

OCTOBER



PLANT

- Continue planting new trees, perennials, shrubs and ornamental grasses.
- Do not plant magnolia, boxwood and holly in the fall. They suffer from wind and cold if they have not been completely established.
- Transplant deciduous trees and shrubs only after their leaves have fallen in late October or November. Best time to plant and transplant perennials.
- Tree peonies. They like 1/3 to 1/2 days' shade and good drainage. Dig a hole 2' deep and 3' wide. Mix the soil with damp peat moss or rotted sawdust and 6 trowels of bone meal and 1 trowel of limestone. Plant very deep. The top of the graft should be at least 6" deep.
- Lily bulbs must be planted as soon as they arrive as they are never dormant. Do not mix fertilizer into soil when planting. Most bulbs need no more than 4" of soil above the bulb. Mulch with chopped leaves of straw, pine needles or natural leaf mold. Water well after planting.
- If you can't plant bulbs when you receive them, store them at 65 degrees or below until you can.
- For spring bloom, plant crocus, snowdrop; winter aconite, anemone, glory-of-the-snow, Dutch hybrid crocus, bulbous iris, scilla, daffodil, narcissus, and, if deer are not a problem, tulips. Plant where they will get at least 1/2 day sun and where the soil drains well (standing water will rot bulbs). To improve heavy clay soil, work in composted material and cover with hardwood mulch. Use bulb fertilizer high in phosphorus at the root of the bulb.
- October is the time to set out pansies so they have a chance to become established before the cold weather comes. Sprinkle a teaspoon of slow release fertilizer around each pansy when planting. They are best spaced 6" to 8" apart. Additional feedings of 5-10-5 monthly in winter will help.



FERTILIZE

- Do not fertilize or prune established shrubs and plants in the fall.
- Late October is the best time to fertilize deciduous trees. All food will be absorbed by tree roots over the next 6 weeks, stored in the trunk, and then circulated to the leaf and flower buds in February.
- Fertilize clematis with lime, and iris with bone meal.

WATER

- Keep watering and mowing new grass; lawn should be 3 inches high going into winter; rake lawn regularly-heavy leaf fall can smother new grass.
- Continue to water shrubs weekly unless there is at least 1/2 inch of rain. Shrubs suffer increased danger of winter damage if they are dried out when entering the winter season, but don't over water.

CHORES

- Fall is the best time to have your soil tested because many problems can be corrected by lime or other additives in the dormant season.
- Clean up all old debris and leaves under shrubs and trees. Large leaves from maples, tulip poplars etc. can trap in mold, and mushrooms. Remove annuals.
- Magnolia leaves can be saved for holiday decorations or can be left under the tree since they create their own fertilizer.
- Start a compost pile if you don't have one. Add leaves and vegetable matter and cuttings from discarded plants if not diseased.
- You can lessen the stress to the plants by transplanting them on a cloudy or drizzly day. Do not fertilize yet.
- Tie up climbing roses with rag strips to prevent wind damage. Cut weak or dead canes all the way to the ground.
- Gather materials from your garden and roadsides for winter arrangements and hang upside down to air dry in warm room. Ornamental grasses also dry easily.

- Potted plants and winter tender ones can be stored in a cool garage or basement all winter. Water every 2 weeks or so but less often if temps are below 30 degrees. Resume fertilizing and watering in March to prepare them for re-entry to a warm protected location outdoors in April.



- Bring remaining cacti, house plants and hanging baskets indoors after washing thoroughly and spraying with insecticide soap to control insects and disease. Turn plants each time you water for even exposure to light.
- Remove bulbs and corms from pots outdoors, clean and hang in mesh bags in garage or tubers can be dusted with sulphur and stored in vermiculite in cellar or garage. Label bags with specific name of plant and color.
- Clean clay pots after scrubbing off scaled on matter. Soften crusty salt deposits by soaking pots in a 1 to 5 vinegar and water solution. Then scrub again.
- Sterilize all pots and containers by dipping them into a 1 to 9 mixture of chlorine bleach and water. Do not combine this with vinegar. Do not combine bleach with any other liquid other than water.
- It is important to cut phlox stems and peony stalks to ground level this month to prevent the spread of powdery mildew or blight. Place leaves and stems into sealed plastic bag, then clean away any debris on ground.

TIPS

- ***Plant paperwhite bulbs in pebbles and water up to base in a cool dark room. When roots are developed and tips are green, bring into a warm sunny room to force bloom. To keep them standing straight add 1 cup of gin to 1 gal of water to refresh plants. Start bulbs at one week intervals to prolong blooms. Discard spent plants.***
- ***A ripe apple placed in a paper bag or closed container with green tomatoes will encourage the tomatoes to turn red.***
- ***Continue feeding birds suet thru winter.***
- ***You can sow seeds of Shirley poppies directly into the garden row for flowers next spring. Before you plant, be sure the soil is loose and well drained. After sowing seeds, rake lightly to cover with soil.***
- ***Most ornamental grasses need full sun. Try Japanese sedge (Carex morrowii) in a shady border or Liriope.***