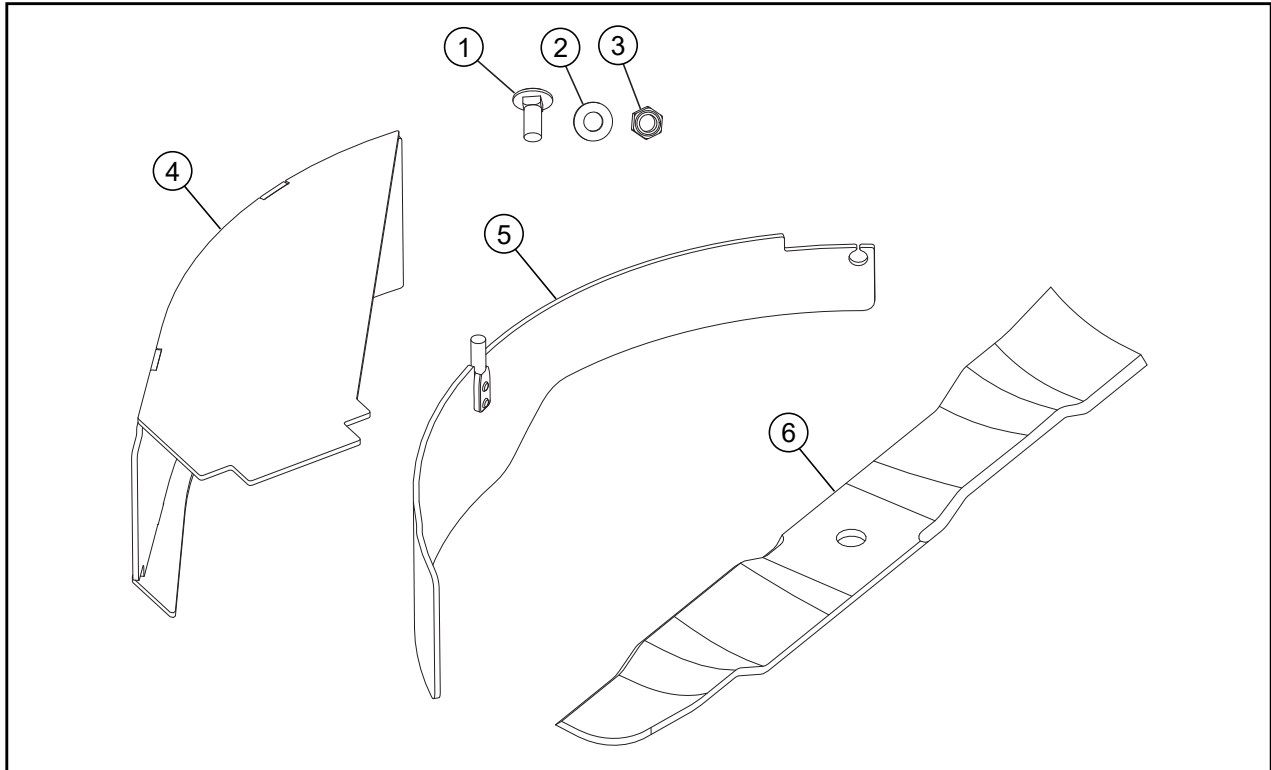


**Packing List**

Listed below are parts included in this kit. If any parts are missing or damaged, please contact Excel Parts Department. Retain these instructions for replacement parts.



INDEX NO.	PART NO.	DESCRIPTION	QTY.
1	016253	CB .312-18 X .75 FUL ZN	1
2	768523	FW .343 X .687 X .051/.080H	2
3	058776	NT .312-18 HX G5 ZY NL	2
4	124444-3	MULCH CLOSE OFF	1
5	117478	MULCH WRAPPER	1
6	794198	BLADE, 17.86"-MUL-F-CW	2



**WARNING**



Use only appropriate vehicle stands, with a minimum weight rating of 2000 pounds to block the unit up. Use in pairs only. Follow the instructions supplied with the vehicle stands.

**Assembly**

1. Park the mower on level ground; disengage the deck clutch; place the steering control levers in the park brake position; stop the engine; remove the ignition key; wait for the engine and all moving parts to come to a complete stop. Disconnect the negative battery cable.
2. Raise the front of the mower for easy access to the blades and to allow the kit to be installed on the underneath side of the deck. Place mower securely on jack stands. Chock the rear drive wheels to prevent the mower from moving.



## WARNING



Mower blades are sharp and can cut. Wrap the blade(s) or wear gloves and use extra caution when servicing them.

3. Remove the existing blades. Retain the hardware. Fig. 1
4. Remove the bolt, flat washer, and nut shown from the deck plate. This hardware will not be used when the mulch kit is installed. Fig. 2

**IMPORTANT:** Retain the bolt, flat washer, and nut as this hardware **must** be installed when the mulch kit is removed to prevent possible debris from escaping through the hole.

5. Install the mulch wrapper as shown. Fig. 3
6. Raise the deck discharge chute up. Insert the tab of the mulch close off into the slot of the discharge chute bracket. Secure the mulch close off with the hardware provided. Fig. 3 & Fig. 4
7. Install the mulching blades on the spindles using the existing blade hardware. Torque bolts to 48 ft-lbs. (65 N•m) when installing blades. Fig. 3

**NOTE:** The spindles have a 5/8" diameter boss that centers the blades on the spindles. When installing the blades, make sure the blade is centered on the boss and seated flat against the spindle shaft face. Fig. 1



## WARNING



Failure to correctly torque the bolt may result in the loss of the blade which can cause serious injury.

Lower the mower, reconnect the negative battery cable and continue operation.

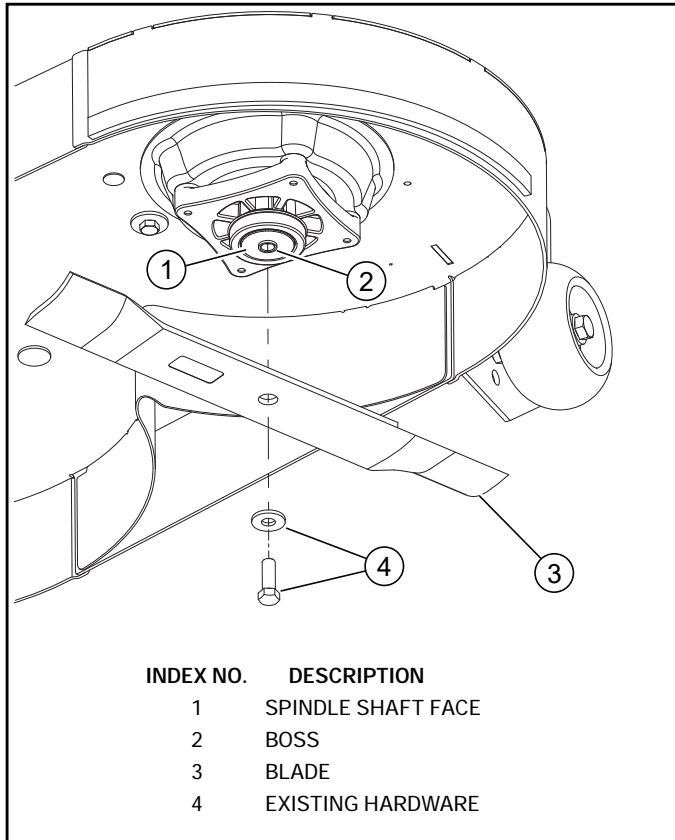


FIG. 1

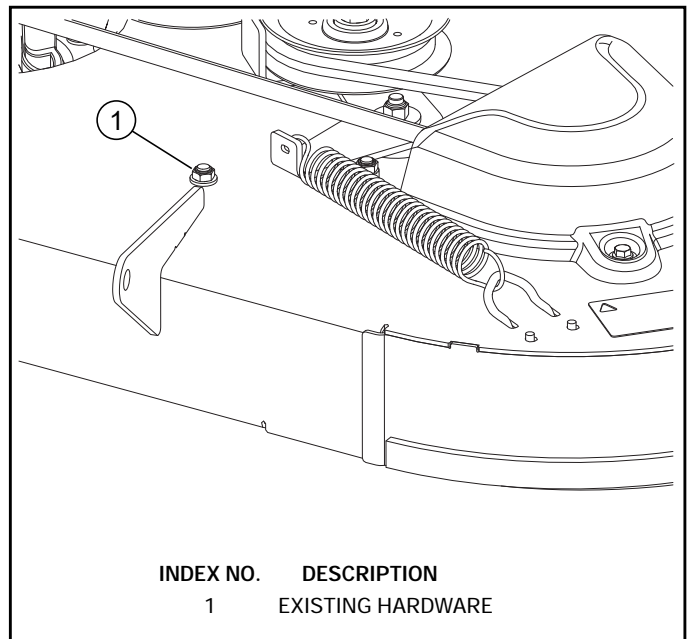


FIG. 2

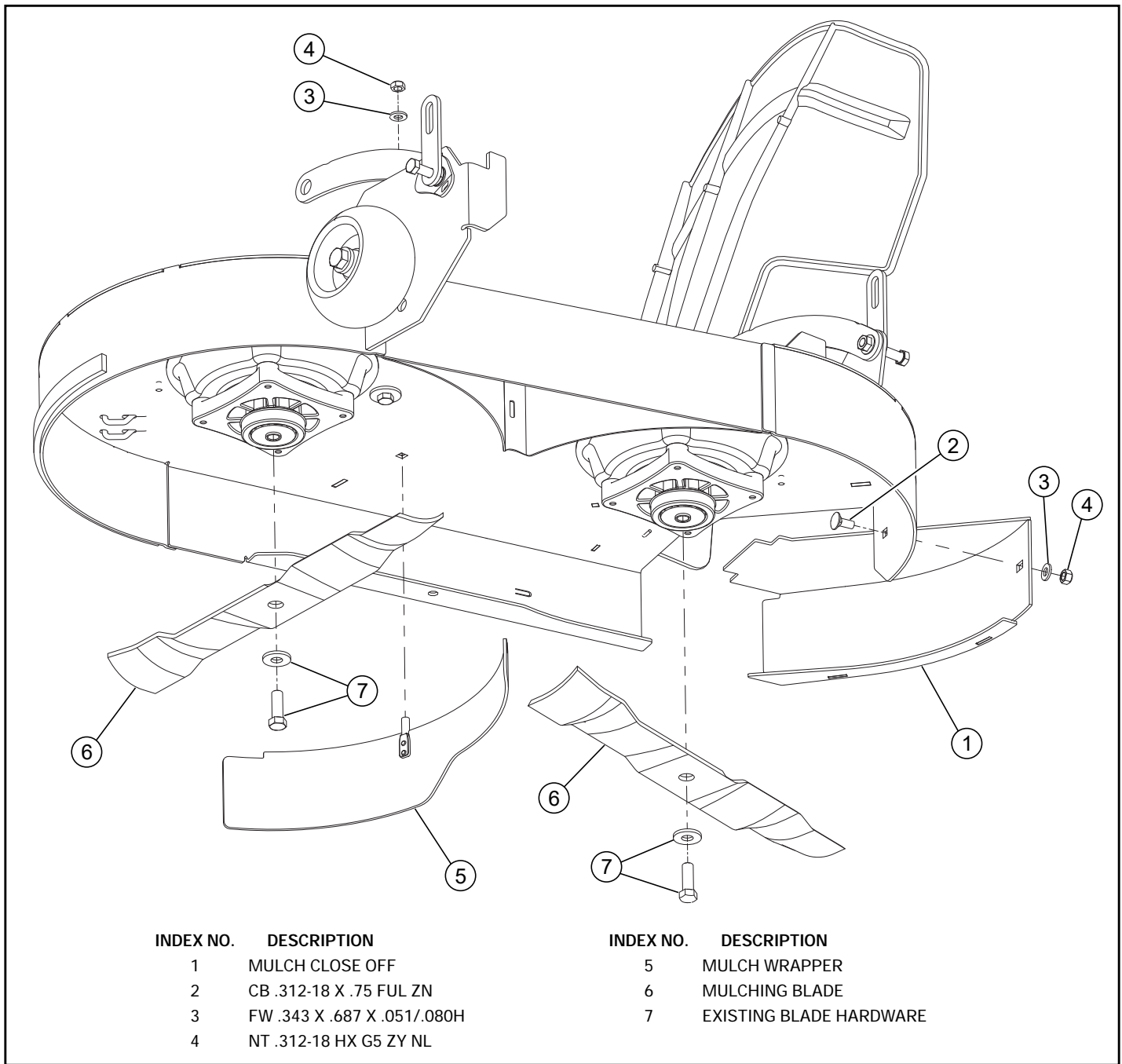


FIG. 3

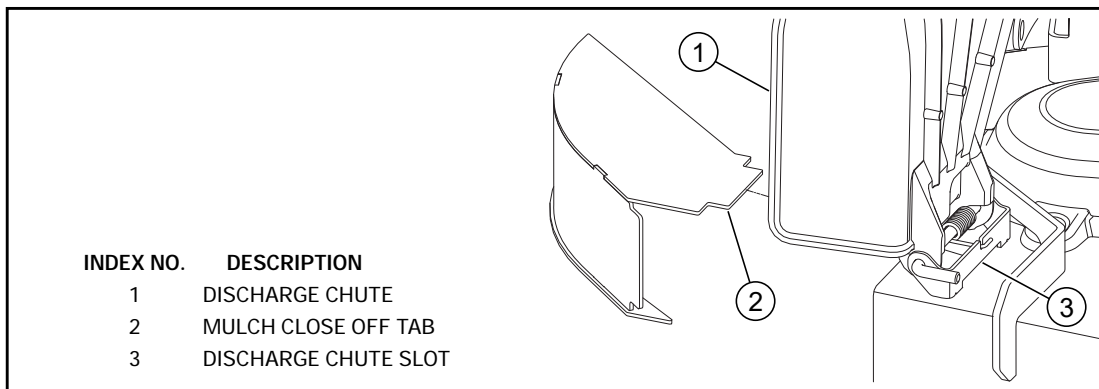


FIG. 4

Mulching grass and leaves into your lawn can be very beneficial. However, mulching can also result in possible negative consequences if not done carefully and correctly. Listed below are some helpful mulching guidelines to help keep your lawn looking healthy.

**Cut off 1" or less of grass at a time.** Doing this will make it necessary to mow more frequently when using a mulch kit. Cutting off too much grass at one time can overload the deck and the engine. This can result in poor cut quality and clumps of debris being deposited on top of the grass. Debris that is left on top of the grass can smother the grass, and it may not break down prior to the next mowing.

<1"

If the grass is too tall, raise the cutting height of the deck to mulch off 1" of grass. When finished, drop the deck another 1" and mow again. Repeat this process if necessary. Sometimes there may be more grass or debris than can reasonably be mulched. In this situation, either collect the debris with a catching system or remove the mulch kit and mow in side or rear discharge mode. Upon completion of this task, manually collect the debris.



**Slow down.** It will be necessary to operate the mower at a slower ground speed than when operating without the mulch kit. Mulching re-cuts grass and leaves multiple times. This consumes more power. Mowing slower gives the blades more time to reduce the clipping size. This allows the clippings to fall out between the tip of the blades and inside of the housing.



**Try not to mow wet grass.** The mower will have difficulty processing wet grass without the grass clumping. Wet grass will also collect on the underneath side of the deck. This will make it necessary to frequently clean the underneath side of the deck in order for it to operate properly.

Mulching heavily weeded areas can have the same effect as mulching wet grass. Weeds will often have a high moisture content and can be very sticky.



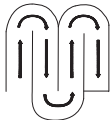
**Set the throttle at full rpm for maximum performance.** The blade tip speed is important. If the engine speed begins to drop, slow down the mowing ground speed until the engine can speed up.



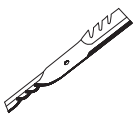
**Do not mulch too low.** Mulching at a low cutting height reduces the space available to accept the clippings. This results in more visible debris. Mowing low also allows valuable soil moisture to escape.



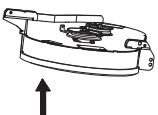
**Avoid mulching when weeds are seeding out.** Mulching provides a good seedbed for weeds to germinate. If you have many weed seeds, consider collecting the grass instead of mulching.



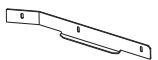
**Be conscious of your mowing pattern.** Shutting off the deck at the end of a pass, or backing up, can result in grass being dropped in front of the blades. It is important to plan your mowing pattern so that any dropped debris can be picked up.



**Use appropriate blades for leaf mulching.** If the grass is dry, the height of the cut can be lowered to prevent leaves from blowing away from the front of the deck. In some conditions, Gator™ style mulching blades are effective at breaking leaves into smaller pieces. Gator™ mulching blades are available from your dealer.



**Adjust the pitch of the deck.** Adjusting the pitch of the deck may result in improved mulching performance. Setting the deck level, or with the rear of the deck slightly lower than the front, can keep material in the deck longer. This will result in finer clippings. Conversely, if the rear of the deck is higher than the front, it may allow faster mowing, but larger clippings.



**Lower the baffles.** When mulching with a rear discharge deck that is fitted with adjustable front baffles, lower the baffles to the lowest setting to prevent debris from being blown out of the front of the deck.