

NOVEMBER TO DO LIST

Here, in checklist format, are suggestions gleaned from a number of sources. These tips for November gardening apply to suburban gardens in our zone, zone 7. If you have any questions call me at 443 420-1335.

Trees and Shrubs

- Mulch trees and shrubs. Leave the base of the trunk bare, (no mulch volcanos spouting trees, like you see in some commercial landscaping jobs!) then mulch out to the drip line if desired.
- Water woody plants, if fall rain is lacking (i.e. if we get less than ½ inch of rain in any seven day period), until the soil freezes or through the end of December, whichever comes first.
- Prune only dead wood at this time.
- You can still have us install plants during the cool fall weather.
- Provide wind protection for marginally hardy shrubs.
- Watch fall color of your woody plants and consider adding red, purple, or yellow with future plantings.

Lawn Care

- Keep mowing at 2 to 2 1/2 inches for healthy grass.
- Water the lawn as needed while grass continues to grow.
- Keep leaves raked off of grass. Mulch-mow any light leaf cover right into the lawn.
- If you have only applied fertilizer once this fall apply the second application this month.
- Apply pelletized lime now if needed. **DO NOT APPLY** within two weeks of applying fertilizer.
- Cold zone gardeners may need to winterize (drain) irrigation systems.
- Hand weed but do not bother to use chemical herbicides or weed preventers as they require warm temperatures to be effective.

Perennials, Annuals, Vines

- Remove dead material to the compost or trash.
- Remove durable stakes and store them for use next year. Remove twigs used for support and use them in compost.
- Last chance to collect any seeds, or leave seed heads for winter interest and winter bird feeding.
- Dig tubers of dahlias, caladiums, and other cold sensitive plants. Even if frost has killed the tops of such plants, the tubers may be fine. Dry well, in the sun if possible, before storing in a frost free place.
- Top flower beds with finished compost before the ground freezes; mulch flowerbeds after the ground freezes. Do not let compost or mulch cover the center of perennials and hardy plants, do not mulch iris roots.

Bulbs

- Plant tulips now; snap up a last minute bargain. Tulips can be planted later than most other hardy spring flowering bulbs.
- Plant any other bulbs you've already bought but think twice on clearance on narcissus and small hardy bulbs. Their growth may lag with this late planting.

Vegetables and Small Fruits

- Clean up garden beds. Put the waste into a hot managed compost or remove to the trash or burn pile.
- Plant garlic.
- Strawberry beds need three to four inches of straw mulch now, for winter protection.
- Red and gold raspberries may be cut to the ground now to rejuvenate the planting.

Containers

- Empty ceramic and inexpensive terra cotta pots and let them dry for storage. They'll crack if they freeze while damp
- Clean up spent plants, empty and store pots, or use containers for small evergreens, hardy bulbs, or a seasonal display.
- Used potting soil can be composted, added to garden beds, or refreshed with a generous amount of finely chipped bark.

Rain barrels

- Before freezing weather, empty and clean barrels and their fittings and hoses. Store barrels so they don't collect rain.
- Reconfigure downspouts if needed for proper drainage while not in rain-collection mode.

Soils and Composting

- Take a soil test now, unless we just had a massive rainfall. That rain could skew the test results.
- Apply pelletized lime now, if needed (again not within two weeks of applying fertilizer). The lime will begin to work during winter and soil will be ready in spring.
- Build leafy composts, and save extra leaves in temporary bins or bags.