

THE RISE OF THE **ROBOTIC LAWN MOWER**

After taking over the American and European markets, the robotic lawn mower is now making an impact on our shores.

An expensive initial outlay, a robotic mower needs to be considered carefully.

How Do They Work

With a robotic mower a border wire is installed around the lawn, defining the area of yard to be mowed. The wire can either be staked down or placed just below the ground. The robot will then use this wire to determine the boundary and to locate the recharging dock. Units now available can be programmed to mow at specific times, can self-dock for recharging, can contain rain sensors and eliminate much of the human interaction required to mow the lawn.



Courtesy: Australian Robotic

Advantages

Robotic mowers are capable of maintaining up to 5 acres of grass.

A robotic mower uses batteries charged using electricity – no gas, no oil, no pollution.

They preserve a steady lawn height by mowing more regularly, taking off 4-5mm at a time.

By using a random mowing pattern (and weighing less than a conventional mower), robotic lawn mowers quite possibly use the optimum pattern for keeping lawns balanced and reducing mower tracks and compaction.

Most robotic mowers have a battery life of between 3 -7 hours and recharge in a matter of hours.

With the ability to be programmed to either self-dock when the battery runs low or after a pre-determined period of time, a robotic mower requires very little in the way of human intervention. You can even program it to mow the lawn while you are start at work so come Friday afternoon, you have your weekend to yourself.

Robotic mowers create a lot less noise than a conventional lawn mower – which would keep the neighbours happy.

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Disadvantages

With cool season grasses like Fescue and Rye, a robotic mower can undertake 99% of the lawn trimming but with fast growing grasses like Couch, Kikuyu and Buffalo regular edging is necessary and so will still require human intervention.

Robotic mowers on the Australian market still require an initial investment with prices starting around \$2000.

Not terribly practical for smaller amounts of lawn such as front lawns and down the side of your house unless you are prepared to install border wire in all areas and move the mower to those areas. Additional wire can be purchased should you use this option.

If you've considered all the options and decided that a robotic lawn mower is for you – take a little more time and research the different brands now available on the Australian market. Prices vary greatly so in-depth research is required to ensure you get the right robotic lawn mower for your lawn and your wallet. After a little time to install the docking station and the border wire, and a few hours to charge the battery the robotic lawn mower can be sent out to do its job while you sit back and relax.

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