

ZRT Riding Mower Resource Guide



A Supplement to the ALCA Equipment Safety & Training Video Series

Developed by
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of the Associated Landscape Contractors of America
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Introduction

Safe, Efficient Use of the ZRT Mower

An Efficient Piece of Equipment

The ZRT (Zero Radius Turning) Riding Mower has fast become one of the leading pieces of production equipment used in commercial landscape maintenance operations. The ZRT combines the maneuverability of a walk-behind mower and the outstanding production characteristics of a riding mower. Because of its riding style, the ZRT mower reduces workday fatigue for maintenance personnel . . . and this may contribute to reduced injury and property damage, as well as increased productivity.

Because of its flexibility and generally smaller footprint, the ZRT mower with an appropriately sized mowing deck can handle virtually any challenge—moving with precision around tree rings and other landscape features.

The ZRT's design lends itself to a variety of maintenance equipment attachments such as aerators, brooms, rakes, debris and snowblowers, vacs, and so forth. While these attachments can add productivity, they also require a thorough understanding of the operation of your ZRT.

Read your Operator's Manual!

This resource guide and the video it accompanies are general use training tools, and are not intended in any way to replace the Operator's Manual.

There are significant differences between various manufacturers' models. You must read the Operator's Manual of your specific mower before you operate it.

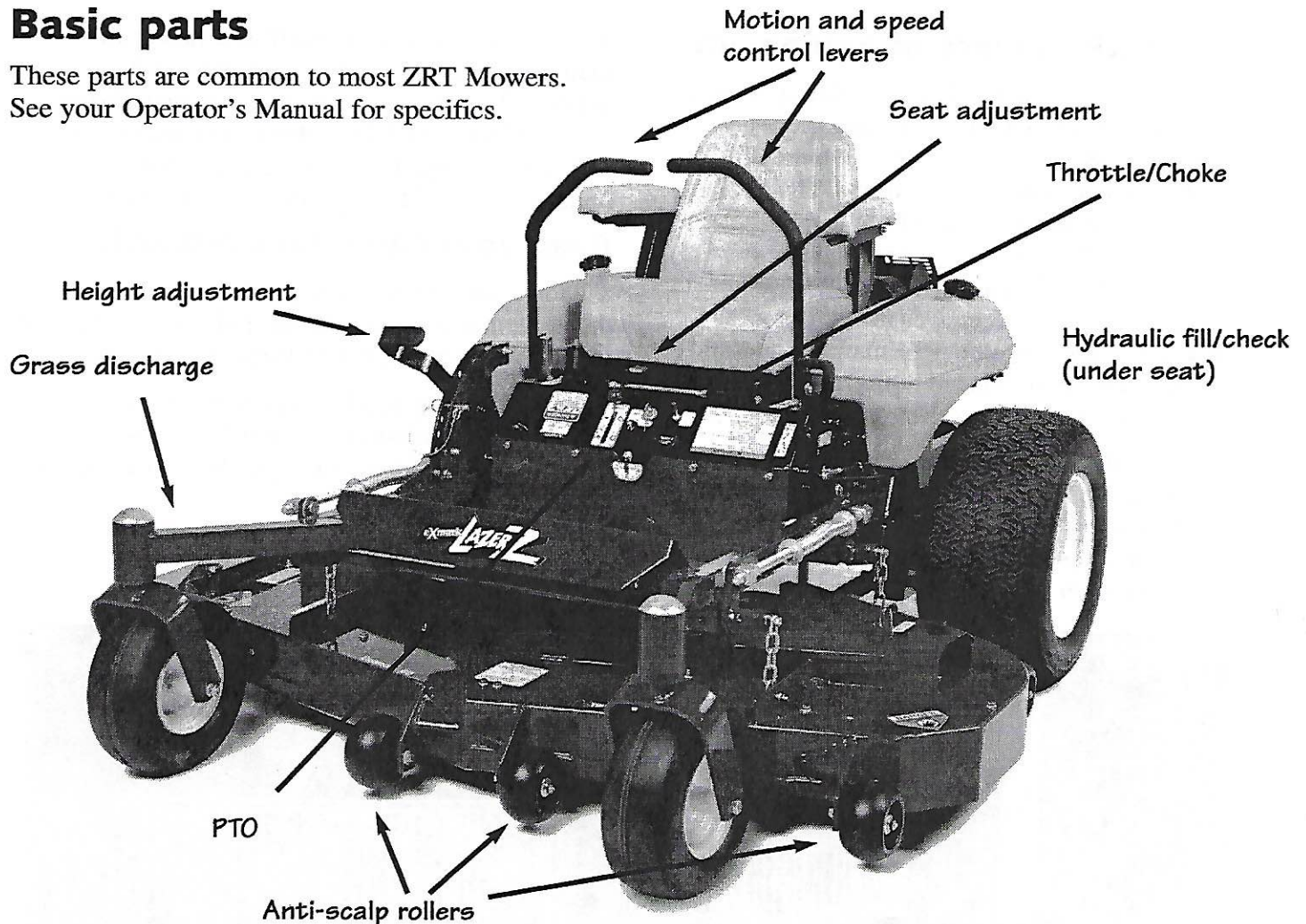


Equipment Components

Engine Parts & Controls/Safety Labels & Instructions

Basic parts

These parts are common to most ZRT Mowers. See your Operator's Manual for specifics.



Safety Labels & Instructions

Whenever and wherever you see the Safety-Alert Symbol, read the message with it carefully! On your equipment you may find safety labels titled DANGER, WARNING, and CAUTION.



The DANGER label indicates an extreme hazard where injury or death is likely if precautions are not taken. A WARNING label

denotes that a hazard exists and that an injury or

death could result if precautions are not taken. And the CAUTION label is placed to remind you to heed safety practices.

Take a moment to locate, read, and understand ALL labels marked with this symbol!

Safety labels will also warn you of hot surfaces, corrosive or poisonous substances, hazards related to fueling and refueling, and other dangers.

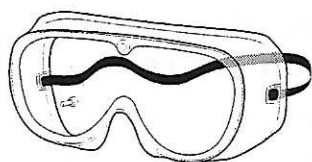
If labels have been worn, or are unreadable, inform your Supervisor, who can provide you with replacement labels.

Safety Basics

Clothing/Personal Protective Equipment

Protective Apparel

Appropriate clothing is vital to the safe, efficient operation of your equipment. You should wear close-fitting clothing, including long pants to protect your legs. You should also wear a reflective vest if you are working near roads.



Wear eye protection at all times. There are many different types of ANSI compliant protective glasses. You must always wear ANSI

approved protective glasses with side protectors.

In addition to eye protection, hearing protection is also required. A small foam type ear plug is commonly worn, as well as the ear muff style. Exposure to loud noise can cause impairment or loss of hearing.

Do not wear tape player, radio, or portable CD headphones while operating machinery. They do not substitute as hearing protection. Safe operation requires full attention.

Always have heavy-duty gloves on hand and always wear them when changing blades, or making other adjustments on the equipment.



Boots with good ankle support and soles that provide good traction are mandatory. Tennis shoes, low-tops, and soft-soled shoes are not adequate, and should not be worn.

A dust filter mask or respirator should be worn if working under dusty conditions.



Safety Basics

Common Injuries, etc. (continued)

Common Injuries and Their prevention

ZRT mowers can be very dangerous if not used properly. The blades spin at very high speeds and can easily cause bodily harm if precautions are not followed.

But if you follow the right procedures, you can avoid injuries entirely! For example:

- Read the Operator's Manual prior to operation.
- Never operate the mower if any safety guard or device is not properly operational or in place.
- Always shut off the mower when you leave it, or before you make any adjustments.
- Disconnect the spark plug wire before making blade or height adjustments, clearing the grass chute, or servicing any part of the mower.
- Never put your hands or feet anywhere near the grass chute or below mower deck.
- Never run over objects that could be hit by mower blades (rocks, stumps, etc.).
- The side discharge chute should never be removed, flipped up, or directed toward people or property during operation.
- The use of a mulching deck that does not employ a discharge chute is recommended to reduce the chance of thrown objects.

Common injuries associated with improperly handling the ZRT mower include:

- Fingers cut or lost by contact with the blade (while cleaning the chute or changing the blade), or by failing to wear gloves while handling the blade.

- Eye injury from debris ejected by the blade.
- Burns from a hot muffler.
- Hearing loss caused by failure to wear hearing protection.
- Back strain from trying to push the mower without help.

DANGER: Be careful when unclogging deflection chute

The deflection chute area (between the grass catcher and mower blade housing) can become clogged with grass clippings. This will be more frequent when the grass is wet or is being cut too short. If the chute is clogged, grass clippings will not be fed into the grass catcher, and this can cause the engine to stall.

To unclog the chute, follow this procedure:

- Stop the mower and shut off the engine.
- Disconnect the spark plug wire and make sure that the blades are stopped.
- Wearing gloves, raise the deflection chute or unlatch the grass catcher and clear out the clog.
- Pick up debris and reinstall the grass catcher.

Always disconnect the spark plug wire and make sure the blades are stopped before performing any adjustment on the ZRT mower!



MR. TIPS

Safety Basics

Bystander Safety

No job is considered successful if an accident or injury occurs, especially if the injury is to a bystander or customer. There are protective measures that you can take to help ensure the safety of others!

Before start-up, make sure that the area is free of people or pets. If bystanders are present, delay your work until the area is clear. Never take chances!

- If someone approaches you while working, throttle down, or stop mowing and turn off the engine. Resume mowing when the area is clear.
- Always position the side discharge chute away from people or property, including buildings, windows, cars, sidewalks, and signs.
- Use recycler mulching decks to prevent accidents caused by thrown objects.

Stay constantly aware of bystanders while operating equipment. If people approach the work area, throttle down until the coast is clear.



MR. TIPS



Pre-Start Inspection

Loose & Damaged Parts/Safety Guards/Lubrication

Pre-start Inspection

ALWAYS inspect any power equipment before starting the engine. All inspections must be done on a hard surface, not on bed or turf areas. A pre-start inspection will help prevent a serious maintenance problem, and more importantly it can prevent an accident or injury.

ALWAYS DISCONNECT THE SPARK PLUG WIRE before pre-start inspections. Then check these areas:

- **Fuel:** Always start with a full tank. A partially full tank will only result in delay later while waiting for the engine to cool.
- **Fuel Filter:** Locate the fuel filter between the fuel tanks and the engine. Check and replace when necessary.
- **Crankcase Oil:** Always check the oil level before operating the ZRT mower, and add oil as needed.
- **Hydraulic System Oil:** Position your machine on a level surface, unscrew the dipstick cap, and make sure the oil level is correct. Fill if necessary.
- **Air Cleaner:** Loosen the thumbscrew until the dust cap and baffle can be removed; separate the dust cap and baffle, clean them out, then re-assemble and reinstall both parts.
- **Lubrication:** Lubricate all the grease fittings based on your equipment's maintenance schedule.
- **Belts, Pulleys, Catchers, and Guards:** Check all these parts to make sure they are in place, properly secured, and in good working order.

- **Cutting Height:** Cutting height is determined by the height of the wheel adjustment. Your Supervisor will determine the correct cutting height and advise you when to change it.
 - Cutting height should match other pieces of equipment.
 - Take care to avoid scalping.
 - To adjust cutting height, refer to your Operator's Manual.

IMPORTANT: Never adjust the height while the mower is running. Always disconnect the spark plug wire before making any adjustments. Always wear gloves when making adjustments!

- **Blade:** Wearing gloves, make sure blade bolts are wrench-tight and blades are sharp.
- **Mowing Attachments:** Make sure that the catcher, side discharge chute, or mulching attachment is properly attached. Do not start the mower without an attachment securely fastened.
- **Tire Pressure:** Check pressure in all tires and adjust as necessary.

Familiarize Yourself with All Controls!

- Read your Operator's Manual before you operate your mower!

