

OCTOBER GARDENING CHECKLIST



- October is still a great time to plant, especially trees and shrubs. Apply Miracle-Gro Quick Start or Bio-tone to establish roots quickly. See our *"Creating Winter Interest"* gardening guide for plant suggestions.
- Plant fall Mums, flowering Kale, Pansies and Violas for a showy fall display. Add the finishing touches with some pumpkins, gourds, cornstalks and straw bales.
- Quick Tip: Clean and preserve your pumpkin's skin by washing it with 1 part bleach to 10 parts water solution.
- Continue planting bulbs until the ground freezes; planting depth is easily achieved by multiplying the bulb's length by 3. Apply Bulb-tone or Bone Meal to spring bulbs as you plant them.
- Plant extra bulbs in containers, sink them in the garden, and after 10-15 weeks bring the pots indoors to force.
- This month is your last chance to plant, transplant and divide perennials to get their roots established before winter.
- Any perennials in containers need to be sunk into the garden holding area or brought into the garage for the winter.
- Deadhead established perennials; cut any back to the ground that have yellowed and are dying. Leave up any that provide winter interest or food for the birds including grasses, coneflower, Sedum, and clematis.
- For first year perennials, including new fall mums, it is best to let them die back naturally. The dead foliage will provide natural winter protection, plus provides a marker where the plant should come back next spring.
- Prune any damaged or diseased growth on woody plants; wait until winter to do any other major pruning or shaping.
- Continue preserving your harvest by freezing, drying or canning your herbs, veggies, and all the fruits of your labor.
- Store harvested seeds in a paper envelope in a cool, dry place like the pantry for planting next spring.
- Dig up annual herbs for an indoor window-sill garden for greens you can use all winter. Do this before heavy frost.
- Donate any extra produce to your local food bank.
- Start a new garden by placing one layer of wet newspaper on top of a lawn area, cover with shredded leaves and lawn clippings then cover with black plastic and secure the sides with rocks or lawn staples. Uncover in the spring, till, and your bed will be ready to plant!
- As annuals and vegetables start dying back; remove them from the garden, compost or discard them as you go.
- Start composting! Layer your grass, leaves, and cuttings from the garden and apply a compost accelerator on top.



- Plan on slowly transitioning houseplants/tropicals from outdoors to indoors; after a couple of mild frosts, rinse them with a hard stream of water to remove insects, bring into the garage or under covered patio, apply a systemic insecticide to the soil, wait a week, cut growth back to a manageable height and shape, and bring them indoors.
- If you have Poinsettias or Christmas cacti, now is the time to start triggering them into flower. Please see our "*Common Holiday Plants*" care sheet.
- Apply a pre-emergent like Preen to established landscape beds, stopping any fall weed seed germination.
- Slow down on watering especially if rainfall is plentiful. If not, continue irrigation until soil freezes.
- Now is a good time to spray your foundation, window frames, etc. with Ortho Home Defense to keep the insects out over winter.
- Spray all the deer favorites with Plantskydd, Repels-All, or Liquid Fence before a hard frost.
- If it is too late to spray repellents, wrap the deer favorites with burlap or mesh fencing to keep them from browsing.
- Protect roses, hydrangeas and broadleaf evergreens with burlap, rose cones, etc. These plants are very susceptible to winter wind and weather damage, which can adversely affect next year's growth and flowering.
- If you forgot in September you still have time to seed a new lawn or over-seed to thicken the old lawn thru the end of October (grade, seed, rake it in, cover with ¼" soil, fertilize, water).
- Scotts PatchMaster is still effective at filling in damaged lawn areas thru October too.
- If you have not applied a lawn food in the past 6-8 weeks fertilize the lawn with a fall formulation or Winterizer.
- Continue to treat broadleaf weeds in the lawn with Chickweed & Clover Killer, Ortho Weed-B-Gon MAX or Bonide Weed Beater Ultra.

