



## How to Winterize a Riding Lawn Mower

A riding lawn mower is a big investment, and should be protected. For many, the winter months mean putting riding lawn mowers away and not giving them another thought until the spring season comes around. Before putting a riding lawn mower into storage, though, take a few simple steps to help maintain it over the winter.

First, drain the fuel from the gas tank and the oil from the crankcase of the riding lawn mower. Always recycle the oil and dispose of the fuel properly. Replace the oil with new oil that is the correct grade for the riding lawn mower. Fill the gas tank with fuel that has been pre-treated with a stabilizer. This will keep the fuel from gumming up in the tank.

After filling up the fuel tank with the new fuel, run the riding lawn mower's engine for a few minutes. This process will cycle the new fuel and additive through the riding lawn mower's system and the carburetor.

Next, remove the spark plug and pour about half an ounce of oil into the cylinder. Replace the spark plug, and remove the spark plug wire. Complete this process for both spark plugs on a twin cylinder engine. Now, crank the system slowly to distribute the oil.

Lubricate all points where friction occurs.

Always make sure to charge the riding lawn mower battery fully prior to storage. To follow best practices, make sure that the battery is charged every two months during the winter. Starting the riding lawn mower and running at full throttle once a month for 20 to 30 minutes helps to charge the battery and to circulate the fuel through the carburetor. After running, top off the fuel tank with pre-treated stabilized fuel.

Once the charging is completed, disconnect the battery and if the riding lawn mower will be stored for an extended period of time, remove the riding lawn mower's battery completely. Be sure to store the battery in a warm dry place and away from any potential flames or sparks.

Also be sure to store the riding lawn mower in a clean, dry place. As with the battery, keep the mower away from stoves or heaters that use pilot lights, devices that can produce a spark, and corrosive materials like fertilizer.

Lastly, if the riding lawn mower comes equipped with pneumatic tires, make sure to park the riding lawn mower on cardboard to keep the tires off the cold concrete.