

Clip Director®

The Clip Director can be adjusted to either the BAG or MULCH position to achieve the desired mowing results.

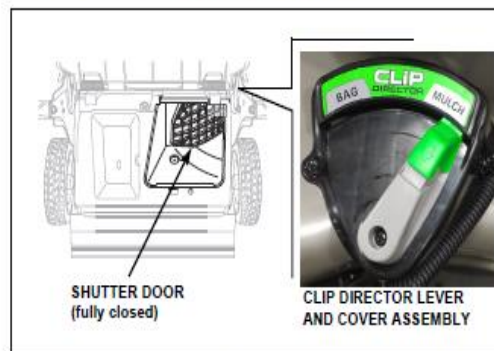
Adjust the Clip Director lever to either the bag (shutter door fully open) or mulch (shutter door fully closed).

To adjust the Clip Director, push the end of the lever and twist the lever to the desired position. Release the button and allow it to snap into the groove.



Mulching

Set the clip director lever in the MULCH position.



Some grass accumulation in the discharge opening is normal when the Clip Director is in the MULCH position. To remove this grass, close the discharge guard, set the Clip Director to the BAG position, engage the blade control lever, and start the engine.

If the Clip Director is difficult to move or the lever will not lock fully:

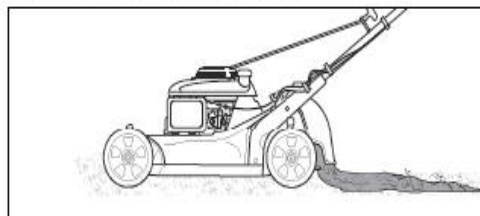
- With the engine OFF, lift the discharge guard and remove the grass clippings from around the shutter door.
- With a garden hose and nozzle, spray around and under the Clip Director lever and cover assembly to remove the grass clippings.

Bag or Rear Discharge

Set the clip director lever in the BAG position.

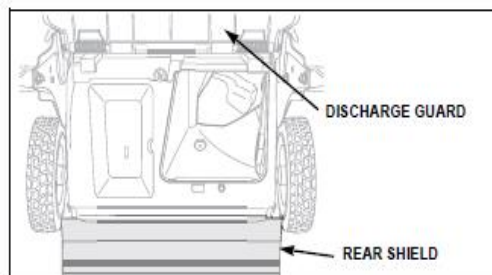


To discharge clippings to the rear, remove the grass bag and leave the Clip Director lever in the BAG position.



Rear Shield

During normal use the rear shield is subject to deterioration and wear. Remove the grass bag and raise the discharge guard to check the rear shield for cracks or tears. If the rear shield is excessively worn, have it replaced by your authorized Honda servicing dealer.



Grass Bag

A lawn mower works like a vacuum cleaner; it blows air through the bag fabric, which traps the grass clippings. Always empty the grass bag before it becomes filled to the limit of its capacity. Bagging performance will diminish after the bag becomes about 90% filled. Also, the bag is easier to empty when it is not packed full.

You can leave the grass bag on the mower during mowing, even when full mulching is selected.

To minimize dust and fine particles from passing through the grass bag fabric, it is best to mow grass in the morning when the grass is damp.

Inspection

During use, the grass bag material is subject to normal wear and tear.

CAUTION

An excessively worn grass bag may allow objects to be thrown toward the operator.

Thrown objects can seriously hurt you.

Replace a worn grass bag to prevent possible injury.

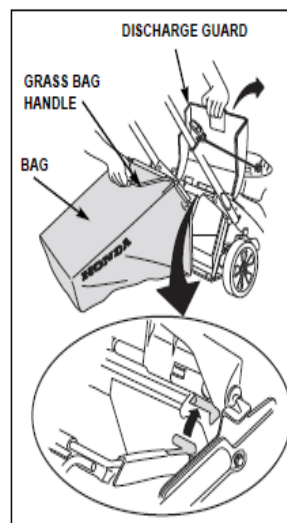
Grass bag replacement is explained on [page 4](#).

Installation

1. Raise the discharge guard and hook the grass bag onto the mower deck as shown.
2. Release the discharge guard to secure the grass bag.

Removal

1. Raise the discharge guard, grasp the grass bag handle, and remove the grass bag.
2. Release the discharge guard.
3. When the grass bag is clear of the discharge guard, you can lift it through the handlebar opening or remove it to the rear of the mower below the handlebar.



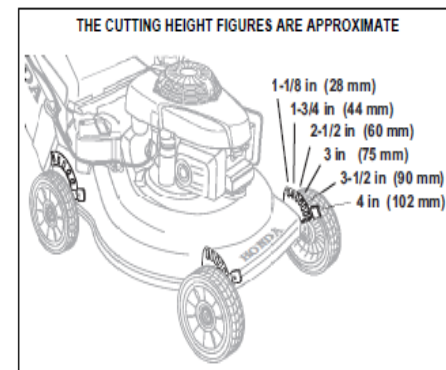
Cutting Height Adjustment

Each wheel of the mower can be adjusted to one of six settings. The actual height of cut grass will vary with lawn and soil conditions.

Be sure the engine is not running when adjusting the cutting height.

To adjust cutting height, pull each adjustment lever toward the wheel, and move it into another notch.

Move all four adjustment levers to the same position, forward for tall grass and rearward for short grass.



If you are not sure what cutting height to select, start with a high setting and check the appearance of the lawn after mowing a small area. Then readjust the cutting height if necessary.

Check the Oil Level

1. Unscrew and remove the filler cap/dipstick and wipe it clean.
 2. Insert and remove the dipstick without screwing it into the filler neck. Check the oil level shown on the dipstick.
 3. If the oil level is low, add oil to reach the upper limit mark on the dipstick. Do not overfill. If the engine is overfilled, the excess oil may get transferred to the air cleaner housing and air filter. An indication of overfilling is white or blue smoke coming from the muffler when the engine is running.
- Use 10W-30 API Service category SJ oil for normal conditions. For additional oil recommendations, see [page 12](#).

NOTICE

Running the engine with a low oil level can cause engine damage.

4. Screw in the filler cap/dipstick securely.

Add Fuel

This engine is certified to operate on regular gasoline with a pump octane rating of 88 or higher.

Never use stale or contaminated gasoline or an oil/gasoline mixture. Avoid getting dirt or water in the fuel tank.

You may use regular unleaded gasoline containing no more than 10% ethanol (E10) or 5% methanol by volume. In addition, methanol must contain cosolvents and corrosion inhibitors.

Use of fuels with content of ethanol or methanol greater than shown above may cause starting and/or performance problems. It may also damage metal, rubber, and plastic parts of the fuel system.

Engine damage or performance problems that result from using a fuel with percentages of ethanol or methanol greater than shown above are not covered under warranty.

WARNING

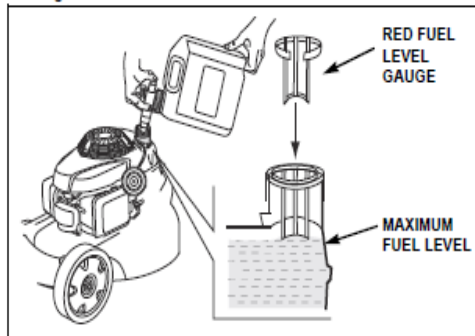
Gasoline is highly flammable and explosive, and you can be burned or seriously injured when refueling.

- Stop the engine and let cool before refueling.
- Keep heat, sparks, and flame away.
- Refuel only outdoors.
- Wipe up spills immediately.

NOTICE

If your equipment will be used on an infrequent or intermittent basis, (more than 4 weeks before next use), refer to "AVOIDING FUEL-RELATED PROBLEMS" on page 18 for information regarding fuel deterioration.

1. Turn engine off and let cool before refueling.
2. Remove the fuel tank cap.
3. Add fuel to the bottom of the red fuel level gauge in the neck of the fuel tank. Do not overfill. Wipe up spilled fuel before starting the engine.



4. Tighten the fuel tank cap until it clicks.

Move the mower at least 10 feet (3 meters) away from the fueling source and site before starting the engine.

NOTICE

Fuel can damage paint and plastic. Be careful not to spill fuel when filling your fuel tank. Damage caused by spilled fuel is not covered by the DISTRIBUTOR'S LIMITED WARRANTY (page 20).

OPERATION

For your safety, avoid starting or operating the engine in an enclosed area, such as a garage. Your mower's exhaust contains poisonous carbon monoxide gas, which can collect rapidly in an enclosed area and cause illness or death.

WARNING

Exhaust contains poisonous carbon monoxide gas that can build up to dangerous levels in closed areas.

Breathing carbon monoxide can cause unconsciousness or death.

Never run the lawn mower in a closed, or even partially closed area where people may be present.

Safe Mowing Practices

Most injuries and property damage with walk-behind mowers can be prevented if you follow all instructions in this manual and on the mower. The most common hazards are discussed below, along with the best way to protect yourself and others.

Avoid Rotating Blades

Rotating blades can cause serious cuts and even amputate fingers, hands, toes, or feet. Keep away from the mower deck whenever the engine is running. If you need to adjust the cutting height or work around the deck for any other reason, always shut off the engine. Wear heavy gloves and disconnect the spark plug cap when you need to clean the mower deck or handle the blades.

WARNING

The blades are sharp and spin at high speed. A spinning blade can cut you severely and can amputate fingers and toes.

- Wear protective footwear.
- Keep your hands and feet away from the mower deck while the engine is running.
- Stop the engine before performing any adjustment, inspection, or maintenance.

Clear Mowing Area

Mower blades can throw rocks and other objects with enough force to cause serious injury. Before mowing, carefully inspect the area and remove all sticks, stones, pieces of wire, and other loose objects. Never operate the blades over gravel.

NOTICE

Striking objects with the spinning blades can cause severe engine damage, which is not covered by the Distributor's Limited Warranty.

Keep Shields in Place

Guards and shields are designed to protect you from being hit by thrown objects and from hot engine parts and moving components. For your safety and the safety of others, keep all shields in place when the engine is running.

Refuel With Care

Gasoline is extremely flammable and gasoline vapor can explode. Refuel only outdoors, in a well-ventilated area, with the engine OFF. Never smoke near gasoline, and keep other flames and sparks away. Always store gasoline in an approved container.

Wear Protective Clothing

Wearing protective clothing will reduce your risk of injury. Long pants and eye protection reduce the risk of injuries from thrown objects. Sturdy shoes with aggressive soles will help protect your feet and give you better traction on slopes or uneven ground.

Stop the Engine When Not Mowing

If you need to leave the mower for any reason, even just to inspect the lawn ahead, stop the engine by releasing the blade control lever.

Avoid Slopes

Avoid steep slopes of more than 20°.

Mow across slopes, not up and down. Be careful when changing direction. Mowing on a slope when the grass is damp or wet could cause you to slip, fall, and lose control of the mower.

NOTICE

Mowing on steep slopes can starve the engine of oil, causing engine damage that is not covered by the DISTRIBUTOR'S LIMITED WARRANTY.

Keep all four wheels on the ground, and be careful to avoid losing your footing and your control of the mower. Keep a firm grip on the handlebar, and walk, never run, with the mower. Be very careful when mowing uneven or rough ground.

If stuck, do not kick or shove the mower with your foot. Use the handlebar to control the mower.

Avoid Obstacles

Gravel, loose stones, and landscaping material can be picked up by the mower and thrown many feet with enough force to cause serious personal injury and/or property damage. The best way to prevent potential injury from thrown objects is to release the blade control lever to stop the blades before reaching areas with gravel, loose stones, or landscaping material.

Be careful when mowing over obstacles that stick up above the surface of the lawn such as sprinkler heads, paving, edging, raised tree roots, etc.

If the blade hits something, or if the mower starts to vibrate, stop the engine immediately, disconnect the spark plug cap, and check for damage (page 10). Striking objects may damage the blades, bend the crankshaft, and/or break the mower deck or other components. Vibration usually indicates serious trouble.

WARNING

A worn, cracked, or damaged blade can break, and pieces of the damaged blade can become dangerous projectiles. Thrown objects can cause serious injury. Inspect the blades regularly (see page 10), and do not operate the mower with a worn or damaged blade.

The DISTRIBUTOR'S LIMITED WARRANTY (page 20) does not cover parts damaged by accidental impact collision.

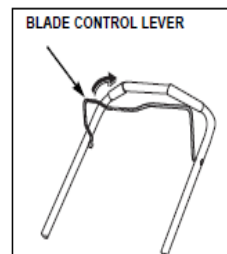
Operating the Controls

Blade Control Lever

The blade control lever must be pulled back against the handlebar to start and run the engine. The blades start to rotate when the lever is pulled back against the handlebar and the recoil starter grip is pulled.

Continue to hold the lever fully against the handlebar. This will keep the engine and blades rotating smoothly and prevent premature wear to the flywheel brake system.

Release the blade control lever to stop the engine and stop blade rotation whenever you need to leave the mower.



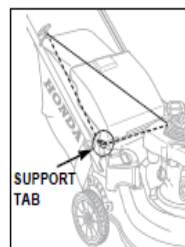
Starting the Engine

The blades turn when you start the engine. Start the engine in a clear or mowed area where the blades can turn freely.

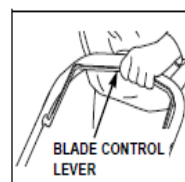
NOTICE

Before starting the mower, make sure the starter rope is not routed below the right handlebar support tab as shown. The rope will quickly be damaged during starting.

1. Turn the fuel valve to the ON position (page 3).



2. Pull back on the blade control lever and hold it against the handlebar.
3. Pull the starter grip lightly until you feel resistance, and then pull briskly. Return the starter grip gently.



To ensure easy restarting and maximum performance from the Auto Choke System™, allow the engine to run for at least three minutes after starting a cold engine before stopping the engine. This minimum run time will be longer if the temperature is below 70°F (21°C).

Continue to hold the blade control lever against the handlebar; the engine stops when the blade control lever is released.

Stopping the Engine

1. Release the blade control lever to stop the engine.
2. When you finish mowing, turn the fuel valve OFF.
3. If your mower will not be used for 3 to 4 weeks, we recommend running the engine's carburetor out of fuel. You can do this by leaving the fuel valve OFF, restarting the engine and running it until the engine stops. See "AVOIDING FUEL-RELATED PROBLEMS" on page 18 if you don't plan to use your mower for a month or more.
4. Clean your mower after each mowing; refer to "Cleaning" on page 14.