

Fall Garden Checklist

Planting

- Container Tips:** Accessorize with twigs or sculpture; Edit throughout the season; store in a dry location
- Planting Perennials, Shrubs, Trees:** Best to plant in spring, Plant at least 6 weeks before ground freezes to give them a chance to establish roots, Water well until ground freezes, Do not fertilize
- Bulbs: When and Where to Plant:** When temps are consistently cool (55 degrees) and until ground freezes, Most bulbs prefer moist, well-drained soil in growing season and drier soil when dormant, Remove all debris and/or cover area to discourage squirrels
- Forcing Bulbs:** Need 12-14 wks of cooling; Good bulbs for forcing: Hyacinths, Tulips, Daffodils, Irises, Muscari; Paperwhite Narcissus & Amaryllis need no cooling period; Paperwhites with strong stems & milder fragrance: 'Israel', 'Nazareth', 'Jerusalem' or 'Bethlehem; Try 1 part alcohol to 7 parts water to control growth after initial watering
- Garlic:** Plant in October when soil temp is $>50^{\circ}$; Select largest bulbs and plant each clove about 6-8" apart; Cover with mulch for winter protection and leave on in spring/summer for weed barrier; Cut scapes after they are 10" long; Harvest when there are still about 5 green leaves (August); Dry for 4-6 weeks; Store in area with 45-55 % humidity, 50-70 degrees

Storing

- Early September**
 1. Begin collecting cuttings & seeds
 2. Bring houseplants inside (when night temps get into the 40's), Acclimate to indoors by moving to a shady spot, reducing water, no fertilizer, wash before bringing inside
 3. Stop using fertilizer except for containers
- Seeds** Seed-longevity chart at www.fedcoseeds.com/seeds/seed_saving.htm
- Dry Corms & Bulb Storage** (Gladiolus) Dig after first frost and after foliage dies, brush off soil and trim off all foliage; Let dry for 2-3 weeks; Place in a paper bag or onion sack and hang in dark, dry place
- Tuber Storage** (Dahlia, Canna, Caladium, Calla Lily, Elephant Ear, Tara) Dig up after first frost, trim so just the tuber is left; Allow plants to cure to one to two days in warm, dry place; Place in a damp (not wet) peat moss, inside a storage container that will exclude light and place in cool, dark place.
- Tools** Keep them sharp; Store them dry; Keep them clean; drain hoses

Clean-up & Maintenance

Vegetables and Annuals

- Prune vines of squash, melons, cucumbers and tomatoes 3-4 weeks before first frost so existing fruit ripens faster
- Clean up annuals and compost or if diseased dispose

Perennials

Don't deadhead for self-seeders you want or for winter interest (studies show that perennials do better through the winter if left standing), Pinch off faded blooms for plants you want to avoid self-seeding

Resource: *The Well-Tended Perennial Garden*, Tracy DiSabato-Aust

Fall Lawn Care

1. Mow 3 ½ to 4 inches, longer grass shades roots reducing water loss and outcompete annual weeds, in the fall mow shorter to 1 inch to avoid snow mold, diseases
2. Let clipping fall to recycle nutrients, they do not lead to thatch problems
3. Remove or mow to mulch leaves in the fall
4. Fertilize:
 - a. Low quality – mid-fall
 - b. Medium quality – late May, early Sept
 - c. High quality – late May, early July, early Sept (can skip July if using a mulching mower)

Shrub & Tree Maintenance

1. **Spring** – Prune non-flowering shrubs including Pine & Spruce
2. **Summer** – Prune spring flowering shrubs after flowers have faded
3. **Late Winter** – Prune dormant trees and summer-flowering shrubs

Planning

Observing and Recording

Keep a garden journal; Organize data; Photography; Take note of first appearance of plant or birds or insects; Mark beginnings and endings (1st frost, temperature)

Extend the Growing Season

1. Raised Beds
2. Mulch
3. Cold Frames & Hoop Houses
4. Forcing bulbs and branches

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