

Choosing between a cultivator and a tiller

A cultivator and a tiller have identical uses, that is to say work the soil to prepare the following season. These machines are generally used between the end of autumn and the beginning of winter. They considerably reduce your efforts and make you gain time, as they are multifunction. You can, in only one go, weed (bury weeds), hoe (break the soil surface), earth up, aerate the soil and eventually mix in your organic waste. By intensifying the working of the soil, a tiller or cultivator prepare perfectly your soil for plants or a lawn the following year.

To know which machine will answer your needs best, you must answer these two questions: what is the surface of my working area? What do I intend to do with my machine?

Tiller

Thanks to its blades that mix the soil, a tiller prepares a plot of land for cultivation. Its use is particularly recommended to maintain a vegetable plot or plough borders and lawns. The recommended area of use varies from 100 to 1000 m² depending on the type (electric or petrol). The blades of a tiller can work the soil as deep as 30 cm, which is more than sufficient for most individuals.

On a motorisation level, a tiller is generally equipped with a petrol, 4 stroke engine. The blades are situated under the motor and either belt driven or chain driven . Some machines are equipped with a wheel, which facilitates moving about when the engine is switched off. The tiller moves forward thanks t the rotation of its blades, its use is by no means effortless. This is why its use is not recommended, for large working areas.

Cultivator

For heavy-duty ploughing, such as preparing a vegetable plot or re-do a lawn, the use of a cultivator is recommended. It is a powerful machine, equipped with several speeds for working and moving forward (plus a reverse gear). It is perfectly suited to areas from 500 m².

A cultivator is a rather heavy machine equipped with two large wheels, which allow moving it easily. Its weight does not allow the cultivator to rest on its blades as a tiller does. Its use is effortless, as you only need to press on the commands to start up and make the cultivator move forward. As it is a very robust machine, it is also possible to attach a ploughshare, to work the soil in deeply.

With their engine size from 5 to 10 hp, the cultivator's blades are driven either by a belt or by a drive shaft. The blades are situated at the rear. They finely break up the soil, for a work that can go up to 50 cm in depth.

Once the type of tool has been chosen, it is time to take an interest in the different characteristics of each model. A presentation of all the elements to consider in function of your needs follows:

- width of the working area : this will decide on the number of blades necessary (from 2 to 6 depending on the models). Cultivators being aimed at larger grounds, they often offer a working width superior to the one of the tillers, thus reducing the number of going over.
- presence of a reverse gear : useful when you need to turn back or when you need to go around obstacles.
- motorisation : for up to 1000m² of ground to maintain, a motor of 3 to 4 hp is perfectly suited to your needs. For a larger area, look at models with at least a motor of 5 hp.
- Plant protecting disks: two disks situated on each side of the blades clearly delimit the working width of the machine, thus reducing the risks of trajectory errors.
- mud guard : protects you against projections. Despite its presence, the use of boots is recommended to minimise the risk of injury.