

Spring Tiny Tunnels, Big Questions: What Happened to My Lawn?

If you've ever watched the snow melt away in early spring only to reveal a maze of winding trails across your lawn, you're not alone.

These curious surface tunnels are typically the work of moles and voles, small mammals that remain active year-round, even beneath a blanket of snow.



Why Do Moles and Voles Tunnel Under the Snow?

During winter, snow acts like an insulating layer over the ground. Beneath it, temperatures remain relatively stable compared to the freezing air above. This creates a surprisingly hospitable environment for small animals.

Moles and voles take advantage of this by creating tunnel systems in the narrow space between the soil and the snowpack. This zone allows them to:

- Move freely without exposure to predators
- Stay warmer than they would above the snow
- Access food sources like roots, bulbs, and insects

Because the ground is often too hard or frozen to dig deeply, especially during cold snaps, these animals shift their activity closer to the surface, right where you'll eventually see the evidence.

Why Do the Tunnels Appear in Spring?

All winter, these tunnels remain hidden under the snow. But as temperatures rise and the snow melts, the protective layer disappears, revealing the network of paths beneath it.

What looks like sudden damage is the result of months of activity that has only just become visible.

Do These Tunnels Harm Your Lawn?

In most cases, the answer is: **not significantly**.

The tunnels may flatten the grass and slightly disrupt the surface, but they typically do not kill the lawn outright. Grass roots often remain intact, and once sunlight, air, and warmth return, the grass begins to recover on its own.

What Should You Do About It?

For mild to moderate tunnel damage, a light touch is best, and given a little time, most lawns bounce back naturally.

- Gently rake the area to lift flattened grass.
- Walk over the raised tunnels to press them back into place.
- Resume normal lawn care, like watering and mowing, as the season progresses.

In more severe cases, where tunneling has been extensive or patches of grass have died, you may need to step in a bit more, such as applying grass seed or topsoil, but even then, recovery is usually straightforward and does not require major repair.

Key Takeaway

While the damage might look alarming at first glance, the good news is that in most cases, your lawn will recover naturally with little to no intervention.

With a little patience and perhaps some light maintenance, your lawn should return to its healthy, green state before long.

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Is moss taking over your lawn after winter? You're not alone!

As the snow melts, lawns stay cool, wet, and often shaded, perfect conditions for moss to thrive. Meanwhile, your grass is just waking up from dormancy, which gives moss the chance to spread, especially in thin or weak areas.

Moss thrives right after winter for a few key reasons, all of which come together perfectly when snow melts:

- Excess moisture from snowmelt keeps the soil damp.
- Cool temperatures slow grass but help moss thrive.
- Low sunlight = shady, moist conditions
- Grass is weak after winter = less competition.
- Soil issues (compacted, poor drainage, acidic, low nutrients).

These conditions tend to worsen over winter, making early spring the perfect time for moss to take hold.

Simple Way to Think About It:

Moss is opportunistic; it shows up when grass struggles. Early spring is basically the “perfect storm” where grass is weak, and moss conditions are ideal.

Combat Moss after Winter:

If you're noticing more moss this time of year, it's usually a sign your lawn could benefit from better drainage, soil health, or early-season care.

Addressing shade will also help prevent moss from returning. Reducing shade helps prevent moss from returning in areas with dense tree cover by allowing more sunlight in; thus, pruning this spring is recommended.



April Lawn Watch: What's Popping Up?

In April (especially in New England), lawns start waking up, and so do a mix of **early spring weeds**.

Broadleaf Weeds (the most noticeable)

These are often the first to catch your eye:

- Dandelion – Bright yellow flowers with deep roots that make them tough to remove.
- White Clover – Low-growing with small white blooms, often spreading in patches.
- Chickweed – Small leaves with delicate white flowers, thrives in moist areas.
- Henbit – Purple flowers with square stems, commonly found in thin turf.

Early Grassy Weeds

These blend in more with your lawn but spread quickly:

- Crabgrass – Begins germinating as soil temperatures rise.
- Annual Bluegrass (*Poa annua*) – Light green patches that seed early and often.
- Rough Bluegrass – Prefers cool, wet conditions and shady areas.

Other Early Spring Weeds

Often tied to soil or moisture issues:

- Wild Onion / Wild Garlic – Thin, upright shoots with a strong odor when cut.
- Plantain – Flat, rosette-shaped leaves that thrive in compacted soil.

Why April is Prime Time for Weeds

- Cool, moist soil creates ideal germination conditions
- Grass is still slow to grow, giving weeds less competition.
- Increased sunlight and spring rain fuel rapid growth.

👉 **Pro Tip:** April is one of the best times to get ahead of weeds. Early treatment makes them much easier to control before they spread and take over your lawn.