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## FALL GARDENING CHECKLIST

**In cold-winter climates fall signals the end of the growing season, yet it is one of the busiest times of the year for the gardener. The seasoned gardener knows that a crisp autumn day is an ideal time to clean up the garden and prepare it for spring planting, rather than toil with the soil on a blustery day in March. What is dug in this fall will bring a beautiful harvest next spring.**

### FALL CLEAN-UP

Clean up the vegetable garden and annual beds and cut back perennials after the first frost. This eliminates cozy hiding places for insects and other garden pests. The lawn should be thoroughly raked for the same reason. Besides harboring insects, a cover of leaves will smother the lawn and retard spring growth. The last mowing should be at a low setting. Just before the lawn freezes, fertilize again for a beautiful yard in the spring. Weeds should be picked to get rid of seeds hoping to germinate and grow next spring. Give your plants a fall check-up and look for weak or diseased plants. Eliminate any plants that might infect or take energy from neighboring plants.

### PRUNING

Pruning is a late fall activity which should be done after the trees and shrubs drop their leaves, which means they are in a dormant stage. Inspect trees and shrubs for dead wood or infected limbs. Pruning will improve shape, allow sun and air in and create a healthier plant. Overcrowding and crossing branches will slow the plant's growth. Be sure to pick up Andy's Guide to Pruning for proper procedures and helpful hints.

### FERTILIZING

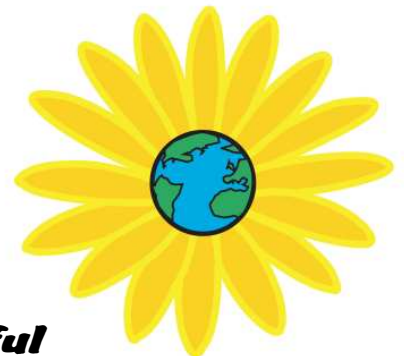
Spring planting will be more effective with fall's preparation. Work fertilizer and composted organic matter into the soil before the ground freezes. Next spring, when the soil begins to thaw and absorb melting snow and spring rains, the nutrients will be dispersed to feed your first plantings.

### PLANTING

Fall planting is one of the secrets to a beautiful spring garden. Fall planted bulbs and perennials will come to life next spring after their long winter hibernation. The snowdrops and colorful crocus will be the first spot of color poking their heads through the melting snow in early spring, soon to be followed by the trumpets of the daffodils. Lawns, trees and shrubs should also be planted in early fall to develop root systems that will prepare them for the rigors of summer. A lawn started in September will be thick and lush next May.

### MULCHING

Mulch used in spring and summer to control weed growth is a little different from the mulch used in winter. Winter mulch should not be dense and heavy. Create your own mulch from shredded tree branches, pine boughs and small leaves, which should be put down when the ground is frozen in your region. This will help protect your tender plants from severe winter weather. There are also many commercially prepared mulches available. In the spring, mulch should be raked away to the compost pile.



***Making the world beautiful  
one flower at a time.***