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Model: 96-395

1. PRODUCT OVERVIEW

The Oregon 96-395 Gator Mulcher 3-In-1 Lawn Mower Blade is designed for mulching, bagging, and side discharge capabilities. This blade is 18 inches in length with a 5/8-inch center hole. It is manufactured in the United States by Oregon.



Image 1.1: The Oregon 96-395 Gator Mulcher 3-In-1 Lawn Mower Blade. This image displays the blade's design, highlighting its mulching teeth and overall shape.

This blade is a replacement for various OEM parts, including Toro 107-1741-03, 107-1742-03, 107-1742, 120-2379, and 120-2379-03. It fits many models, such as Toro 74143.

2. SAFETY INFORMATION

WARNING: Always disconnect the spark plug wire or remove the battery before performing any maintenance or blade replacement on your lawn mower to prevent accidental starting.

Read and understand all safety instructions provided in your lawn mower's owner's manual before installing or using this replacement blade. Failure to follow these instructions can result in serious injury or property damage.

General Safety Precautions:

- Always wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including heavy-duty gloves and eye protection, when handling or installing the blade.

- Ensure the mower is on a flat, stable surface before beginning any work.
- Never work under a mower that is supported only by a jack. Use jack stands or other secure supports.
- Inspect the blade for damage before each use. Do not use a bent, cracked, or excessively worn blade.
- Keep hands and feet away from the blade area when the engine is running.
- Store replacement blades in a safe, dry place, away from children and pets.

3. SETUP AND INSTALLATION

This section outlines the general procedure for replacing a lawn mower blade. Refer to your specific lawn mower's owner's manual for detailed instructions and torque specifications.

Tools Required:

- Heavy-duty gloves
- Eye protection
- Wrench or socket set (appropriate size for your mower's blade bolt)
- Torque wrench
- Wood block or blade removal tool
- Wire brush (optional, for cleaning)

Installation Steps:

1. Prepare the Mower:

- Disconnect the spark plug wire or remove the battery.
- Ensure the fuel tank is less than half full to prevent spills if tilting the mower.
- Tilt the mower onto its side with the carburetor and air filter facing upwards to prevent oil or fuel leakage.

2. Secure the Blade:

Place a wood block between the blade and the mower deck to prevent the blade from turning while loosening the bolt. Alternatively, use a specialized blade removal tool.

3. Remove the Old Blade:

Using the appropriate wrench or socket, loosen and remove the blade bolt. Note the orientation of the old blade before removal. Blades typically have a cutting edge that faces the ground.

Important: The blade bolt may have standard or reverse threads. Turn counter-clockwise to loosen most bolts. If it doesn't loosen, try turning clockwise.

4. Clean the Blade Area:

Clean any grass clippings or debris from the underside of the mower deck and around the blade mounting area using a wire brush or scraper.

5. Install the New Blade:

Position the new Oregon 96-395 blade onto the blade adapter, ensuring the cutting edges face the ground. The blade's center hole should align with the adapter's post, and any alignment pins or washers should be correctly seated.

Note: The "Gator" teeth on this blade are designed for mulching and should be oriented correctly.

6. Tighten the Blade Bolt:

Reinstall the blade bolt and hand-tighten it. Use the wood block or blade removal tool to secure the blade, then tighten the bolt to the torque specification recommended in your mower's owner's manual using a torque

wrench. Overtightening or undertightening can be dangerous.

7. Final Check:

Ensure the blade is securely fastened and spins freely without wobbling. Reconnect the spark plug wire or reinstall the battery. Return the mower to its upright position.

4. OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

This blade is designed for optimal performance in mulching, bagging, and side discharge applications. Proper operation of your lawn mower with this blade will ensure efficient cutting and a healthy lawn.

General Mowing Tips:

- **Blade Balance:** Ensure the blade is properly balanced before installation. An unbalanced blade can cause excessive vibration, premature wear on mower components, and an uneven cut.
- **Cutting Height:** Adjust your mower's cutting height according to grass type and desired lawn appearance. Avoid cutting more than one-third of the grass blade length at a time.
- **Mowing Speed:** Operate the mower at a steady, moderate pace. Moving too fast can result in an uneven cut and may not allow the mulching action to be effective.
- **Mulching Performance:** For best mulching results, mow when the grass is dry. Wet grass tends to clump and can clog the mower deck.
- **Bagging/Side Discharge:** When bagging or side discharging, ensure the collection bag or discharge chute is clear and properly attached.
- **Overlap Passes:** Overlap each mowing pass slightly to ensure complete coverage and a uniform cut.

5. MAINTENANCE

Regular maintenance of your Oregon 96-395 blade will extend its lifespan and ensure consistent cutting performance. Always follow safety precautions before performing any maintenance.

Blade Inspection and Sharpening:

- **Inspect Regularly:** After each use, or at least once a month, inspect the blade for sharpness, nicks, bends, or cracks.
- **Sharpening:** A sharp blade cuts grass cleanly, promoting healthier growth. A dull blade tears grass, leading to brown tips and increased susceptibility to disease. Sharpen the blade as needed, typically every 20-25 hours of mowing or at the start of each mowing season.
- **Sharpening Procedure:**
 - Remove the blade following the installation steps (Section 3).
 - Use a file, bench grinder, or specialized blade sharpener to restore the cutting edge. Maintain the original blade angle.
 - Remove an equal amount of material from both cutting edges to maintain balance.
 - After sharpening, check the blade's balance using a blade balancer. An unbalanced blade can cause excessive vibration and damage to your mower.

- **Replacement:** Replace the blade if it is severely bent, cracked, or has lost a significant amount of material due to wear or sharpening. A damaged blade can be dangerous and ineffective.

Cleaning:

- Clean the underside of the mower deck and the blade after each use to prevent grass buildup, which can reduce cutting efficiency and promote rust.
- Use a scraper or stiff brush to remove caked-on grass.

6. TROUBLESHOOTING

This section addresses common issues related to lawn mower blade performance.

Problem	Possible Cause	Solution
Uneven Cut	Dull blade, unbalanced blade, incorrect cutting height, uneven tire pressure on mower.	Sharpen or replace blade. Balance blade. Adjust cutting height. Check and adjust tire pressure.
Excessive Vibration	Unbalanced blade, bent blade, loose blade bolt, debris caught in blade area.	Balance blade. Replace bent blade. Tighten blade bolt to specifications. Clean debris from under deck.
Poor Mulching/Bagging	Dull blade, wet grass, grass too tall, engine speed too low, clogged deck.	Sharpen blade. Mow when grass is dry. Cut grass in multiple passes. Ensure proper engine RPM. Clean mower deck.
Blade Not Spinning Freely	Debris wrapped around spindle, bent blade, seized spindle.	Remove debris. Replace bent blade. Inspect and replace spindle if seized.

7. SPECIFICATIONS

- **Model Number:** 96-395
- **Brand:** Oregon
- **Blade Type:** Gator Mulcher 3-In-1
- **Length:** 18 inches
- **Center Hole:** 5/8 inches
- **Weight:** Approximately 1.89 pounds
- **Dimensions:** 25 x 5 x 5 inches (packaging/shipping dimensions)
- **Country of Origin:** United States
- **Replaces OEM Parts:** Toro 107-1741-03, 107-1742-03, 107-1742, 120-2379, 120-2379-03
- **Fits Models:** Toro 74143 (and others)

8. WARRANTY AND SUPPORT

For specific warranty information regarding your Oregon 96-395 Gator Mulcher blade, please refer to the official Oregon website or contact Oregon customer support directly. Warranty terms typically cover manufacturing defects and material flaws under normal use.

Contact Information:

- **Manufacturer:** Oregon
- **Website:** www.oregonproducts.com (This is a general link, specific product support might be found through their site search)
- **Customer Support:** Refer to the website for contact numbers or email support.

When contacting support, please have your product model number (96-395) and purchase information readily available.