a medium-rare temperature.

Alternate Stove Top Method

Sometimes you don't have time to warm up the oven and let your leftover steaks sit for half an hour. For those of you with some beef broth in your pantry, you can use this to reheat your steak in a skillet and skip the oven method.



Reheating a steak on a skillet with beef broth will help prevent overcooking it

You can put in as much beef broth as you want, it all just depends on how juicy you want your steak to be. The broth will be cooked into the steak as you are warming it up and add some moisture and juiciness back to the steak. Cook the steak on both sides with the broth until the internal temperature reaches 110 degrees again. Then, you will be able to enjoy a juicy and tasty leftover steak.

Classic Reheating

The microwave may not be the first thing that comes to mind when reheating steak to make it taste as good as it did, but stay with me. The microwave is going to be the most convenient for you, and with a couple of simple hacks you can avoid the common disadvantages to using a microwave to

reheat your steak.

First, you will want to put your steak in a deep dish that is microwave safe. Secondly, you will need to pour some gravy, broth, or leftover meat juices into the dish. This will keep your steak from drying out and ensure that it tastes good and moist. Cover the dish with a lid or microwave safe plastic wrap and you are ready to move on to the next step.

Now you can start the microwave. Turn the power level to half and cook the leftover steak in 30-second segments. Flip the steak over each segment to keep the heat spread out equally and avoid any cold spots in your reheated meal. Because you will be checking it constantly, this is a second good way to reheat steak without overcooking it.

This technique won't get the steak back to its original crispiness, but the added juice will keep the flavor and the heat should warm up your steak nicely. All in all, this is not a bad solution if you are in a hurry and don't have too much time to warm up your meal.

Air Fryer

An air fryer is a swiss army knife when it comes to kitchen appliances. It is great for cooking but is also a game changer when it comes to reheating food. From pizza to french fries, it can reheat almost any leftover, including steak.



Using an air fryer you can reheat a steak

First, you should coat your leftover steak with some oil or some butter before you put it in the air fryer. Then, all you have to do is follow the same temperature and time instructions from the oven sections.

Set the air fryer to 250 degrees and stick the steak in for at least 20 minutes and until it reaches 110 degrees on the inside. Check the steak every once in a while while it is cooking to make sure you haven't fried it too much. The air fryer will cook your steak all the way through again and give it a texture very similar to when it came right off the grill. The oil or butter on top will help bring out the taste and keep the steak moist after it has been cooked into the meat. You can't go wrong warming up most things in an air fryer, steak included.

Whatever method you end up using, rest assured

that reheated steak isn't a bad idea so long as you learn how to reheat steak without overcooking it. You will have a nice, warm meal that tastes almost as good as it originally did.

This guide is one of our exclusive Guides. Checkout our other exclusive Guides found only here on LincOn.com.

Kinetic Log Splitters

Kinetic log splitters use a build-up of kinetic energy in large springs and release that energy on a log to quickly split it. It takes about 2-4 seconds to split a log. This difference between how they work and gas or electric powered log splitters or even hydraulic manual log splitters sets them apart. However, they do have their drawbacks.

How do kinetic splitters work

Typically, log splitters work by pushing a hydraulic ram. The ram is powered by a pump that pumps the hydraulic fluid. However, that's not how kinetic log splitters work. Kinetic log splitters work by taking the engine's power and coiling large and powerful springs. This energy is then released all at once on a log.

Advantages/Disadvantages of Manual log splitters

Like anything else, there are advantages and disadvantages to using a kinetic log splitter. These may or may not affect you but should be taken into consideration when purchasing a log splitter.

Advantages

- Speed
- No hydraulic fluid
- No pumps

Disadvantages

- Cost – More expensive
- Cannot be operated vertically
- Does work as well on logs with knots

Kinetic Log Splitter Models

There's not a lot of kinetic log splitters on the market but here are some to consider.



DK2 Kinetic Log Splitter

The DK2 kinetic log splitter features a 7 HP Kohler engine and an over-sized table beyond the wedge. It also have a 1 second cycle time. You read that right – 1 second!

DR Rapid Fire Log Splitters



DR Pilot K10

DR Equipment has a several kinetic log springs with models ranging in power and ones that are powered by electric motors so you get the benefits of an electric log splitter and the speed of a kinetic log splitter.

For gas powered models, DR has models K22 and K28. The K22 can split logs 18" long and 30" in diameter while the K28 is towable and can split logs 24" long and up to 30" in diameter. Their top of the line model is the XLK34 and it compares with 34 Ton hydraulic log splitters.



DR XLK34

Electric models include the Pilot K10 and the K22E. The K10 is the cheapest model and has a 1 second cycle time and can split logs up to 16" long. The K22E is like its K22 counterpart and can split logs 18" and up to 30" in diameter.



Oregon Kinetic Log Splitter

Oregon has a line of log splitters and part of this line-up includes a kinetic log splitter. The Oregon Kinetic Log Splitter has a 34 Ton equivalent and can handle 24" logs



Range Road Kinetic Log Splitter

Range Road is a Canadian company that makes equipment for small to medium sized logging operations. One of the pieces of equipment they make is a kinetic log splitter. The Range Road Kinetic log splitter is electric and can split logs 20"



SpeeCo Commercial Kinetic Log Splitter

The SpeeCo Commercial Kinetic Log Splitter features a Kohler engine. It is also towable which is handy for getting it around. It has a 2 second cycle time.



Woods Kinetic Log Splitter

The Woods Kinetic Log Splitter is a commercial/residential splitter that can split 24" logs and features a 32" table for working rounds. The unit is towable.



WoodMaxx Kinetic Log Splitters

WoodMaxx is another U.S. based manufacturer that makes two kinetic log splitter models. The first model is the LS-28T. It's a 28 Ton equivalent log splitter that can split 24" logs up to 28" in diameter. The next model is the LS-34T. This

model can also handle 24" and 28" in diameter.

Conclusion

As you can see, there are a number of different options for kinetic log splitters. Kinetic splitters have power and most importantly speed. They are a great choice if want to get the job done and have few logs with knotted wood. If none of these work for you, you can always take a look at electric log splitters or manual log splitters and see if anything there will work for you.

Hopefully this guide has been helpful in showing you the different options that are available. Check out our other exclusive Guides on Linc0n.com

If you know of any other kinetic log splitters that should be on this list, please email Dave at dbroer@Linc0n.com

Manual Log Splitters

Manual log splitters are log splitters that use mechanic leverage to split a log. These sometimes involve the same hydraulic rams that electric or gas powered log splitters use but it may use some other means to split the log. This guide focuses on different manual log splitters that are available and allows you to compare different models and see what is available.

How do splitters work

Typically, log splitters work by pushing a hydraulic ram. The ram is powered by a pump that pumps the hydraulic fluid. This

pump can either be powered by a gas motor, an electric motor or manually activated.

Advantages/Disadvantages of Manual log splitters

Like anything else, there are advantages and disadvantages to using an manual log splitter. These may or may not affect you but should be taken into consideration when purchasing a log splitter.

Advantages

- No gasoline needed
- Relatively quiet
- Can be used indoors/in enclosed spaces
- Can be more powerful than

Disadvantages

- Some options are less powerful
- More effort needed than powered units for some options

Manual Log Splitter Models

Here are some electric log splitters to consider. The splitters are sorted by power.



Felled Slide Hammer Manual Log Splitter

Felled Slide Hammer Manual Log Splitter

The Felled Slide Hammer manual log splitter is another splitter that uses hammer force to split the log. You raise and lower a ram on the handle to give it the force to split logs.



Harbor Freight 10 Ton Log Splitter

Harbor Freight 10 Ton Log Splitter

The Harbor Freight 10 Ton Hydraulic log splitter works much like a traditional log splitter by using a ram to press the log against a wedge. The ram is powered by cranking two levers back and forth to move the piston. At 10 tons it's more capable than most electric splitters and can split logs up to 18" long. This unit can also be ordered through Amazon.



Logo Smart-Splitter 14 Ton Manual Log Splitter

Logosol Smart-Splitter 14 Ton Manual Log Splitter

The Logosol Smart-Splitter 14 Ton manual log splitter is one of the more powerful log splitters on our list. It's easy to use and can take logs up to 21.5" long and any width. It works by simply raising a weight and letting it drop. You repeat this until the log is split.



Sun Joe 10 Ton Hydraulic Log Splitter

Sun Joe 10 Ton Hydraulic Log Splitter

The Sun Joe 10 Ton hydraulic log splitter looks and works very similarly to the Harbor Freight model. They both can take logs up to 18" so they are probably made by the same manufacturer and just branded differently.



Timber Tuff Manual Log Splitter

The Timber Tuff Manual Log Splitter works by raising and

lowering a hammer weight built into the handle. This action splits the log.



Vulcan 8 Ton Manual Log Splitter

The Vulcan 8 Ton Manual Log Splitter is a vertical log splitter that uses a hydraulic ram that is powered by manually pumping the ram with your foot until the log splits. It can split logs up to 25".

Wedges and Mauls

In addition to manually powered hydraulic rams and levels that provide mechanical advantage when splitting wood, other manual log splitters include traditional and non-traditional wedges and mauls. Here are some to consider.



Estwing Sure Split Wedge

The Estwing Sure Split Wedge is a powerful wedge design. It helps split logs more easily due to its non-traditional design. This wedge is made in the U.S.A so you are sure to get

a quality product.



Fiskars IsoCore Maul

The Fiskars IsoCore Maul is a 36" long maul engineered with a special wedge to make splitting wood easier. The IsoCore technology means less impact to user when splitting a log.



Manual Log Splitter Wedge

This Manual Log Splitter Wedge is a generic wedge that is pretty much a standard design. It features a four-way split and requires an 8lb+ sledge hammer to force it through a log.

Conclusion

As you can see, there are a number of different options for manual log splitters. They range from hydraulic rams, levers and even simple wedges so there is plenty to consider when looking for a log splitter. If none of these work for you, you can always take a look at electric log splitters or kinetic log splitters and see if anything there will work for you.

Hopefully this guide has been helpful in showing you the

different options that are available. Check out our other exclusive Guides on LincOn.com

If you know of any other electric log splitters that should be on this list, please email Dave at dbroer@LincOn.com

Electric Log Splitters

Electric log splitters are log splitters that use electricity to power the hydraulic ram that splits the log. They have advantages over gas powered log splitters but are generally less powerful but are still very capable machines. This guide focuses on different electric log splitters that are available and allows you to compare different models and see what is available.

How do splitters work

Typically, log splitters work by pushing a hydraulic ram. The ram is powered by a pump that pumps the hydraulic fluid. This pump can either be powered by a gas motor, an electric motor or manually activated.

In this case, the hydraulic pump is powered by an electric motor. The hydraulic ram or piston presses the log against a wedge causing the log to split.

Advantages/Disadvantages of electric log splitters

Like anything else, there are advantages and disadvantages to using an electric log splitter. These may or may not affect you but should be taken into consideration when purchasing a

log splitter.

Advantages

- No gasoline needed
- Relatively quiet
- Can be used indoors/in enclosed spaces
- Lower to the ground – can roll logs more easily onto it
- Easy to start

Disadvantages

- Electricity needed
- Electric cord
- Less powerful
- Lower to the ground – potentially more bending needed

Electric Log Splitter Models

Here are some electric log splitters to consider. The splitters are sorted by power.



Earthquake 5 Ton Electric Log Splitter

Earthquake 5 Ton Electric Log Splitter

The Earthquake 5 Ton electric log splitter is another one of the smaller yet capable log splitters in our listing. It features a 1500 watt motor and can split logs up to 20" in length. This model is also available with a stand.



Harbor Freight 5 Ton Electric Log Splitter

Harbor Freight 5 Ton Electric Log Splitter

The Harbor Freight 5 Ton electric log splitter is one of the smallest in the lineup but it's a very capable 1.8HP splitter that can accommodate logs up to 18" long.



Sun Joe 5 Ton Electric Log Splitter

Sun Joe 5 Ton Electric Log Splitter

The Sun Joe 5 Ton electric log splitter features a 15 amp motor and can split logs up to 20.5".



Southland 6 Ton Electric Log Splitter

Southland 6 Ton Electric Log Splitter

The Southland 6 Ton electric log splitter features a unique design that allows it to be shifted so that you can split logs in the vertical as well as horizontal position. It can split logs up to 20.5" long.



WEN 6.5 Ton Electric Log Splitter

WEN 6.5 Ton Electric Log Splitter

The WEN 6.5 ton electric log splitter is one of the few log splitters that comes on a stand which eliminates bending to load the logs but you will need to lift the logs into place. The splitter can handle logs 10.5" in diameter and 20.5" long.



Boss 7 Ton Electric Log Splitter

Boss 7 Ton Electric Log Splitter

The Boss 7 Ton electric log splitter can reportedly split logs

over 20" in diameter and features a 2HP motor that needs a 20A outlet to power it. It can split logs up to 20" long making it a nice mid-range unit.



Powerhouse 7 Ton Electric Log Splitter

Powerhouse 7 Ton Electric Log Splitter

The Powerhouse 7 Ton electric log splitter is the smaller of the two Powerhouse-brand splitters on our list. It can split logs up to 20.5" and claims to produce more force than the Boss 7 Ton log splitter so if you're looking for a mid-range splitter, this one should make your list as well.



Stark 7 Ton Electric Log Splitter

Stark Industrial 7 Ton Electric Log Splitter

The Stark Industrial 7 Ton electric log splitter is another splitter in the mid-size range. It features a 1500 watt motor and is capable of splitting 21" logs.



Powehouse 9 Ton Electric Log Splitter

Powerhouse 9 Ton Electric Log Splitter

The Powerhouse 9 Ton electric log splitter is one of the most powerful electric log splitters available. It can handle logs up to 20". This unit can draw up to 2900 watts or 25 amps so make sure you have a powerful electric outlet!



Boss 10 Ton Electric Log Splitter

Boss 10 Ton Electric Log Splitter

The Boss 10 Ton Electric Log Splitter is one of the powerful electric splitters available. It requires a 20 Amp circuit to provide the power that the unit needs. It features a bi-directional wedge, an industrial wedge and the ability to split logs up to 22" long.

Conclusion

As you can see, there are a number of different options for electric log splitters. They range in power from 5 tons all the way to 10 tons and can be floor height and some are

available at a table height.

Hopefully this guide has been helpful in showing you the different options that are available. Check out our other exclusive Guides on Linc0n.com

If you know of any other electric log splitters that should be on this list, please email Dave at dbroer@Linc0n.com

How Many Hours a Day Do You Homeschool?

One of the first questions people ask when they hear we homeschool is, “how many hours a day do your homeschool?”

Immediately, questions pop up in my own mind because there are so many variables and no two days are alike. Some of those variables are the number of children doing lessons, the number of babies and toddlers that need to also be watched, or which curriculum is being used.



Dad reading to his child is part of homeschooling

What is Homeschooling?

The most important thing to make sure to understand is that homeschooling is NOT like the same style of learning that occurs in a public/private/parochial schooling. There are as many styles of homeschooling as there are homeschoolers. Each of those families will also tell you totally different responses to the question of how many hours a day do you homeschool?

Where to start

If you are at the beginning stages of thinking about homeschooling your children, your first stop should be Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) to learn about your state homeschool requirements. Some states actually mandate a certain number of hours of instruction for homeschooled children in a given school year. Oddly, these mandates are written by people who do not know much about homeschooling nor do they really grasp how little actual instruction a child in

a school building indeed receives. Some states do not mandate a certain number of days or hours, but you will need to review your states' requirements and adhere to them.

There is a famous motto from a style of schooling that says, "Education is an atmosphere, a discipline and a life." Many homeschool families model their lives around learning. These families consider the everyday work of living as opportunities to build character, virtue, and teaching lessons. When Dad makes a loaf of banana bread, the children helping are learning about fractions from the recipe as well as how to lovingly work for the needs of one another. Children helping as Mom weeds the garden are learning about plants, plant life, insects, ecology, and the discipline of doing that which needs to be done.



A homeschooling family can all work together

Homeschool Schedule

Some homeschool families are regimented about maintaining a specific schedule to their day. Families with children in varying age ranges can benefit from maintaining a schedule such as the one discussed here. Families schooling maybe just one child, with non-school age siblings will maybe want a routine like the one discussed here.

As a rule of thumb, children in the early elementary grades (kindergarten-4th grade, approximately) should not spend more than 1-2 hours doing seated learning. Most of a young child's learning time should be spent outdoors, playing or doing the things of life such as helping with cooking, cleaning and gardening and listening to read-alouds. There is an amazing website devoted to families reading aloud called Read-Aloud Revival. You will learn about the benefits, books lists for every age group and podcasts about the topic.

Children in the middle grade years (5th-8th grade, approximately) will slowly increase the number of hours of seated learning from 2-5 hours as they get older. It is still important that children in this age group get plenty of time outdoors, time to play, do independent reading as well as listen to family read-alouds. This age group will also begin to take over household chores and begin caring for young siblings as well.

High school aged young people will spend a considerable length of their day doing lessons. Most will be able to complete assigned lessons in 4-6 hours. This age group will need to be encouraged to get enough time outdoors, but will be a great asset to homelife taking on household chores, errands, childcare as well as household maintenance. All of these activities help a child blossom from infancy to a helpful, responsible, productive adult who has had a love of learning instilled.

Getting going with Homeschooling

Now that you have some idea of how many hours a day to homeschool, you may next wish to learn more about how to start, what style of learning matches your family, what curriculum to use, how to set up your home for learning, how to comply with your state's homeschooling laws, what records you will need to maintain and how to find support for yourself as your children's teacher.



Children can work on their school work alone

If you are new to homeschooling, the topic is vast and the internet is full of so many wonderful ideas. Read from a diverse set of bloggers and homeschool websites, find your favorites that match your teaching style, maybe your faith and then do not try to do it all. You can quickly become overwhelmed. Also, find other homeschool families around you so you can learn what is offered locally. There may be cooperative learning opportunities, homeschool field trips, playgroups, meet-ups, conferences, and organizations.

Planning your homeschool day and year is made easier with a well produced homeschool planner.

Conclusion

There are some really well-written books about homeschooling as well. Please check some of these out from your local library, Amazon carries many and Thirftbooks will frequently have them available as well.

The Brave Learner by Julie Bogart

Homeschool Bravely by Jamie Erickson

The Call of the Wild and Free by Ainsely Arment

Teaching from Rest by Sarah Mackenzie

Home Grown by Ben Hewitt

The Read Loud Family by Sarah Mackenzie

Plan Your Year by Pam Barnhill

Designing Your Own Classical Curriculum by Laura Berquist

Catholic Education: Homeward Bound by Kimberly Hahn

Managers of Their Homes by Steven Maxwell

Best wishes in your homeschooling journey! Be sure to check out our other exclusive Guides found only on LincOn.com.

ATV Snowblower

ATV's are very versatile tools and if you live in a northern climate that receives a decent amount of snow, you be looking at it and wondering if you can use an ATV to clear snow. There are snowplows that you can mount on the front of your ATV but clearing snow by plowing it isn't always a great idea. What about a snowblower? This ATV snowblower guide will show you some options to using a snowblower with a your ATV.



Snowblower features to consider

It may seem like a simple thing – just mount a snowblower to the front of your ATV and you're good to go but there is more to consider. First you need to consider the size of the path you want to clear. Then you need to consider the weight along with the mounting bracket to make sure that it will fit your ATV. Finally, you'll want to consider the opening size and the horsepower to be able to clear the snow in your area.

How wide of a path?

First thing to consider is how wide of a snowblower do you need? You might be thinking of your driveway but what about

walkways? How wide are those paths? If you get a wider snowblower like 48 or 52" it means you can clear your driveway in a couple of swaths but will you be able to clear the paths around your house with that? If you go with a narrower swath it will mean more time clearing your driveway. Weigh those pros and cons and determine what is more important to you.

Snowblower Weight

Most ATV snowblowers are mounted to the front winch of your ATV so you need to factor in how much weight your ATV can carry. Most ATV's have a limit that they can carry/pull on their winches so when you look at the models below or at a winch mounted snowblower, keep the weight in mind so you don't overload the front of your ATV.

How much power do you need?

Most ATV snowblowers are powered by external engines. The engine powers both stages of the snowblower – the impeller which draws the snow in and the chute which throws the snow. The wider the snowblower, the more power that is needed to bring that snow in and throw it.

If your area receives a lot of powdery or fluffy snow, you'll need less power than areas that receive wetter snows. I like to consider my "worst case" scenario and make sure that I have the power to move that snow. A good rule of thumb is to have about 0.37 HP per inch of your swath and that should be more than adequate to handle what you throw at it.

In addition to the width, you need to consider the height of the intake. The hardest area of snow to clear is at the end of your driveway and that pile will be many times larger than your deepest snowfall so don't buy something with too small of an opening.

ATV Snowblower brands

Keeping in mind all of the factors above, take a look at the comprehensive list below of ATV snowblower manufacturers and see what might work for you. Snowblowers come in all different sizes, weights, and powers. Some are even designed specifically for certain brands.



Bercomat Snowblower

Bercomac

Berco is pretty much the standard by which other ATV snowblowers are measured. It's a family owned business that produces high quality snowblowers that can be mounted on many different ATV models. Bercomac uses reliable Honda engines and are available with a 48" model and a 54" model. The units all electronically controlled and can be mounted in 5 minutes.

Iron Baltic



Iron Baltic Snow Blower

Iron Baltic manufactures several snowblowers for ATV's. They range in width from 49-71" and are available with several different engine configurations. Engines range from the Honda GX390, the Briggs & Stratton XR Professional series and the Briggs & Stratton Vanguard. The chute is electronically adjustable and can throw the snow up to 49' so you can most likely send the snow clear out of your yard!

Massimo



Massimo ATV Snowblower

Massimo makes is a manufacturer of ATV's, side-by-sides and other equipment for outdoor use. As part of it's line up that make a 60" snowblower with a 420cc engine (about 13 HP) designed for UTV's but might be an option for ATV owners. The snowblower also features a strobe light and a electric control over the shoot adjustment. The unit comes with a universal mounting plate so it can be mounted on other brands than Massimo.

Quadivator



Quadivator Snowblower

Quadivator makes a 50" snowblower that can mount to most snowblowers. They feature an 18HP Briggs & Stratton engine mounted to a frame and it becomes basically a PTO engine and allows several different attachments which are connected via belts. Attachments include the snowblower, a lawn mower and a power sweeper so this allows some flexibility.

Rammy



Rammy ATV Snowblower

Rammy is a company based in Finland so it knows how to deal with snow. The Rammy Snowblower 120 ATV comes with a Briggs and Stratton engine and universal mounting for different brands like Polaris, Can AM, Arctic Cat and Click&Go

Other brands

There are some companies that over time that used to make snowblowers that would attach to ATV's. In addition to national brands, there may be region or local shops making models that might show up on Craigslist or eBay. The key components are the performance which is driven by the engine

and how well built the unit is. If you're willing to work on something or work with a local shop, it might be worth taking a look if it can do what you need it to.

Concluding thoughts

Hopefully this guide has been helpful in letting you know what to look for in an ATV snowblower. There's clearly some options out there with a number of companies producing high quality products that will give you years of use and allow you to put your ATV or UTV to use at a time of year when sometimes they don't get used. Additionally, it makes the job of clearing snow that much easier.

In my guide for Snowmobiles for Heavy Riders I mentioned that there are several manufacturers that make track systems to replace your ATV tires as an alternative to a snowmobile but that option could also extend the life of your ATV into winter and combined with a snowblower can make for a formidable tool in the winter.

I hope you enjoyed this guide. If there are any ATV snowblowers we've left off this list, please email Dave at dbroer@lincon.com with your suggestion!

Be sure to check out other other exclusive Guides on LincOn.com!