

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Zero Turn Radius
Mower Safety



Zero-Turn-Radius (ZTR) mowers are gaining in popularity every year since their inception. ZTR mowers are fast, agile mowers than can out maneuver riding mowers, which have a steering wheel to guide them. The ZTR technology for the reasons above allows fast and more efficient mowing which saves valuable time.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that from 2008-2010 35,000 people visited hospital emergency rooms with accidents from riding mowers. Many of these were ZTRs. From 2008 to 2010, they recorded 90 deaths from riding mowers, including ZTRs.

These fatal accidents mentioned above can be attributed to the following reasons:

- Mower tip overs
- Victim falling off or falling under the mower.
- Victim getting thrown off or falling off the mower

Following are some tips that will guide you in operating a ZTR:

- **Understand what Zero Turn Radius means** – The drive wheels operate independently- powered by hydraulic motors on each axle. One side can turn in reverse while the other is going forward, allowing the machine to run in a circle like a top in one place.
- **Select a mower appropriate to your needs** – The size of your mowing area depends on the size of machine that you need. A medium size yard you could use a 15 to 18 HP mower with a cutting width of 36 to 40 inches, and if you have an acre or more to mow, you would probably want to consider a 22 to 25 HP with a 50 inch width.
- **Read the owner's manual** – The owner's manual will give you all the right answers to your questions.
- **Check out all the controls on your mower** – Refer to the instruction manual. It will give you the answers for every control, location and function.
- Following are some of these controls and their function:
 - **Ignition-** For starting the engine
 - **Parking brake-** Affords you extra security when starting the engine. Most models must be engaged to start the engine.
 - **Mower clutch-** Engage the mower blades.
 - **Deck height adjustment-** To raise and lower the blade, depending on the height you want to cut the grass.
 - **Steering arms-** These arms replace the steering on conventional mowers.

The following service tips should be practiced or performed each time before you start to mow:

- ✓ **Check the oil & fuel.**
- ✓ **Check the belts, pulleys and blades to be sure that they are free of debris and are in good working condition.**
- ✓ **Check the tires.** The nature of the mower tends to put a lot of stress on the tires with the rapid turns.
- ✓ **Find an area with sufficient space for practice** – Use this area to practice handling the machine before you actually start to mow.
- ✓ **Sit down on the mower** – After you have selected a mower to suit your needs, and before you start the engine, adjust the control arms so that they are in a comfortable position. Usually they tilt out and in and left to right from the center of the machine. Some ZTR models have a neutral position so that the arms can be adjusted for short or tall people.
- ✓ **Grasp each control with your hands** – Move the control arms back and forth to get used to their feel. When you release the pressure they will come back to the neutral position. Push forward – the machine goes forward – pull back and the machine goes backward.
- ✓ **Engage the parking brake, disengage the mower clutch, pull the choke knob, advance the throttle lever and turn the key to crank the engine.**
- ✓ **Slowly push the control arms forward** – keeping them equally advanced so that the mower will run in a straight path.
- ✓ Turn your mower left and right by advancing the opposite control stick or easing back the control on the side that you wish to turn to.
- ✓ Try backing the mower by pulling the arm backward. Practice making sharp turns by reversing the control arm on the side you wish to turn top.
- ✓ Get familiar with the mower deck and the height adjustments. This will help you to know the width of the cuts.

General Safety Tips:

- *Do not let untrained personnel attempt to use the ZTR.*
- *A good idea is to rent or borrow a ZTR to be sure that this is the machine for you.*
- *Regular lubrication is critical to increase the life of the ZTR and keep the deck clear as well.*
- *Mow only in dry conditions- Avoid mowing in wet areas.*
- *Avoid steep inclines- Refer to the owner's manual for charts to show the angle of incline they that recommend.*

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Excerpts: www.cpsc.gov
www.wikihoiv.com/Operate-a-ZTR-Lawnover
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**<> ONE BAD DAY ON A MOWER CAN <>
RUIN YOUR DAY**

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**BE CAREFUL – THE LIFE YOU SAVE
COULD BE YOUR OWN!!!**