

Sears

owners manual

# CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER

MODEL NO.  
131.96860

**CAUTION**  
Read Rules for  
Safe Operation  
and Instructions  
Carefully

- Assembly
- Operating
- Maintenance
- Repair Parts



SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO. U.S.A.  
SIMPSON-SEARS LIMITED, CANADA

Printed in U.S.A.

# IMPORTANT RULES FOR SAFE OPERATION

## TRAINING

1. Read the Owners Manual carefully and fully familiarize yourself with the controls and proper use of your mower. Be prepared to stop the traction & blade motors on a second's notice. Only persons well acquainted with these Rules for Safe Operation should be allowed to use your mower.
2. Do not allow children or young teenagers to operate your mower.
3. Do not allow anyone in the area while cutting. Keep the children and pets in the back yard while mowing the front yard. Keep a wary eye out for children or passers-by, stop the traction motor while they are in the vicinity of your mower. Children, particularly could get an extremity in the way of a revolving blade and also, although the area to be mowed should be completely cleared of all foreign objects, a small object may have been overlooked and could be accidentally thrown by the mower.

## PREPARATION

4. Thoroughly inspect your lawn and remove all foreign objects such as rocks, stones, wires, cans, boards, branches, bones and other foreign objects before each cutting. Do not strike any roots or other foreign objects as they may be propelled by the blades causing injury to the operator, a bystander or a pet or damage to other property or the mower itself.
5. Do not operate the mower when barefoot or wearing open sandals. Always wear substantial footwear, preferably steel-toed shoes. Also, do not wear loose fitting clothing that could get caught in moving parts.
6. A power lawn mower is a precision piece of lawn care equipment, not a plaything, therefore, extreme caution must be exercised at all times.
7. Never attempt to operate a damaged mower, always repair any damage before attempting to start or operate your mower.
8. Never attempt to carry any passengers, their safety as well as your safety will be endangered.
9. Your mower is equipped with a traction motor interlock system. This system will prevent the motor from starting if the operator tries to start the motor while the transmission is in gear. Before attempting to start the traction motor make sure the gear shift lever is in neutral and then firmly apply the foot brake. This will release the parking brake.

10. Each time before leaving the operator's seat be absolutely sure the parking brake is engaged, the gear shift lever is in neutral, the traction motor is shut off, all moving parts have stopped and the ignition key is removed. Never leave the operator's seat with the traction motor running. Always get on or off your mower from the operator's left-hand side. This will reduce exposure to discharge area.
11. Always mow in daylight or good artificial light, only.
12. Never operate your lawn mower in wet or slippery grass, where traction is unsure, or at a speed which could cause a skid.

## OPERATION

13. Never place your hands or feet under the mower, in the discharge chute or near any moving parts while the mower is running. Always keep clear of the discharge chute.
14. Always set the parking brake, shift into neutral shut off the traction motor, make absolutely sure the blades and all moving parts come to a stop and remove the ignition key each time you dismount your mower, even for a second. Children, yourself, other persons, or pets may be endangered.
15. If your mower should inadvertently strike a foreign object, immediately set the parking brake, shift into neutral, shut off the traction motor, make absolutely sure the blades and all moving parts have completely stopped, remove the ignition key, then thoroughly inspect the mower for any damage. Such damage must be repaired before restarting and operating the mower.
16. If the mower should start to vibrate abnormally, set the parking brake, shift into neutral, shut off the traction motor, make absolutely sure the blade and all moving parts have completely stopped, remove the ignition key, then check immediately for the cause of this vibration as vibration is generally a warning of trouble.
17. Before clearing the discharge chute, adjusting, cleaning, repairing, or inspecting your mower, set the parking brake, shut off the traction motor, make absolutely sure the blades and all moving parts have completely stopped, remove the ignition key, to prevent injury or accidental starting.
18. Before attempting to remove or empty the grass catcher, always set the parking brake, shift into neutral, shut off the traction motor, make absolutely sure the blades and all moving parts have completely stopped and remove the ignition key to prevent injury.



## RULES FOR SAFE OPERATION (Continued)

19. Never mow a terrace, slope, or incline that is too steep to preserve good stability and control in order to prevent tipping or sideways upsets. Always mow up and down such an incline, at a slow speed with a riding mower, do not mow across. Always exercise extreme caution when changing direction on inclines. Never attempt to mow steep terraces, slopes or inclines.
20. Do not start or stop suddenly when going up or down a terrace, slope or incline. If it is necessary to stop your mower on an incline, do so firmly to prevent the mower from picking up speed during declutching and before reaching the brake position. Do not shift gears while going up or down inclines. Choose a gear low enough to negotiate the incline without stopping and shifting gears. To reduce the speed of the mower on an incline move throttle lever to slow.
21. Never attempt to operate your mower without the proper guards, plates or other protective devices in place and fully functioning.
22. Be absolutely sure that the discharge guard or an approved grass catcher is used at all times when the mower is operating in order to minimize the possibility of injury or damage from a thrown object.
23. Before and while attempting to back up, look carefully to be absolutely sure that children, bystanders, pets, foreign objects or obstacles of any kind are not behind you.
24. Never direct grass clippings from the discharge chute toward bystanders or pets nor allow anyone near the machine while it is operating.
25. Be sure to exercise special care when moving around fixed objects in order to prevent the blades, from striking them. Never deliberately run a power mower into or over any foreign objects.
26. Use care when pulling loads. Use only approved drawbar hitch points. Limit loads to those you can safely control. Do not turn sharply.
27. Never shift gears to reverse your direction or travel until the mower comes to a complete stop.
28. Always stay alert to avoid holes in the terrain and other hidden hazards. Tipping or sideways upsets can happen easily in holes or ditches.
- Use low gear on unfamiliar ground. If the mower becomes stuck in a hole, always shut off blade motor before attempting to free it.
29. Be ready to start mowing before you start the traction or blade motors or shift into gear. The use of any precision piece of power equipment requires your full concentration and attention to the job being done in order to prevent injury or damage.
30. Always shut off blade motors when not cutting grass such as when crossing a gravel drive, sidewalk or roadway or when transporting the mower.
31. Watch out for traffic when crossing or near roadways.

## MAINTENANCE

32. Keep all nuts, bolts and screws tight in order to be sure that the mower is in safe working condition. Check the blade and motor mounting bolts at frequent intervals for proper tightness. Before performing any maintenance, always set the parking brake, shift into neutral, shut off the traction motor, make absolutely sure the blade and all moving parts have completely stopped, remove the ignition key to prevent injury or accidental starting.
33. Always keep your mower in good operating condition and make sure that all guards, plates and other protective devices are in place. Give your mower the regular maintenance it needs and have a competent serviceman make a thorough inspection of the mower at least once a year.
34. Keep your lawn mower in locked storage to prevent children from playing and tampering with it.
35. Frequently check the condition of your grass catcher bag for wear or deterioration. If you detect wear or deterioration, replace the bag with a new approved one for added protection.

# craftsman quality lawn care equipment

## CRAFTSMAN 1-YEAR GUARANTEE

If during the first year this Craftsman product fails to give proper performance due to defects in material or workmanship, we will make all necessary repairs, free of charge.

### All Electric Riding Mower's Batteries:

During the first two years if a battery proves defective and will not hold a charge, in exchange for the battery we will replace the battery at no charge.

This guarantee service is available through any of our stores or service centers throughout the United States or Canada.

A MODERN LOW COST MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT IS AVAILABLE ON THIS PRODUCT, TO EXTEND THE GUARANTEE. CONTACT YOUR NEAREST SEARS STORE.

## INTRODUCTION

Your new Sears riding rotary lawn mower utilizes a high-lift, sharp, cutting blade(s) rotating about the vertical shaft(s) with in the blade housing. In order to cut lawn fast and efficiently, the tip of this blade(s) rotates at a speed of approximately 17,000 feet per minute or almost 193 miles per hour when the blade motors switch is in the on position.

This blade(s) cuts lawn through the use of such force coupled with the sharpness of the blade(s). Obviously, this force constitutes a potential danger if the lawn mower is not properly used and maintained. It is, therefore, imperative in its use and maintenance that the operator always follow the normal precautions stated in the **RULES FOR SAFE OPERATION** as well as other instructions contained in the Owners Manual in order to prevent injury or damage.

This riding mower has been designed, engineered and manufactured to give you the best dependability and performance. Should you experience any problem which cannot be easily remedied, please return your lawn mower to your nearest Sears, Roebuck and Co. store. They have well qualified, competent, trained technicians and proper tools to service or repair this unit. **NEVER ATTEMPT TO SERVICE OR REPAIR YOUR LAWN MOWER UNLESS YOU ARE FULLY QUALIFIED TO DO SO.**



## REFERENCE PHOTO FOR ASSEMBLY AND INSTRUCTION

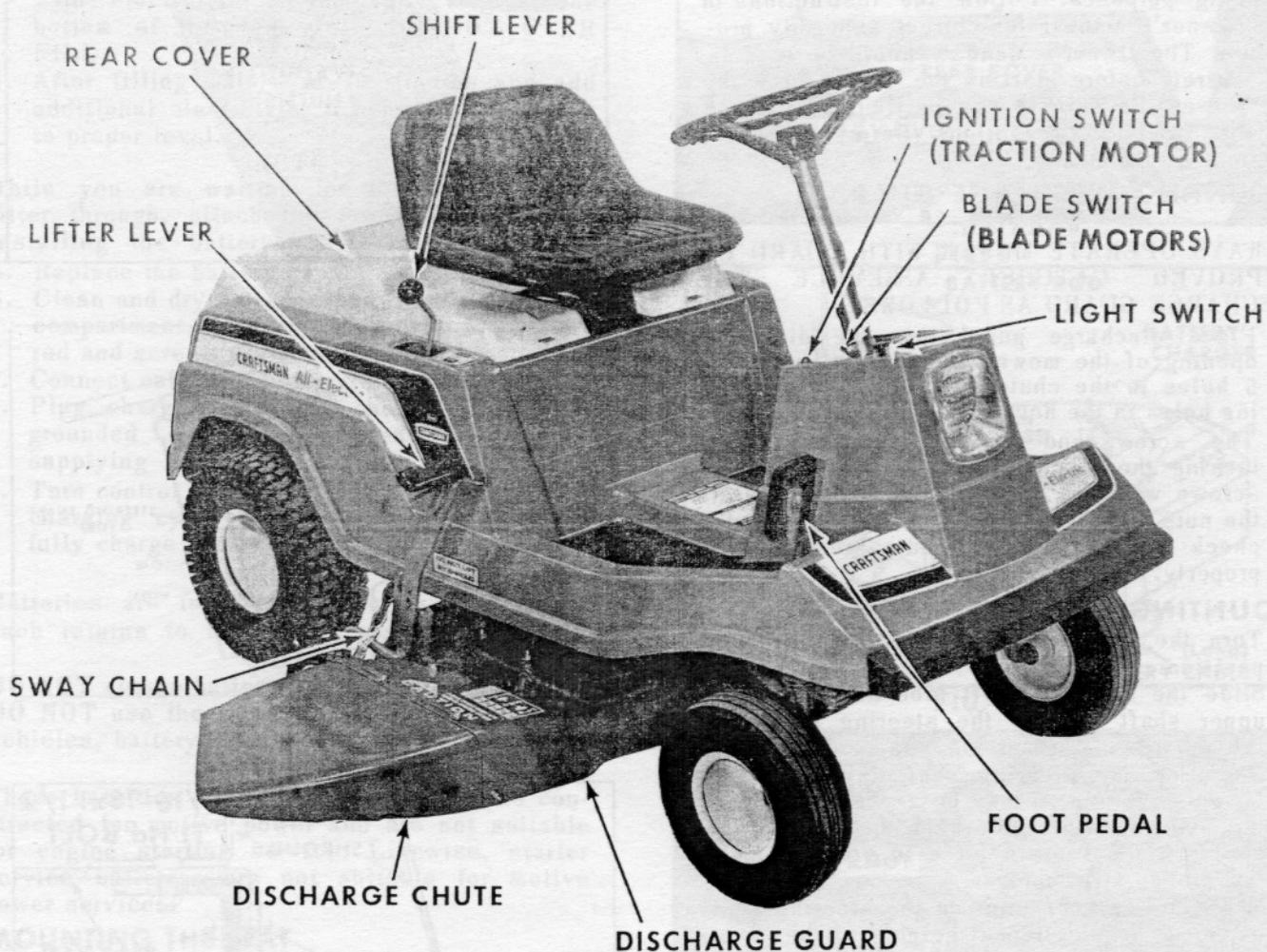


FIG. 1

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# assembly

This Craftsman Riding Lawn Mower has been packed with some parts not assembled for shipping purposes. Follow the instructions in this Owner's Manual for correct assembly procedure. The Owner's Manual should be read in its entirety before starting the motor or using the mower. Be sure to pay particular attention to the "Safety Precautions Before Mowing" section in this book.

## MOUNTING DISCHARGE GUARD

### WARNING:

ALWAYS OPERATE MOWER WITH GUARD OR APPROVED CATCHER. ASSEMBLE THE DISCHARGE GUARD AS FOLLOWS:

1. Place discharge guard into the discharge opening of the mower housing and align the 5 holes in the chute with the 5 corresponding holes in the housing. (See Fig. 2)
2. The screws and nuts are supplied for attaching the discharge guard. Install these screws with the heads to the inside; install the nuts loosely. Tighten the nuts uniformly; check to assure that all nuts are tightened properly.

## MOUNTING STEERING WHEEL

1. Turn the front wheels to a straight forward position.
2. Slide the steering shaft tube down over the upper shaft ring on the steering shaft and through the grommet on the body shroud.
3. To slide the steering shaft tube over the lower shaft ring, it may be necessary to rock the steering shaft tube back and forth while applying a downward force in order to make the proper alignment.
4. There are two (2) holes in the steering shaft to permit a selection of heights of the steering wheel. Choose the position most comfortable to you. (See Fig. 3)
5. Visually align the hole in the steering shaft tube with one of the holes in the steering shaft.
6. Secure the steering shaft tube to the steering shaft with the 1/4" bolt and locknut provided.

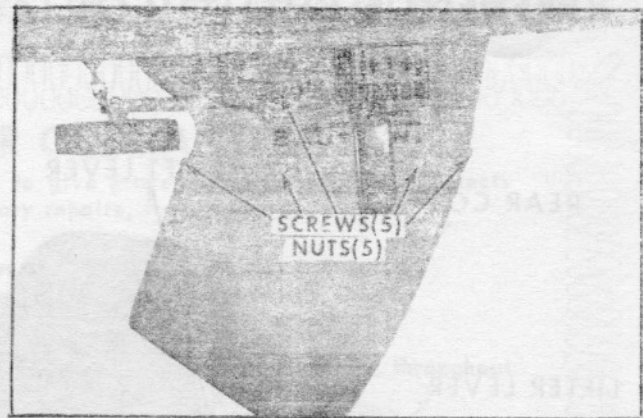


FIG. 2

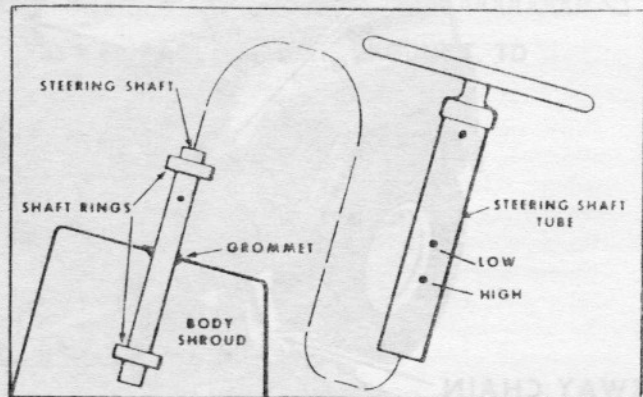


FIG. 3

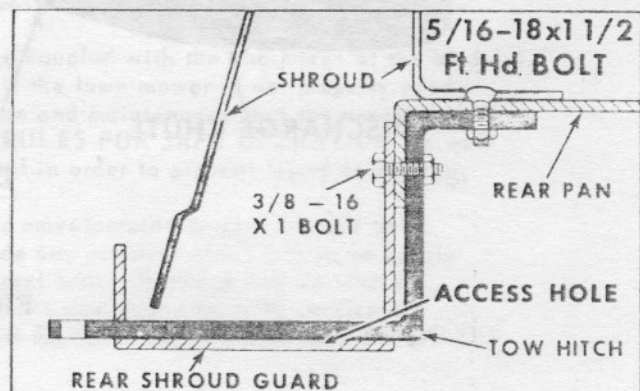


FIG. 4

## MOUNTING TOW HITCH

To mount the tow hitch onto your mower, proceed as follows:

1. Remove both bolts, nuts and shroud guard shown in Fig. 4.
2. Position tow hitch through shroud guard and mount on mower with the two bolts and nuts previously removed. (See Fig. 4).

## ACTIVATING BATTERIES

Electrolyte is not furnished with your mower and must be obtained locally. Use only battery grade sulfuric acid electrolyte with 1.265 specific gravity plus or minus 0.005 corrected to 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

**CAUTION: ALWAYS FOLLOW RULES  
FOR SAFE OPERATION.**

### WARNING:

BATTERY ELECTROLYTE IS POISONOUS AND CAN BE INJURIOUS TO EYES AND CLOTHING. HANDLE IT CAREFULLY. If spilled, clean with a solution of one part baking soda to four parts water.

To activate the batteries proceed as follows:

1. Remove rear cover by squeezing inward on the sides close to rear and lifting up, slide the cover forward until it slips off the rear cover clips then lifting upward pull cover



back and away from mower. (See Fig. 5)

2. Disconnect cables from battery terminals and remove the two screws holding battery rod in place. Remove batteries from compartment.
3. Remove the battery caps and fill each cell with electrolyte to the split ring at the bottom of the vent well. **DO NOT OVER FILL.**
4. After filling wait 5 to 10 minutes and add additional electrolyte, if necessary, to bring to proper level.

**NOTE:**

While you are waiting for the electrolyte to filter through, attach the tow hitch before re-installing the battery in the mower.

5. Replace the battery caps.
6. Clean and dry batteries and install in battery compartment. Secure in place with the battery rod and screws previously removed.
7. Connect cables to terminals as shown in Fig. 6
8. Plug charger cord into charger and into a grounded alternating current (AC) outlet supplying 105 to 130 volts. (See Fig. 7)
9. Turn control knob to "On" position. The charging cycle requires 6 to 15 hours to fully charge batteries. (See Fig. 7)

**NOTE:**

Batteries are fully charged when time control knob returns to the "Off" position.

**NOTE:**

**DO NOT** charge batteries with any other charger. **DO NOT** use the mower batteries to start other vehicles, battery damage will result.

**WARNING:**

These batteries are specially designed and constructed for motive power and are not suitable for engine starting service. Likewise, starter service batteries are not suitable for motive power service.

**MOUNTING THE SEAT**

Place the seat correctly on the seat mounting bracket and secure in place with the hex head bolt and washers provided, do not tighten. (See Fig. 8) The seat position is adjustable. Before tightening the bolt, try the seat in several different positions. After selecting the position most desired by you, tighten the bolt securely.

**HEIGHT OF CUT**

The height of cut can be varied by the use of the lifter arm. (See Fig. 9) Five different cutting



FIG. 5

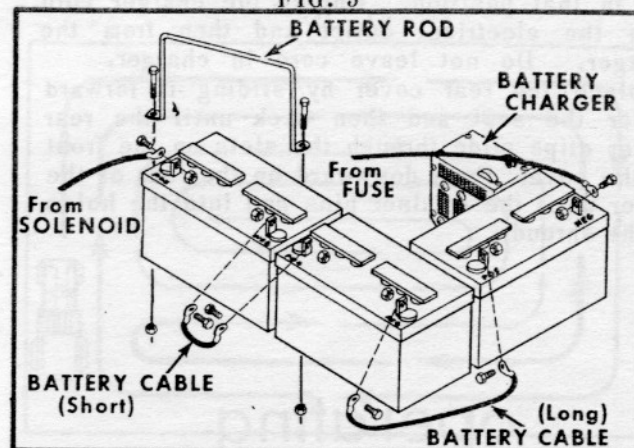


FIG. 6

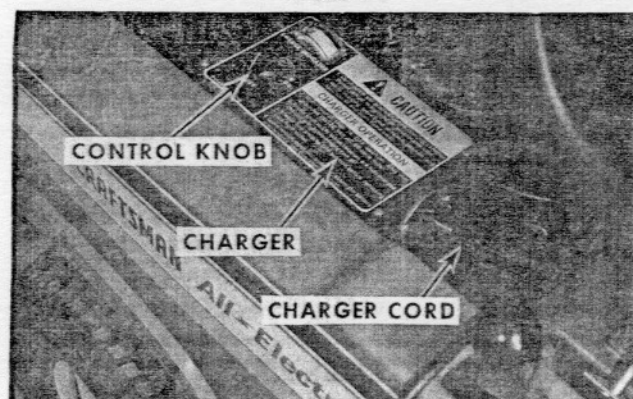


FIG. 7

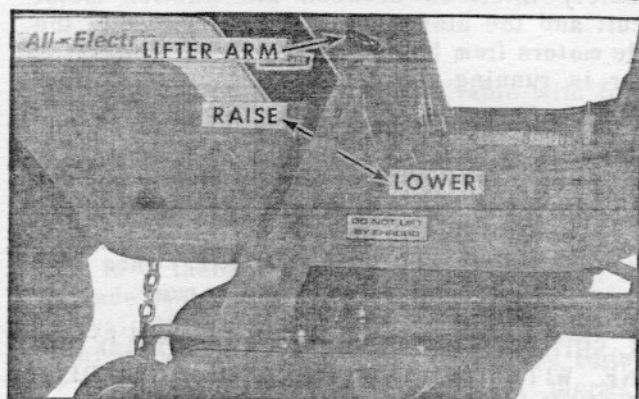


FIG. 9

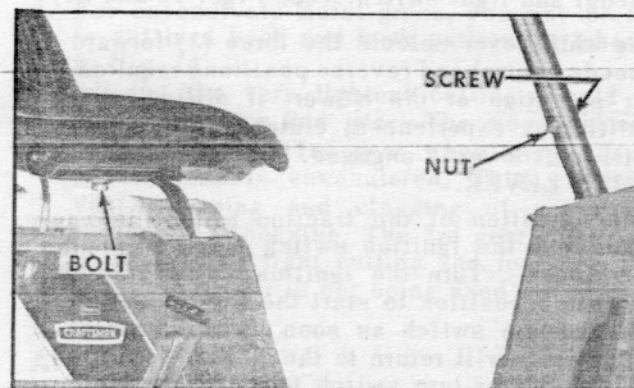


FIG. 8

**CAUTION : ALWAYS FOLLOW RULES FOR SAFE OPERATION.**

heights are available from a low cut of approximately 1 1/2" to a high cut of approximately 3". This adjustment can be made when the mower is stopped or during operation. To change the cutting height, relieve the tension on the lifter arm by pulling slightly backward while squeezing the release rod toward the handle grip. Move the lifter arm forward to lower or rearward to raise the cutting head to the desired height. The height of cut referred to above, are approximate and may vary depending upon soil conditions, height of grass, and types of grass being mowed.

#### BEFORE STARTING MOWER

Move charger timer control knob to "Off", if not in that position. Unplug the charger cord from the electrical outlet and then from the charger. Do not leave cord in charger.

Replace the rear cover by sliding it forward under the seat and then back until the rear cover clips slide through the slots on the front of the cover. Push downward on the rear of the cover until the retainer pins pop into the holes in the shroud.

## operating

### MOWER OPERATION

#### SAFETY PRECAUTIONS BEFORE MOWING

Before using your mower, again refer to the "Rules for Safe Operation" as shown on the inside of the front cover of this manual. Always be careful.

#### OPERATING CONTROLS—MOWER

The operation of the mower is controlled by the shift lever, ignition switch, blade switch, foot pedal and light switch. (See Figs. 10 and 11)

1. The shift lever selects the three (3) forward speeds, neutral and reverse positions required for operation of the mower. If difficulty in shifting is experienced, clutch and declutch until shift lever is engaged. **DO NOT FORCE SHIFT LEVER.**
2. The operation of the traction motor is controlled by the ignition switch located on the dashboard. Turn the ignition switch to the "Switch" position to start the traction motor. Release the switch as soon as motor starts. The switch will return to the "Run" position. To stop motor turn switch to "Off" position. Keep switch in "Off" position and remove key, when mower is not in use.

**CAUTION: ALWAYS FOLLOW RULES  
FOR SAFE OPERATION.**



FIG. 10

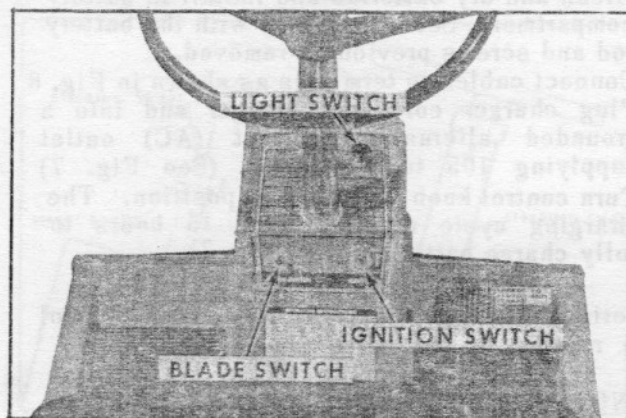


FIG. 11

#### NOTE:

Place shift lever in "N" position or the electrical circuit will not be closed and the motor will not start.

3. The operation of the blademotors is controlled by the blade switch located on the dashboard. To start the blade motors, with the traction motor running, raise blade switch to the "Start" position. Release switch after blade motors are running. The switch will return to "Run" position. To stop the blade motors push switch to "Off" position.

#### NOTE:

A safety interlock between the traction motor circuit and the blade motors circuit prevents the blade motors from being started unless the traction motor is running.

4. The foot pedal is a combination clutch and brake.
  - a. The clutch is "ENGAGED" when the pedal is all the way out (i.e. when the foot is removed from the pedal).
  - b. The clutch is "DISENGAGED" when the pedal is depressed half way or more.

#### NOTE:

**ALL SHIFTING OF SHIFT LEVER SHOULD BE DONE WITH PEDAL DEPRESSED TO DISENGAGED POSITION.**

- c. The brake is on when the pedal is depressed all the way down.



- d. To set parking brake, depress foot pedal all the way down. While pushing down on parking brake plunger, (See Fig. 12) release foot pedal. Release parking brake by depressing the foot pedal.

**NOTE:**

DO NOT OPERATE MOWER WITH FOOT PEDAL PARTIALLY DEPRESSED. BELT DAMAGE MAY RESULT.

5. The headlight is operated by the light switch on the dashboard. When the headlight is used during mowing a slightly shorter mowing cycle should be expected.

## TO OPERATE MOWER

1. Try your mower in a large open space. Learn to start, stop, and reverse your mower. It is suggested that the blade switch be in the "Off" position during this trial period.

Until you have the feel of your Riding Mower, go slowly at first, avoiding sharp turns at high speed. Attempt only those maneuvers that you are certain you can do. Avoid uphill turns.

2. Push in foot pedal and move shift lever to required selection:
  - (1) First gear for very slow speed.
  - (2) Second gear for normal or intermediate speed.
  - (3) Third gear for fast speed.
  - (R) Reverse gear for backing at normal speed.
3. Release foot pedal slowly and mower will start to move.
4. To stop mower, push foot pedal all the way down, move shift lever to neutral position and release foot pedal.
5. On rough ground, raise mower to high cut. (See "HEIGHT OF CUT.")
6. Never leave mower with motor running.
7. Keep people, particularly children, away from discharge chute.
8. On hills operate cautiously, keeping shift lever in forward position. To reduce speed of mower on a slope, move shift lever to a lower gear.

## MOWING TIPS

1. The average mowing time available with fully charged batteries is 1 hour and 15 minutes which is sufficient time to mow 1/2 to 3/4 acres. The mowing cycle will vary with grass density, moisture and hilly or level terrain.

**NOTE:**

There is a thermal overload switch on each of the blade motors in case of a over load. You must wait 30 to 45 seconds to allow the switch to cool before restarting the motors or the motor will shut off repeatedly. To prevent thermal overload during mowing, raise the height of cut, reduce your ground speed (use a lower gear) or both.



FIG. 12

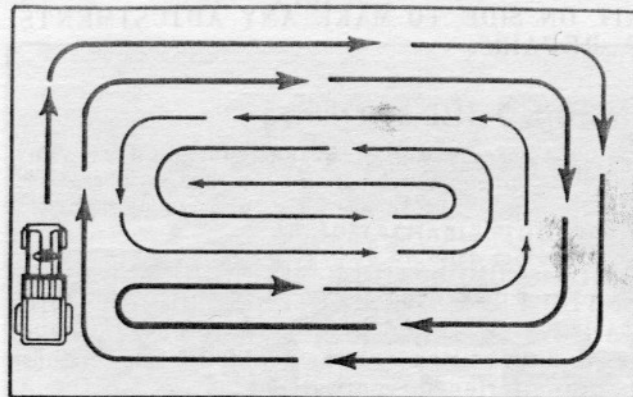


FIG. 13

2. In the early spring, when the grass is wet or when ground is soft, adjust for high cut to avoid overloading of engine. For other conditions see "HEIGHT OF CUT."
3. For extremely heavy cut conditions, it is advisable to make the width of your cut 1/2 or 3/4 of normal full cut. This will reduce the load on the mower and provide a cleaner cut since blade speeds will be fully maintained.
4. For normal mowing use mowing pattern as shown in Fig. 13. The first two to four laps are cut in a clockwise direction. The balance of cutting is done in a counterclockwise direction. This should produce best results for most lawns.
5. For excessively moist grass, you may prefer to cut in a back and forth pattern, as shown in Fig. 14.
6. All but the very lightest cutting should be done in 1st or 2nd gear. The mower should be operated in 1st gear when very heavy, moist grass is encountered. This will prevent clumping and clogging of grass beneath mower housing. The 3rd gear should be used for very light cutting and for traveling when the mower is not being used for cutting.

## AFTER MOWING

After you have finished your mowing and cleaned your mower as described under Cleaning Instructions proceed as follows:

**CAUTION: ALWAYS FOLLOW RULES FOR SAFE OPERATION.**

1. Drive mower to storage area near electrical outlet. Stop ground travel, shift to neutral and set parking brake.
2. Turn ignition switch to "Off" position and remove key.
3. Remove rear cover and charge batteries according to instructions.

## maintenance

REMOVE BATTERIES BEFORE TURNING UNIT ON SIDE TO MAKE ANY ADJUSTMENTS OR REPAIRS.

### CHARGING THE BATTERIES

As soon as you finish using your mower, you should recharge your batteries so that your mower will be ready the next time you need it.

#### WARNING:

HIGHLY COMBUSTIBLE HYDROGEN GAS IS VENTED FROM THE BATTERIES DURING THE CHARGING CYCLE. Keep the rear cover off the mower until timer returns to "Off" position. Charge batteries in ventilated area. Keep flame away from and do not smoke around batteries.

To charge batteries, remove rear cover, plug power cord into charger and then into a grounded alternating current (AC) outlet supplying 105 to 130 volts.

Turn the time knob clockwise to the "On" position to start the charging cycle. The timer will not be activated until batteries reach approximately 80 percent of full charge. The timer will then operate for an additional 6 hours to fully charge the batteries. When the batteries are fully charged, the timer will automatically return to the "Off" position shutting itself off. Movement of the timer knob is not noticeable due to the length of the charging cycle.

The charger also contains an automatic timer that turns the charger on every 24 hours to permit a 12-15 minute boost charge. This keeps the batteries at a full charge at all times. Only one full charge is required after each mowing. The complete charging cycle will take from 6-15 hours, depending upon condition of batteries.

#### NOTE:

Should memory fail you, reset the time as it will not damage the batteries. It is better to charge them twice, than let them remain in a discharged condition.

Keep the charger connected to a live electrical outlet whenever the machine is not in use . . . even during winter storage. Batteries can be severely damaged if stored for prolonged periods in a discharged condition.

**CAUTION: ALWAYS FOLLOW RULES  
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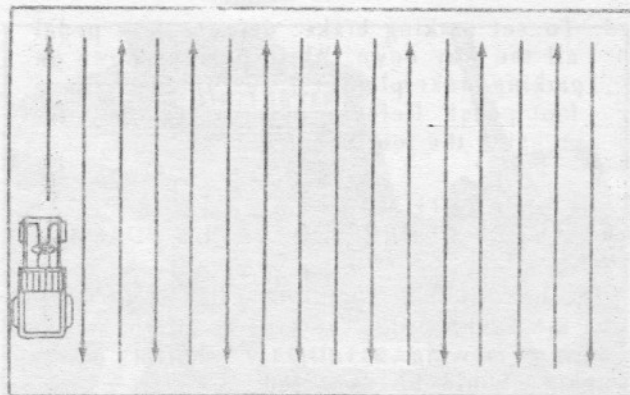


FIG. 14

It is normal for the charger to become warm while in operation. A thermostat within the charger, prevents machine damage in the event the charger becomes too warm. The thermostat works in the same manner as a circuit breaker.

The rear cover can be replaced on the mower AFTER the timer has returned to the "Off" position. The rear cover need not be removed during the daily automatic charging cycles.

#### NOTE:

DO NOT charge batteries with any other charger. DO NOT use the mower batteries to start other vehicles, battery damage will result.

### BATTERY CARE

A hydrometer test of the battery solution should be made monthly. If the specific gravity tests 1.225 or less, the battery should be thoroughly recharged. At the same time the solution level should be examined, and distilled water added when necessary to retain the proper level. When necessary to add water, do it just prior to recharging so that the added water mixes with the solution. Care should be exercised not to overfill the batteries at any time.

Any collection of grease or any other substance should be removed from the top of the batteries and the top kept dry and clean at all times. The batteries should be kept snug and not permitted to get loose. The vent caps should be kept tight and the small vent holes in top or side of cap be kept open at all times to permit escape of gas formed in the batteries.

### BLADE CARE

Improper balance of blade or bent blade will cause excessive vibration when running and eventually damage the mower.

The trailing edge of the blade is formed upward to create a pumping action. This helps discharge the cut grass and create a steady air-flow condition for clean, efficient cutting. After prolonged use, this formed edge becomes eroded and the blade must be replaced to maintain maximum cutting efficiency. A dull edge will bruise and split ends of grass and cause browning of freshly cut area.



To insure satisfactory operation, it is recommended that before the start of each mowing season, the old blade be discarded and replaced with an authorized factory replacement blade. The blade can be ordered at all Sears retail stores and catalog sales units.

## BLADE REPLACEMENT

### WARNING:

DISCONNECT ONE OF THE BATTERY CABLES FROM ONE OF THE BATTERIES TO OPEN THE ELECTRICAL CIRCUIT.

1. Remove cutting head, see "Removal of Cutting Head" paragraph.
2. Turn cutting head over and wedge a block of wood between the blade and housing to prevent blade from turning.
3. To remove blade nut, turn counter clockwise. (It may be necessary to strike the wrench a sharp blow with a hammer to loosen blade nut,)
4. Place new blade properly on the motor shaft (The word "TOP" is stamped on all blades to assure proper installation). Secure blade with nut and washers previously removed. (See Fig. 15)
5. Remount cutting head onto mower, see step 5 under "Removal of Cutting Head" paragraph.

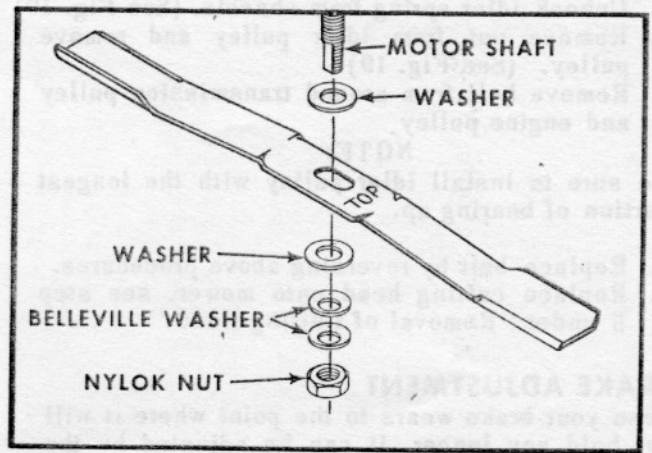


FIG. 15

## REMOVAL OF CUTTING HEAD

DISCONNECT ONE OF THE BATTERY CABLES FROM ONE OF THE BATTERIES TO OPEN THE ELECTRICAL CIRCUIT.

1. Disconnect the detachable plugs (one on each blade motor) from the wiring harness. (See Fig. 16)
2. Disconnect sway chains from mower by removing the cotter pins from the sway chain pins. (See Fig. 17)
3. Remove the nylok nut and washer from pivot shaft assembly to disconnect cutting head from mower. (See Fig. 18)
4. Slide cutting head out from beneath mower.
5. To assemble reverse the above procedure.

### NOTE:

To fasten sway chains to chassis, first place sway chain pin through top of chain (discharge side only, other side use next to last link) then through hole in chassis with chain inside chassis and secure with retainer pin on outside as shown in Fig. 17.

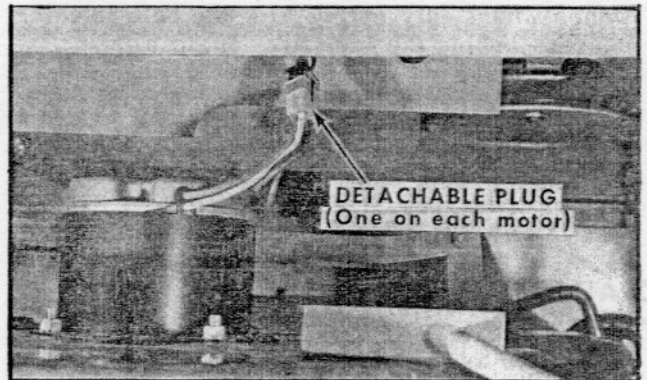


FIG. 16

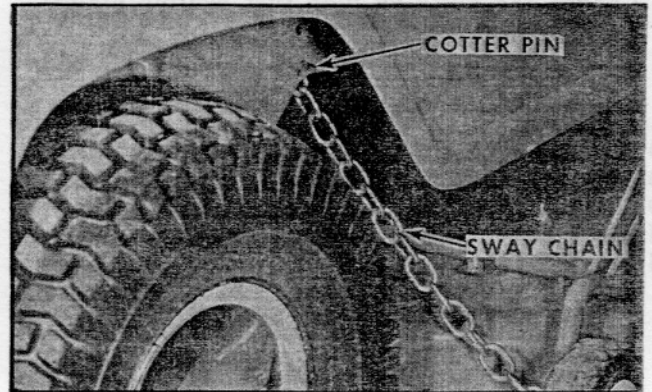


FIG. 17

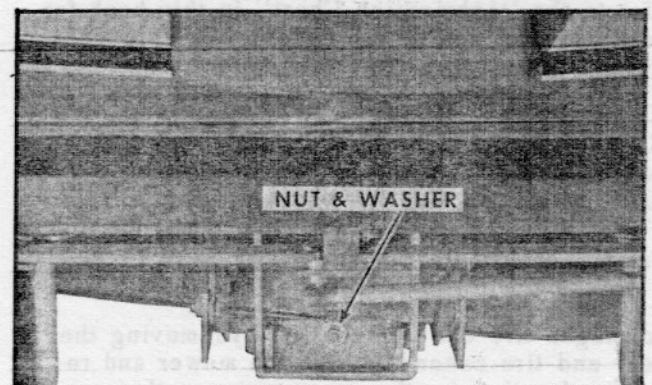


FIG. 18

## V-BELT

The drive belt used on this mower is a "V" type belt. Proper tension on this belt is maintained by the use of a spring loaded idler. No tension adjustment will be required.

Normal belt life is approximately 75 hours of mowing time. This figure will vary depending upon the amount of clutching and declutching and also upon the severity of use.

## REPLACING MOTION BELT

1. Remove cutting head, see "Removal of Cutting Head" paragraph.

**CAUTION: ALWAYS FOLLOW RULES FOR SAFE OPERATION.**

2. Unhook idler spring from chassis. (See Fig. 19)
3. Remove nut from idler pulley and remove pulley. (See Fig. 19)
4. Remove belt from around transmission pulley and engine pulley.

**NOTE:**

Be sure to install idler pulley with the longest portion of bearing up.

5. Replace belt by reversing above procedures.
6. Replace cutting head onto mower. see step 5 under "Removal of Cutting Head."

### BRAKE ADJUSTMENT

When your brake wears to the point where it will not hold any longer, it can be adjusted by the following procedure.. (Refer to Fig. 20)

1. Unhook light duty spring from the hole in the chassis behind the transmission.
2. Remove brake rod from hole in actuating lever.
3. Unhook brake rod from brake spring and rehook spring into second hole in the rod.
4. Reinsert brake rod through actuating lever and secure with rear spring, rehook spring in hole in the chassis.

### TO ADJUST CHAIN DRIVE

The drive chain will loosen with wear and can be tightened as follows:

1. Place rear of mower on blocks to permit rotation of rear wheels.
2. Loosen the bolts on both rear bearing plates (two on each side). (See Fig. 21)
3. Slide rear axle towards the rear one notch at a time on the ratchet as far as possible.

**NOTE:**

BOTH CHAIN ADJUSTERS MUST BE SET IN CORRESPONDING NOTCH OR THE AXLE WILL NOT BE PERPENDICULAR TO THE DRIVE CHAIN CAUSING EXCESSIVE WEAR TO THE CHAIN, OR CHAIN TO COME OFF SPROCKET.

4. After proper chain tightness has been obtained tighten all four (4) bolts securely and remove mower from blocks.

### MOWER LUBRICATION

Refer to the "Lubrication Chart" in this book for information on how and when to lubricate your mower.

### TIRE SERVICE

Tires should be kept inflated to 15 lbs. air pressure. Mowers with low tire pressure or less than 15 lbs. of air pressure will cut lower to the ground. Accordingly the tires with over 15 lbs. air pressure will make a higher cut.

A damaged tire can be repaired by removing the wheel and tire assembly from the mower and repairing the tire in the same manner that you

**CAUTION: ALWAYS FOLLOW RULES  
FOR SAFE OPERATION.**

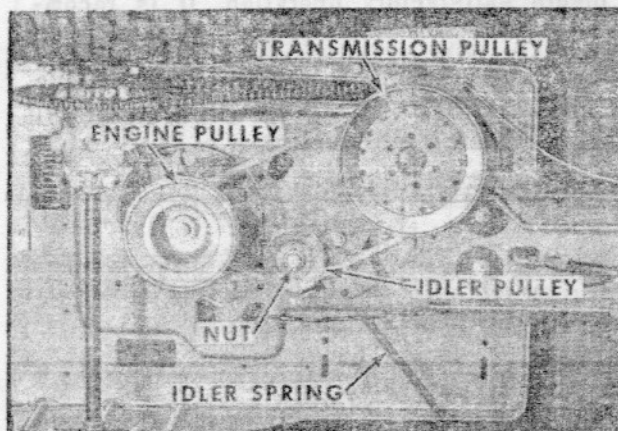


FIG. 19

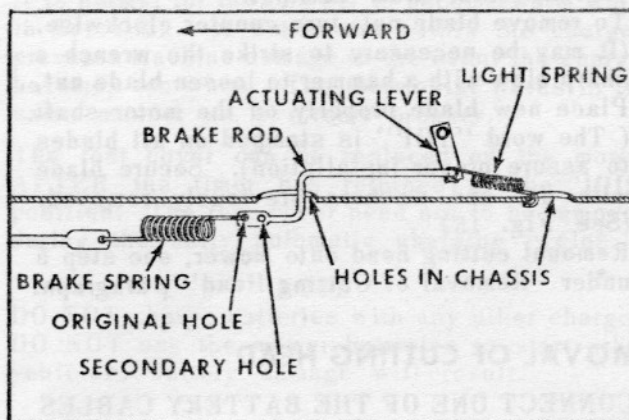


FIG. 20

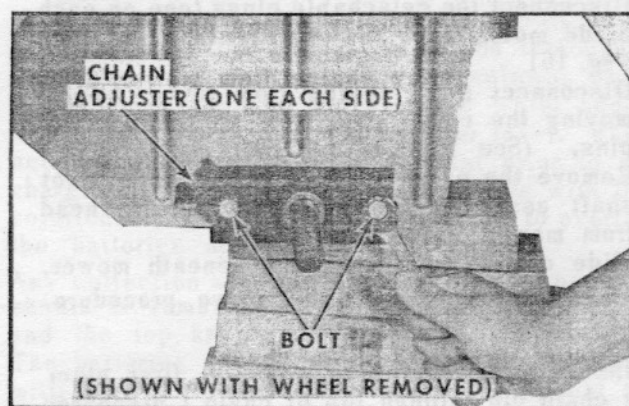


FIG. 21

would an automobile tire.

**NOTE:**

Remove hucaps to air tires.

**NOTE:**

This applies to the rear wheels only, the front tires are semi-pneumatic.

### CLEANING INSTRUCTIONS

It is imperative that your mower be cleaned periodically to ensure maximum performance. Water pressure from a garden hose will loosen grass accumulation if cleaning is done immediately after mowing, before clippings harden. In either



case, newspapers or a dropcloth spread beneath the mower beforehand will facilitate final clean-up.

### STORAGE INSTRUCTIONS

In the event your mower is not to be operated for periods in excess of 30 days - and at the end of each mowing season - prepare for storage as outlined below:

Clean all dirt and grease from your mower. Repaint chipped or rusted spots.

#### NOTE:

Leave battery charger connected to electrical outlet to maintain batteries at full charge. This will prevent freezing during winter storage.

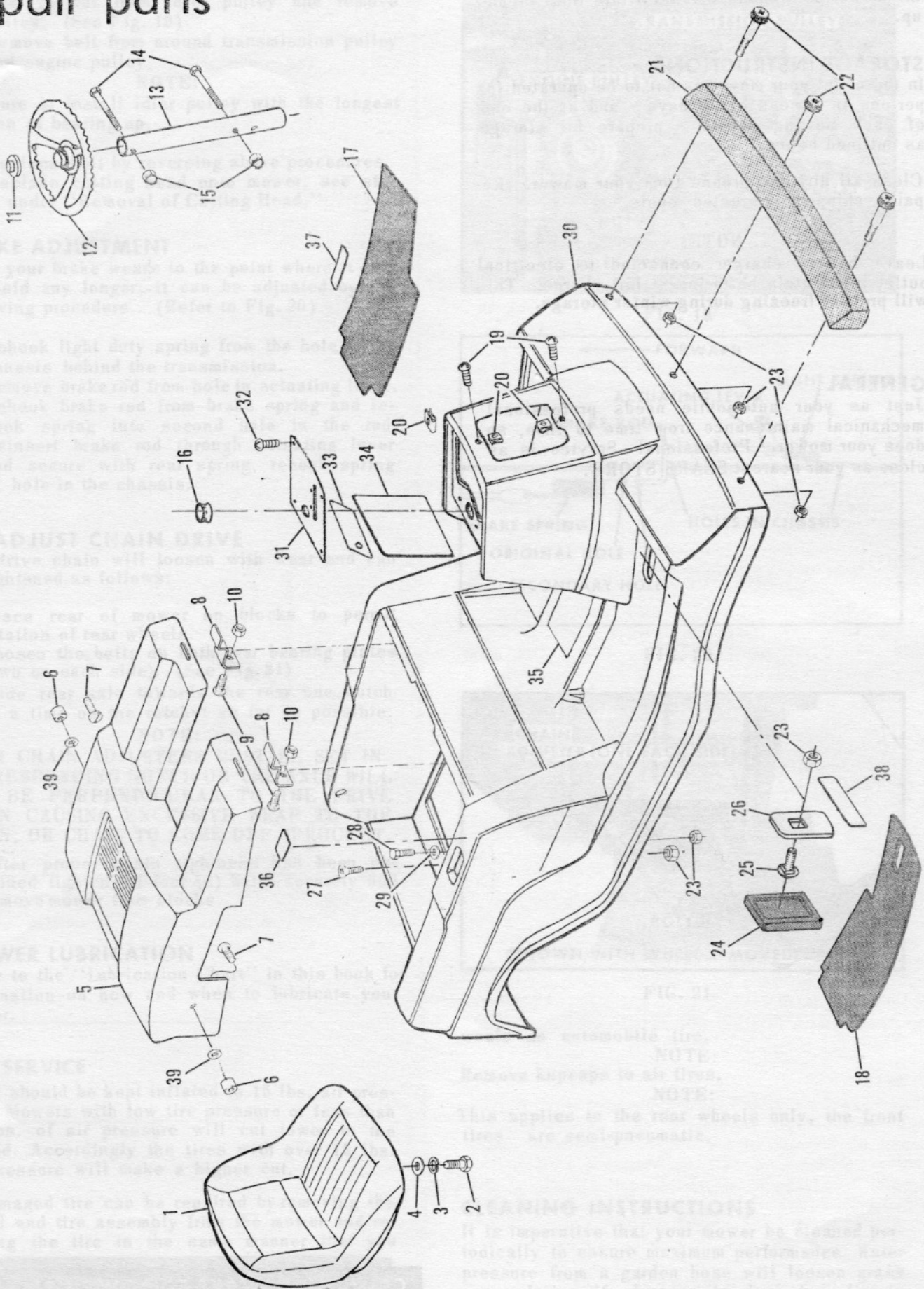
### GENERAL

Just as your automobile needs professional mechanical maintenance from time to time, so does your mower. Professional Service is as close as your nearest SEARS STORE.

**CAUTION : ALWAYS FOLLOW RULES  
FOR SAFE OPERATION.**

# repair parts

CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER MODEL NUMBER 131.96860

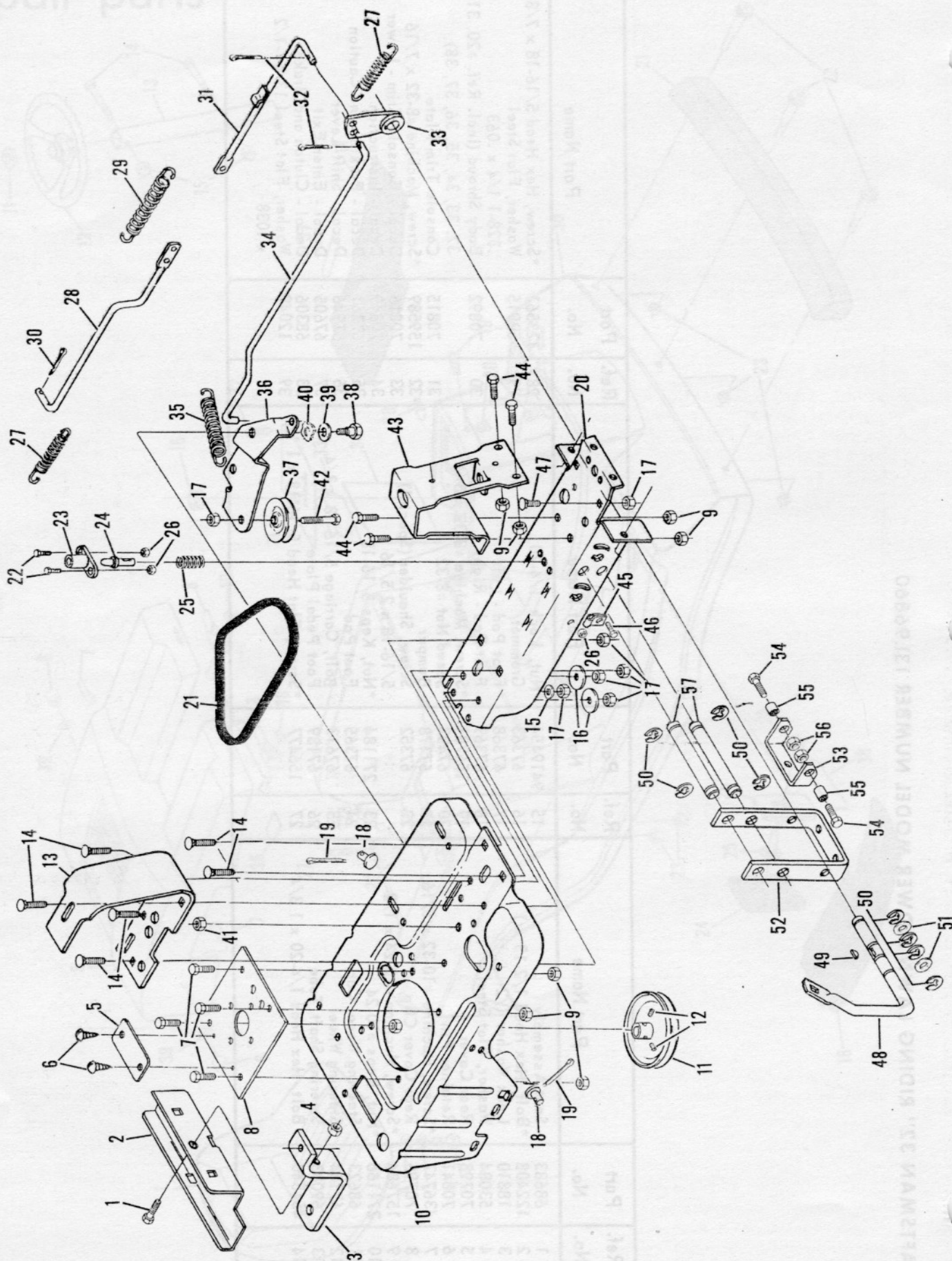




CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER MODEL NUMBER 131.96860

Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name
1	68683	Seat Assembly	15	9419454	*Nut, Lock 1/4-20	28	423561	*Screw, Hex Head 5/16-18 x 7/8
2	122408	*Bolt, Hex Head 1/2-13 x 1	16	67363	Grommet	29	52915	Washer, Flat Steel
3	18810	Lock Washer 1/2	17	67368	Foot Pad - Left			.328-1 1/4 x .063
4	53084	Washer, Flat Steel	18	67369	Foot Pad - Right	30	70892	Body Shroud (Incl. Ref. #20, 31.
5	70798	Rear Cover	19	156781	*Screw, Machine #8-32 x 3/4			32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38)
6	70841	Retainer Pin	20	67433	Speed Nut #8-32	31	70815	Console Trim Plate
7	436747	*Screw, Machine #10-32 x 5/16	21	67178	Bumper	32	159589	*Screw, Machine #8-32 x 7/16
8	70795	Rear Cover Clip	22	67352	Screw, Shoulder (Special)	33	70816	Decal - Console Trim - Lower
9	157684	*Screw, Machine #10-24 x 1/2			5/16-18 x 2 5/16	34	70849	Decal - Instruction
10	271166	*Nut, Keps #10-24	23	271184	*Nut, Keps 5/16-18	35	67761	Decal - Parking and Caution
11	68623	Steering Wheel Cap	24	67365	Foot Pad	36	67946	Decal - Shift Lever
12	67184	Steering Wheel	25	67613	Bolt, Carriage 5/16-18 x 3/4	37	67605	Decal - Enter-Exit
13	69083	Steering Shaft Tube	26	67189	Foot Pedal Plate	38	68306	Decal - Clutch and Brake
14	454840	*Bolt, Hex Head 1/4-20 x 1 3/4	27	156477	*Screw, Flat Head 5/16-18 x 1 1/2	39	12049	Washer, Flat Steel 13/64-1/2 x .038-

\*Standard Hardware Items - May Be Purchased Locally



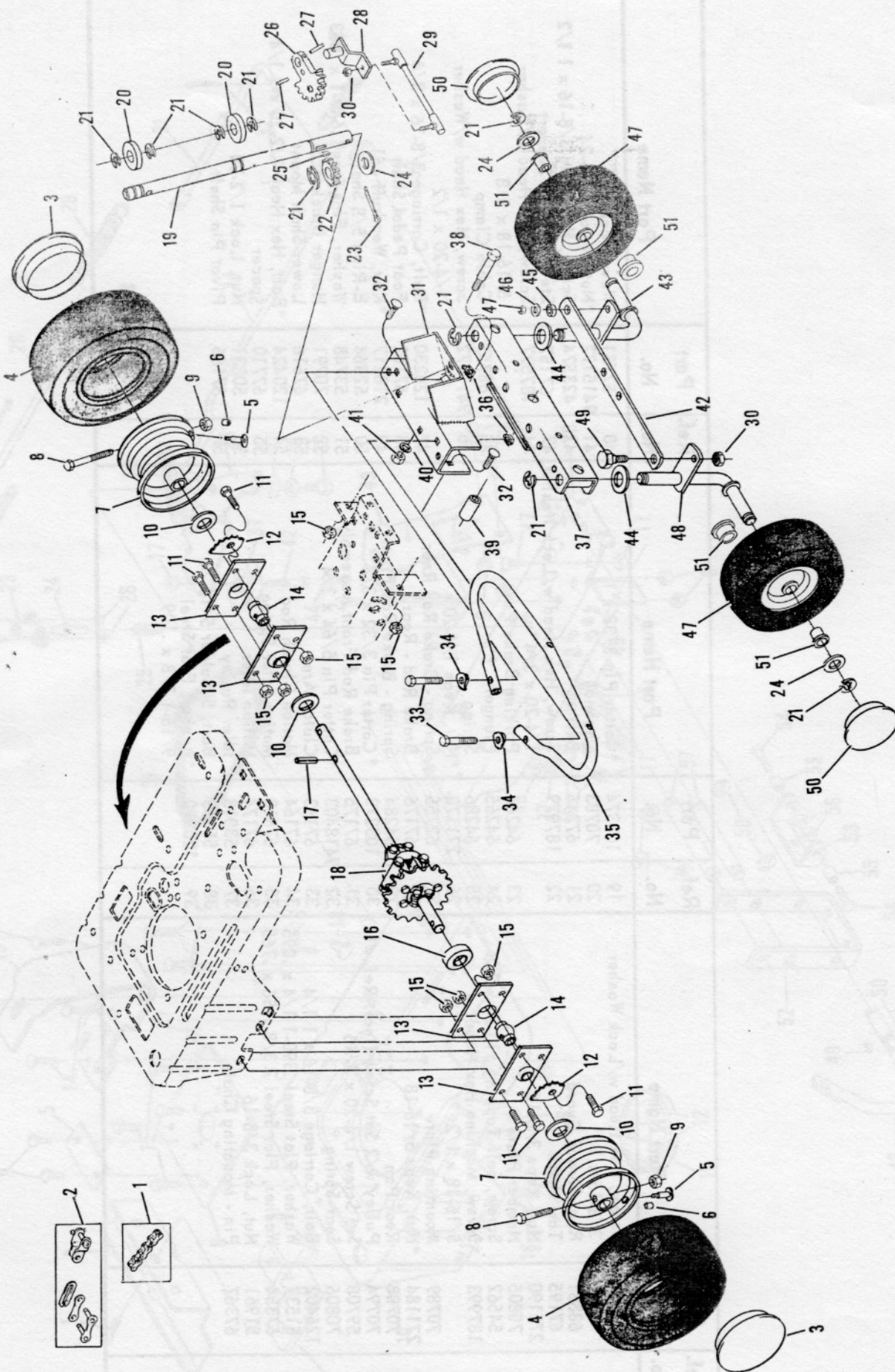


# CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER MODEL NUMBER 131.00860

Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name
1	423571	*Screw, Hex Head w/Lock Washer 3/8-16 x 1	19	103374	*Cotter Pin 3/32 x 1 Channel	40	57731	Wave Washer
2	68881	Rear Shroud Guard	20	70783	Belt	41	9415172	*Nut, Nylok 5/16-24
3	67195	Tow Hitch	21	67346	*Screw, Hex Head w/Lock Washer 1/4-20 x 3/4	42	423574	*Screw, Hex Head 3/8-16 x 1 1/2
4	271190	*Nut, Keps 3/8-16 Number Plate	22	187979	Parking Brake Post	43	67157	Steering Shaft Support
5	70805	Screw, Self-Tapping #10-24 x 3/8	23	64263	Plunger	44	187527	*Screw, Hex Head w/Washer 5/16-18 x 5/8
6	54562	*Screw, Machine Hex Head 5/16-18 x 1/2	24	64265	Spring	45	68757	Cable Clamp
7	187993	Mounting Plate	25	64286	*Nut, Keps 1/4-20	46	9411372	*Screw, Hex Head w/Washer 1/4-20 x 1/2
8	70789	*Nut, Keps 5/16-18	26	62755	Spring - Brake Rod Rear	47	126230	*Bolt, Carriage 3/8-16 x 3/4
9	271184	Rear Pan	27	67176	Brake Rod - Rear	48	67162	Foot Pedal Shaft
10	70788	Pulley w/2 Set Screw (Incl. Ref. #12)	28	64284	*Cotter Pin 3/32 x 3/4	49	218217	*Key, Woodruff #61
11	70794	Set Screw 1/4-20 x 5/16	29	103373	Brake Rod Front Assembly	50	52364	E-Ring 5/8 Shaft
12	59708	Seat Spring	30	67175	*Cotter Pin 5/64 x 3/4	51	53748	Washer, Flat Steel .640-1 x .063
13	70806	*Bolt, Carriage 3/8-16 x 1 1/4	31	9418403	Clutch Arm	52	70791	Hanger Bracket
14	126402	Washer, Flat Steel .390-1 1/4 x .095	32	67163	Motion Clutch Rod	53	67616	Lower Shaft Mount
15	61537	Washer, Flat Steel 2 3/8-.156 x .765	33	67164	Motion Idle Spring	54	120424	*Bolt, Hex Head 1/2-20 x 1 1/4
16	67354	Nut, Lock 3/8-16	34	67610	Idle Pulley	55	67710	Spacer
17	51961	Pin - Mounting Chain	35	67174	Bolt, Shoulder 5/16-24	56	50831	Nut, Lock 1/2-20
18	67367		36	53018	*Washer, Flat Steel 9/16-1 3/8 x .109	57	67166	Pivot Pin Shaft

\*Standard Hardware Items - May Be Purchased Locally

CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER MODEL NUMBER 131.96860

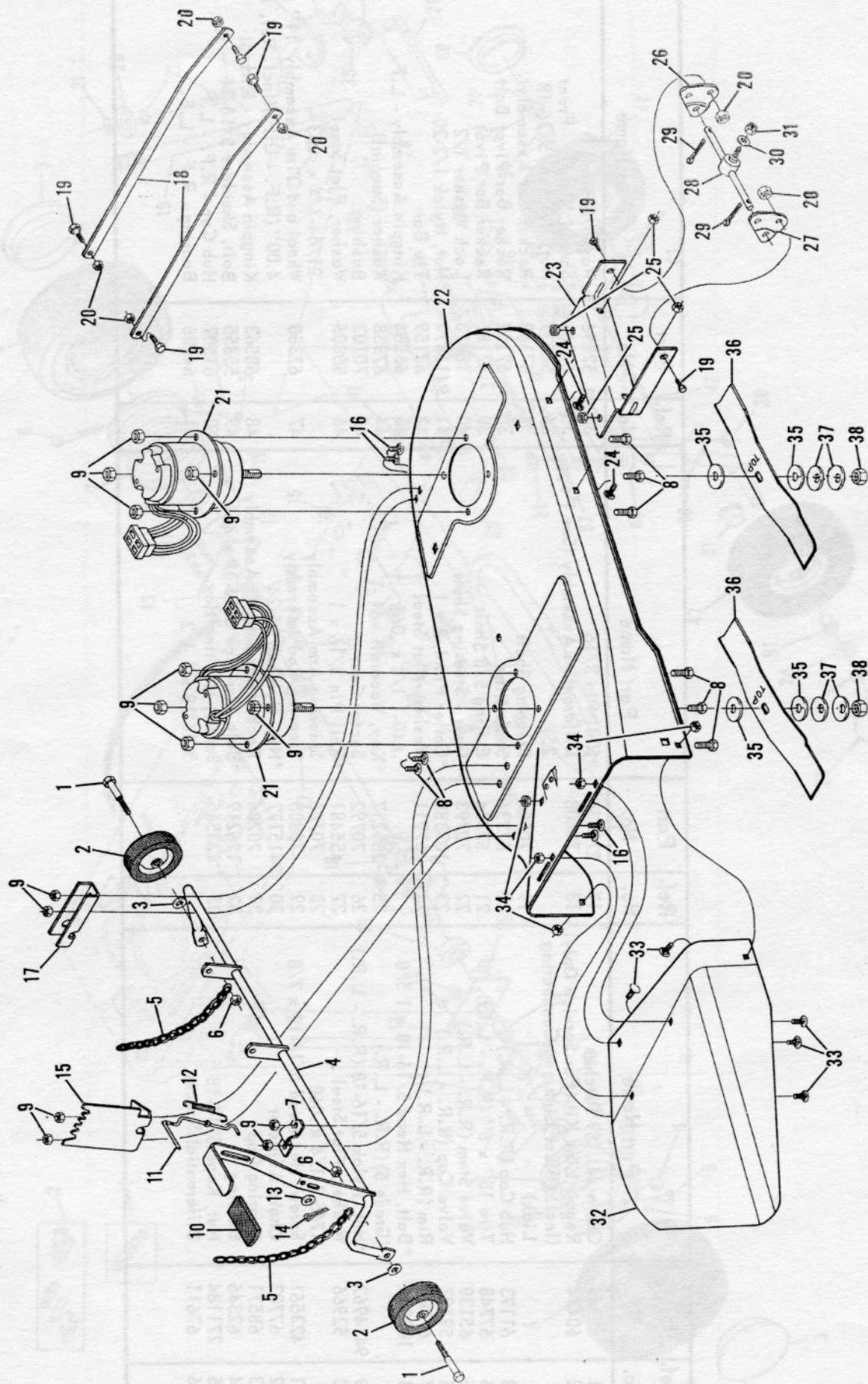




Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name
1	67344	Chain #41 (89 Pitches)	17	273336	*Roll Pin 3/16	34	52896	Washer (Formed)
2	60474	Repair Link Kit (For Service Only) (Incl. Offset Link and Connecting Link)	18	70808	Differential Assembly (See Page 25)	35	67161	Shroud Support - Front
3	61193	Hub Cap (R.R. - L.R.)	19	70804	Steering Shaft	36	55837	Nut, Retainer 5/16-18
4	67748	Tire 15" x 6" (R.R. - L.R.)	20	67336	Shaft Ring	37	67148	Rocker Bar Assembly
5	65139	Valve Stem (R.R. - L.R.)	21	52364	E-Ring 5/8 Shaft	38	67152	Rocker Bar Pivot Bolt
6	59192	Valve Cap (R.R. - L.R.)	22	70793	Gear - Steering Shaft	39	67151	Rocker Bar Pivot
7	67749	Rim (R.R. - L.R.)	23	103385	*Cotter Pin 1/8 x 1	40	18810	Lock Washer 1/2
8	180084	*Bolt, Hex Head 5/16-18 x 1 5/8 (Grade 5) (R.R. - L.R.)	24	57911	Washer, Flat Steel .640-1 1/4 x .063	41	9415474	*Nut, Nylok 1/2-20
9	9414962	*Nut, Nylok 5/16-18 (R.R. - L.R.)	25	281217	*Key, Woodruff #61	42	67159	Tie Bar
10	52966	Washer, Flat Steel .765-1 1/4 x .060	26	70792	Sector Gear	43	68564	Kingpin Assembly - L.F.
11	423561	*Screw, Hex Head 5/16-18 x 7/8	27	455481	*Roll Pin 3/16 x 1	44	67338	Washer (Special)
12	67703	Chain Adjuster	28	70786	Steering Arm Assembly	45	70702	Bushing
13	68571	Bearing Cup	29	70803	Steering Rod Assembly	46	50806	Washer, Flat Steel 21/64-3/4 x .063
14	62346	Bearing	30	9415172	*Nut, Nylok 5/16-24	47	67350	Wheel and Tire Assembly 11" x 4.00" (R.F. - L.F.) (Incl. Ref. #51)
15	271184	Nut, Keps 5/16-18	31	70784	Rocker Bar Support Assembly	48	68563	Kingpin Assembly - R.H.
16	67611	Differential Spacer	32	126219	*Bolt, Carriage 5/16-18 x 3/4	49	55855	Bolt, Shoulder 5/16-24
			33	423565	*Screw, Machine Hex 5/16-18 x 1 1/2	50	61507	Hub Cap - R.F. - L.F.
						51	64906	Bearing - R.F. - L.F.

\*Standard Hardware Items - May Be Purchased Locally

# CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER MODEL NUMBER 131.96860

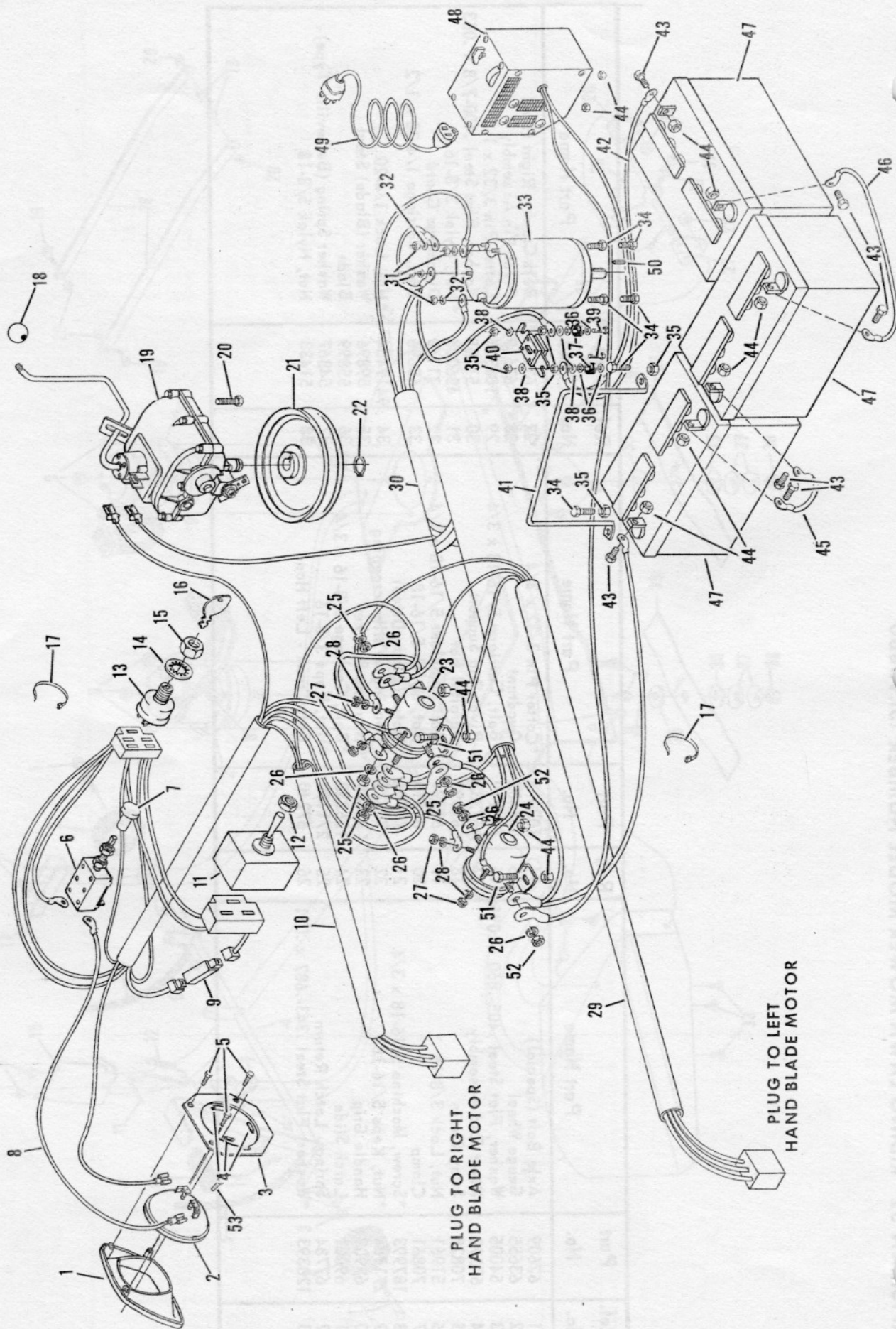




Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name
1	67609	Axle Bolt (Special)	14	103373	*Cotter Pin 3/32 x 3/4	27	67241	Bell Crank - Right Hand
2	63655	Gauge Wheel	15	67402	Quadrant	28	67619	Pivot Pin Assembly
3	54005	Washer, Flat Steel .405-.860 x .095	16	126219	*Bolt, Carriage 5/16-18 x 3/4	29	103374	*Cotter Pin 3/32 x 1
4	67390	Pivot Rod Assembly	17	67337	Pivot Rod Support	30	51785	Washer, Flat Steel .400-7/8 x .063
5	70828	Sway Chain	18	67393	Parallel Bar	31	456004	*Nut, Nyllok 3/8-16
6	51961	Nut, Lock 3/8-16	19	67394	Bolt, Shoulder 5/16-18 x 3/4	32	71169	Discharge Guard
7	70861	Clamp	20	67818	Nut, Nyllok 5/16-18	33	68696	Bolt, Carriage 1/4-20 x 1/2
8	187993	*Screw, Machine 5/16-18 x 3/4	21	70796	Motor (Blade Drive)	34	9419454	*Nut, Lock 1/4-20
9	271184	*Nut, Keps 5/16-18	22	70875	Housing w/Silk Screening	35	59896	Washer (Blade) Steel
10	67903	Handle Grip	23	68579	Housing Bracket	36	55899	Blade
11	69001	Latch Slide	24	126230	*Bolt, Carriage 3/8-16 x 3/4	37	54867	Washer Spring (Belleville Type)
12	67784	Spring - Latch Return	25	271190	*Nut, Keps 3/8-16	38	51433	Nut, Nyllok 5/8-18
13	120393	*Washer, Flat Steel .343-.687 x .071	26	67240	Bell Crank - Left Hand			

\*Standard Hardware Items - May Be Purchased Locally

CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER MODEL NUMBER 131.96860



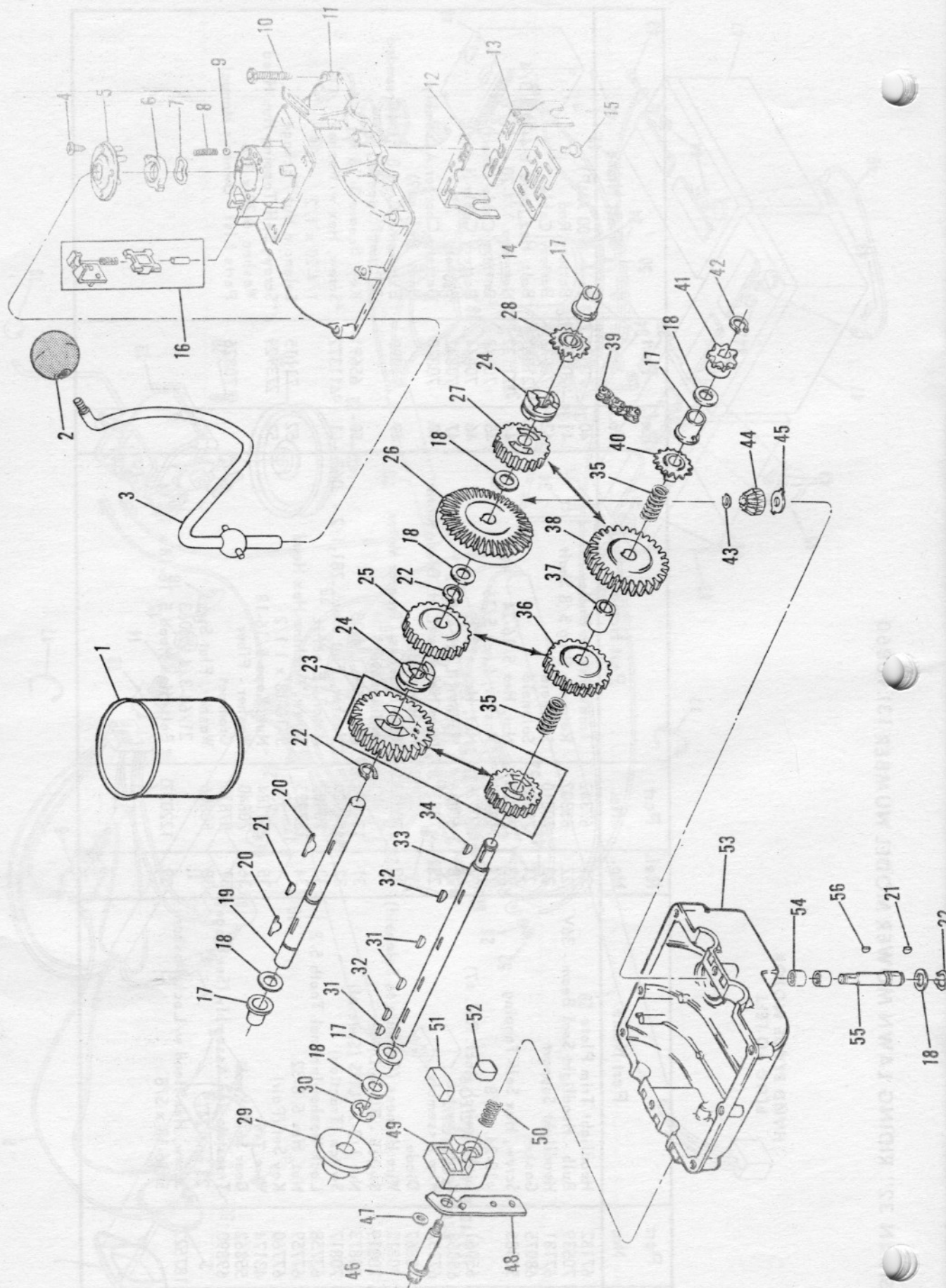


Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name
1	67182	Headlight Trim Plate	21	67342	Transmission Pulley	40	70818	Fuse (100 AMP)
2	70539	Bulb - Headlight Seal Beam - 36V	22	65302	Retainer Ring 5/8 Shaft	41	70797	Battery Rod
3	67181	Headlight Support	23	70810	Solenoid	42	70936	Battery Cable
4	68075	Gasket	24	70809	Solenoid	43	121887	*Bolt, Hex Head 1/4-20 x 3/4
5	56385	Screw, Hex Self-Tapping #10-24 x 3/8	25	124920	*Nut, Hex 5/16-24	44	271172	*Nut, Hex 1/4-20
6	65061	Light Switch (Incl. Ref. #7)	26	112723	*Washer, Lock 5/16	45	70843	Battery Cable (Short)
7	68058	Knob - Switch	27	110923	*Nut, Hex #10-32	46	70844	Battery Cable (Long)
8	67357	Wire Assembly	28	60836	Washer, Lock #10-32	47	70842	Battery
9	70867	Diode	29	70811	Wire Harness (L.H. Blade Motor to Solenoid)	48	70820	Battery Charger Assembly (Incl. Ref. #49)
10	70812	Wire Harness (Console to Solenoid)	30	70813	Wire Harness (Tractor Motor to Solenoid)	49	71099	Extension Cord 8 Ft. (Grounded 3-Prong)(Special)
11	70819	Switch - Blade Drive	31	134551	*Nut, Hex 1/4-20	50	65691	Key, Square 3/16 x 1 1/4
12	70873	Nut 1/2-27 UNS (Special)	32	9414920	*Washer, Flat Steel .281-1/2 x .063	51	9411372	*Screw, Hex w/Washer 1/4-20 x 1/2
13	70817	Switch (Traction)	33	70807	Motor - Electric	52	71115	Solenoid Nut Package
14	67758	Lock Washer Internal Tooth 5/8	34	187993	*Screw, Machine Hex Head 5/16-18 x 1 1/2	53	273929	*Screw, Self-Tapping Hex Head Washer 6-20 x 3/8
15	67759	Nut, Hex 5/8-32	35	271184	*Nut, Keps 5/16-18			Parts List - Owner's Manual
16	67760	Key Set (Pair)	36	70840	Washer - Fiber			
17	43174	Wire Tie	37	57813	Grommet			
18	55862	Gear Shift Knob	38	50806	Washer, Flat Steel 21/64-3/4 x .063			
19	69890	Transmission Assembly (See Page 23 and 24)	39	122027	*Bolt, Hex Head 5/16-18 x 1 1/4			
20	187527	*Screw, Hex Head w/Lock Washer 5/16-18 x 5/8						

\*Standard Hardware Items - May Be Purchased Locally

CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER MODEL NUMBER 131.96860

## TRANSMISSION ASSEMBLY PART NUMBER 69890





## TRANSMISSION ASSEMBLY PART NUMBER 69890

Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name
1	58354	Grease (Shell Darina AX) (1 lb. Can) (Furnished Separately)	18	58318	Washer (.030) Plain	36	58326	Gear - Spur - 25-Tooth
2	55862	Knob - Transmission (Furnished Separately)		58316	Washer (.040) Black	37	58328	Spacer
3	67341	Shift Lever Assembly		58319	Washer (.050) Plated	38	58329	Gear-Spur 30-Tooth
4	39742	Screw, Thread Cutting #10-24 x 7/16	19	64876	(Refer to Service Bulletin for Application of Key #18)	39	58338	Chain
5	68009	Cover - Nylon	20	58342	Shaft, Drive	40	58339	Sprocket 12-Tooth (Special)
6	65276	Insert - Nylon	21	124549	*Key, Hi-Pro, Special	41	65278	Sprocket - 7-Tooth
7	65277	Washer, Wave .758-.645 x .105	22	65302	*Key, Woodruff #9	42	58317	Ring, Retainer
8	65275	Spring - Detent	23	64877	Retainer Ring - 5/8 Shaft (#5100-62)	43	58334	Retainer Ring 1/2 Shaft (#5100-50)
9	65274	Ball - Detent	24	58323	Gear Set Package (Furnished in Set Only for Service)	44	58333	Pinion Bevel 16-Tooth
10	9415800	*Screw, Hex Head Machine 1/4-20 x 1 1/4	25	58327	Clutch Collar	45	64881	Washer, Thrust
11	68022	Housing - Upper	26	58335	Spur - Gear 25-Tooth	46	64261	Bolt, Shoulder (Special) 1/2-3/8 x 24
12	68004	Fork Shifter - R.H.	27	58336	Bevel Gear - 40-Tooth	47	64744	Washer, Plain Steel .505-3/4 x .006
13	68002	Fork Shifter - L.H.	28	58337	Spur Gear - 20-Tooth	48	68023	Actuating Lever Assembly
14	58343	Plate, Lock-Out	29	64260	Sprocket - 12-Tooth (Special)	49	70103	Brake Jaw
15	58344	Screw, Shoulder (Special)	30	52364	Brake, Disc	50	64258	Spring Compression
16	70303	Switch Kit Assembly	31	431787	E-Ring 5/8 Shaft	51	70104	Puck, Friction
17	58320	Bearing, Flange	32	124543	*Key, Woodruff #3	52	64259	Puck, Friction
			33	64880	Shaft, Output	53	64882	Housing - Lower
			34	124544	*Key, Woodruff #4	54	58331	Bearing - Needle
			35	58324	Spring - Compression	55	58330	Shaft, Input
						56	124542	*Key, Woodruff #2

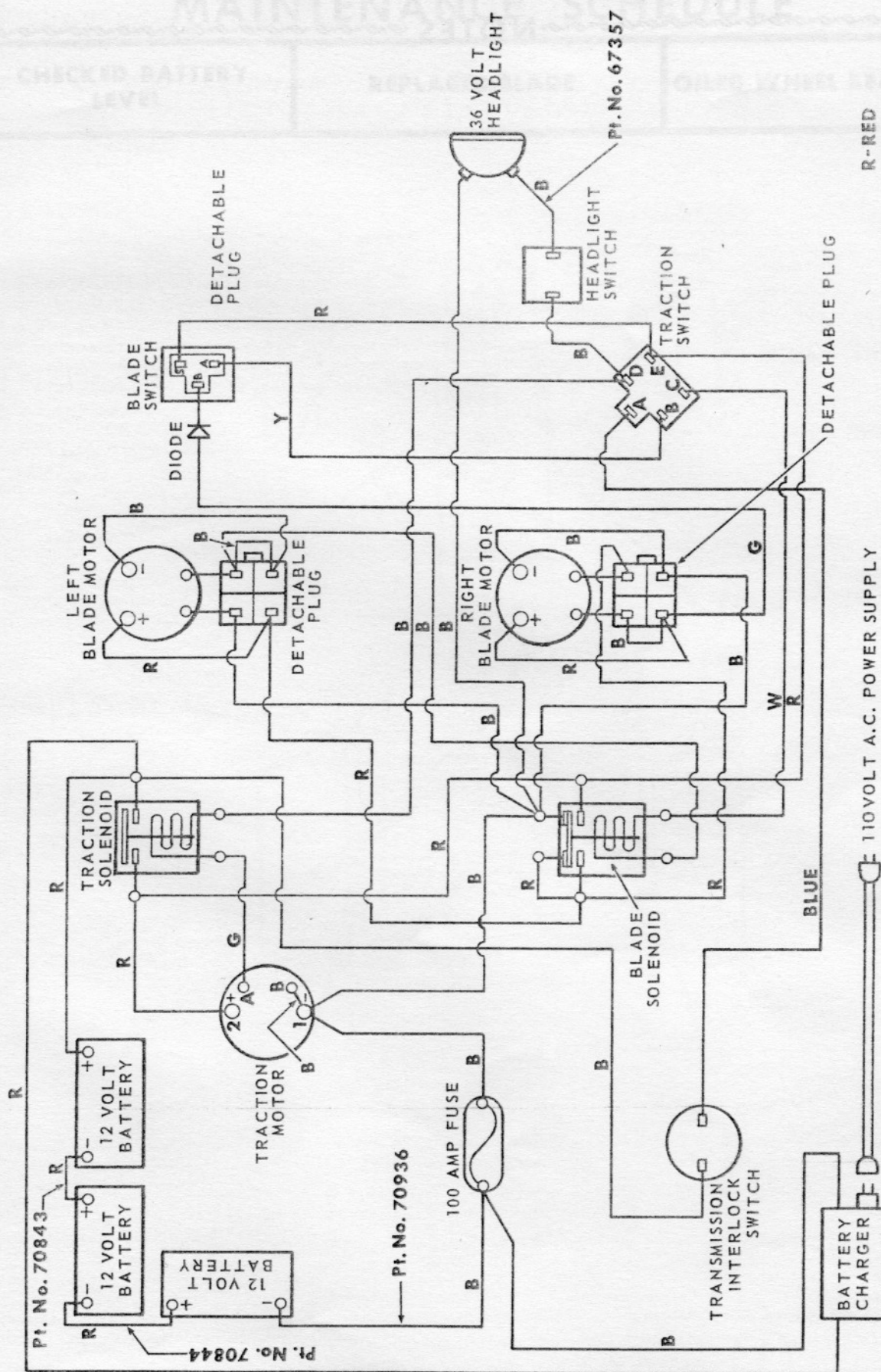
\*Standard Hardware Items - May Be Purchased Locally

**DIFFERENTIAL AND AXLE ASSEMBLY PART NUMBER 70808**



Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part No.	Part Name
1	67927	Rear Axle Assembly - Short	4	66681	Gear - Miter	7	66677	Bolt - Differential 5/16-24 x 2 5/8
2	66679	Bolt, Sprocket 5/16-24 x 1 1/16	5	67926	Rear Axle Assembly - Long	8	66675	Bolt - Differential 5/16-24 x 1 1/4
3	66685	Differential Sprocket - 40 Tooth	6	66676	Housing - Differential	9	66678	Nut, Lock - Stoner Flange 5/16-24





R-RED  
W-WHITE  
B-BLACK  
Y-YELLOW  
G-GREEN

# NOTES

6 CELL  
 1-LEVER  
 8-DECK  
 14-SPRINGS  
 5-RED

CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER MODEL NUMBER 101.90840

## DIFFERENTIAL AND AXLE ASSEMBLY PART NUMBER 70808



Ref. No.	Part Name	Ref. No.	Part Name
1	CHRYSLER BALL BEARINGS	7	66577 Ball Differential 3 1/2" Dia
2	1/2" Dia. Spring 14-1/2" X 1 1/2"	8	66578 Ball Differential 3 1/2" Dia
3	1/2" Dia. Spring 14-1/2" X 1 1/2"	9	66579 Ball Differential 3 1/2" Dia

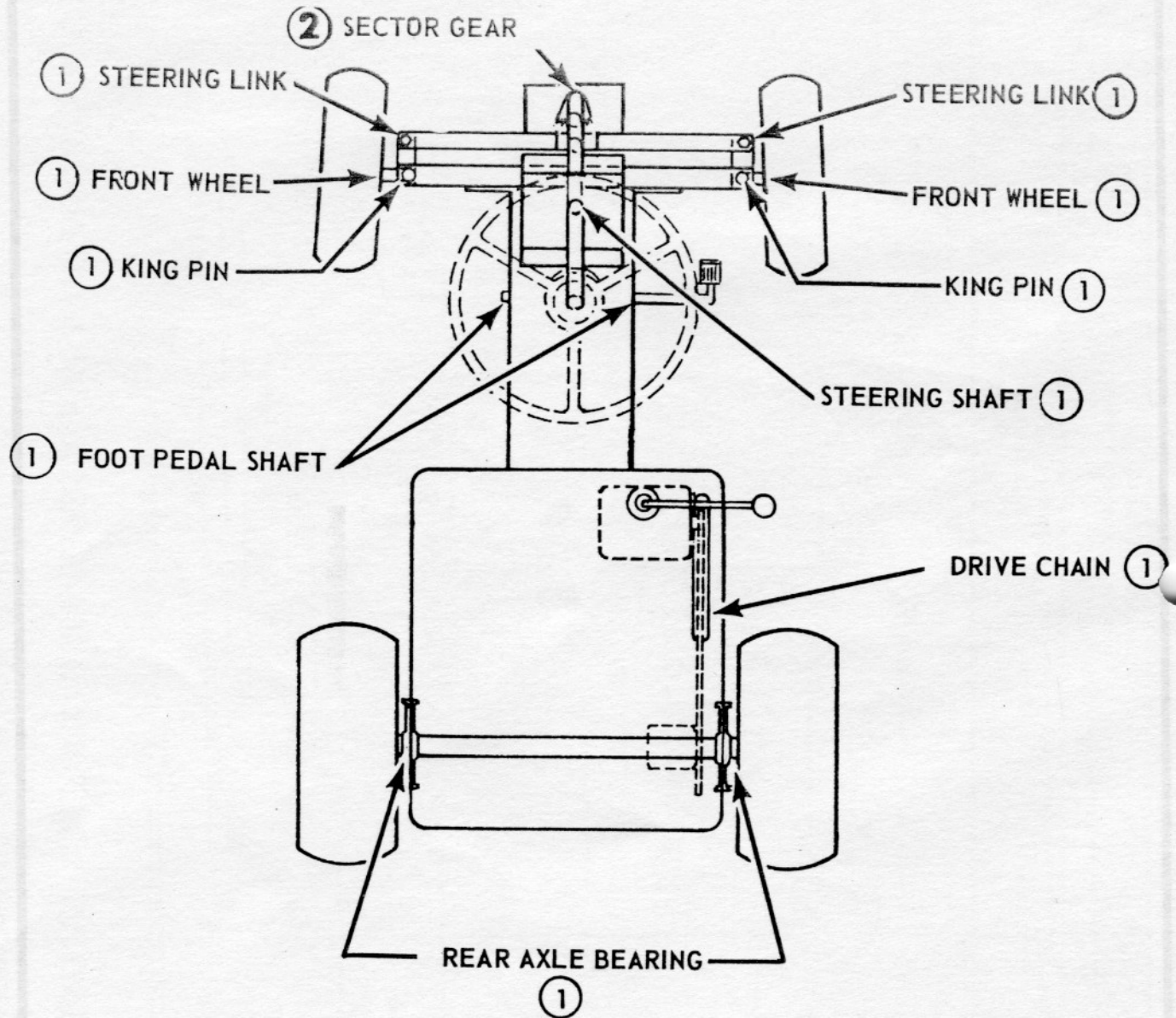
CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER MODEL NUMBER 101.90840



# MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

CHECKED BATTERY LEVEL	REPLACED BLADE	OILED WHEEL BEARINGS

# LUBRICATION CHART



**① SAE 30 MOTOR OIL EVERY 5 TO 10 HOURS**

**② CHASSIS GREASE EVERY 10 HOURS**



## accessories

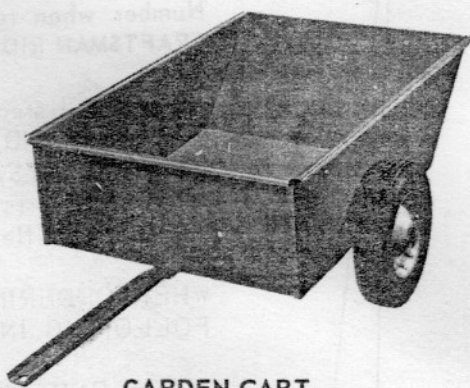
THE BELOW RECOMMENDED ACCESSORIES ARE CURRENT AND WERE AVAILABLE AT THE TIME THIS MANUAL WAS PRINTED.

### GRASS CATCHER

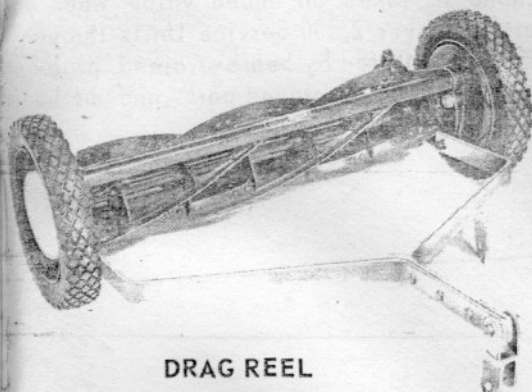
A grass catcher is available for this model mower as a very desirable accessory. The catcher eliminates any need for raking by picking up all clippings and leaves for a well-groomed look.

Grass catchers are available through any Sear's retail or catalog sales unit.

Be sure to provide the model number of this mower when ordering.



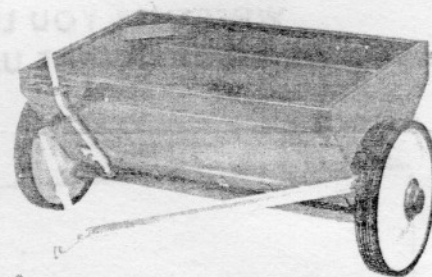
GARDEN CART



DRAG REEL



LAWN SWEEPER



FERTILIZER AND SEEDER

AVAILABLE AT YOUR NEAREST SEARS  
RETAIL STORE OR CATALOG SALES UNIT

Sears

# owners manual **CRAFTSMAN 32" RIDING LAWN MOWER**

**MODEL NO.  
131.96860**

## **HOW TO ORDER REPAIR PARTS**

**SEARS SERVICE  
IS AT YOUR SERVICE  
WHEREVER YOU LIVE  
OR MOVE IN THE U.S.A.**

The Model Number will be found on a plate attached to the rear of the Chassis Assembly. Always mention the Model Number when requesting service or repair parts for your CRAFTSMAN RIDING LAWNMOWER.

All parts listed herein may be ordered through SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO. or SIMPSON-SEARS LIMITED. When ordering parts by mail, selling prices will be furnished. On request or parts will be shipped at prevailing prices and you will be billed accordingly.

WHEN ORDERING REPAIR PARTS, ALWAYS GIVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AS SHOWN IN THIS LIST

1. The PART NUMBER
2. The PART DESCRIPTION
3. The MODEL NUMBER  
**131.96860**
4. The NAME OF ITEM  
Riding Lawnmower

Your Sears Merchandise takes on added value when you discover that Sears has over 2,000 Service Units throughout the country. Each is staffed by Sears-trained, professional technicians using Sears approved parts and methods.