

# Safety Tips for Raking Leaves



Most of us go out several times during the fall months to rake up the leaves on our yards. Instead of causing stress to ourselves by trying to rush to get the job done, wait until all the trees have lost all of their leaves, and plan a weekend to get the job done.

If you have a fairly large job and need help, ask someone to help you. Take your time and follow the below tips to ensure that you are not going to risk becoming hurt or injured.

## Raking Tips

1. Hold the rake handle close to your body to maintain proper posture, keeping one hand near the top to ensure you are getting good leverage as well that you are using your arms and legs more than your spine and back. You can find ergonomic rakes at most garden centres, to help ensure you are raking properly. Keep in mind you should also find a rake that is of proper height for you.
2. Make sure to switch sides frequently and avoid twisting at the waist.
3. Take breaks, pace yourself and consume lots of water. Raking is a great source of exercise but can be strenuous. By taking breaks when needed and rehydrating your body you will ensure that you are decreasing your risk of injury.
4. Dress according to the weather. Wear layers that can be easily removed or re-added if needed. If the weather calls for it gloves and a hat should be worn as well to prevent you from becoming sick.

## Bagging Tips

1. Do not pile too many leaves into one bag, especially if the leaves are wet.
2. Lift manageable loaded bags. Over piling or wet leaves can cause the bag to become too heavy and awkward for you to lift.
3. When you are ready to lift the bag remember to keep your back straight and use your legs to do the lifting. Your abdomen should be engaged (flexed) to help maintain that straight back.
4. When you are finished raking and bagging, take a few minutes to cool down, preform some stretches if needed or take a small walk

Info gathered from:

[http://www.physiotherapy.ca/getattachment/Practice-Resources/Clinical/Resources/Patient-Information/RakingTips\\_EN\\_compressed.pdf.aspx](http://www.physiotherapy.ca/getattachment/Practice-Resources/Clinical/Resources/Patient-Information/RakingTips_EN_compressed.pdf.aspx)  
<http://essenceofhealthmarkham.com/keep-pain-free-while-raking-leaves/>