

# November Gardening Checklist

This is still a great time to plant trees and shrubs, although the selection at local nurseries and garden shops may not be that extensive. Many garden centers have much less inventory in the fall than they do in the spring, when temperatures are beginning to warm up and more people have gardening on their minds.

If planning to order any seeds for planting next spring, go ahead and order them now—you'll be more certain of getting the varieties you want, and you'll have the seeds available once you're ready to plant.

There is still time to set out cool-season bedding plants, such as pansies, violas, snapdragons, dianthus, and flowering kale. When looking for transplants to purchase, make sure to select short, stocky plants with good green color.

Don't get in a hurry to prune woody plants. Late December through early February is usually the best time to prune trees and shrubs. Remember: Don't top trees! Severe pruning reduces the life of trees and allows large entry points for diseases and insects.

Reduce the fertilization of indoor plants from late October until mid-March. An exception would be plants in an atrium or well-lighted window. Also, be extra vigilant about checking house plants for watering: the extra warmth and lack of humidity due to winter heating in our homes causes plants to dry out more quickly.

Once Bermuda grass lawns begin to go dormant, reduce irrigation frequency to about once per month. Dormant turf grass is yellow and appears dead, but it still needs some water in order to be healthy next spring when it begins to grow again. With the temperatures much lower now, you can also reduce irrigation on fescue and other winter grasses to about once every week to 10 days.

Evergreen trees and shrubs in our landscapes frequently suffer from a lack of moisture during the dry months of winter. Make sure to water evergreens about once per month to ensure healthy growth all through the winter and into next spring. Deciduous trees and shrubs that go dormant in the winter also need adequate moisture, even though they are not actively growing. Watering once every four to six weeks should be adequate for most dormant trees and shrubs.

Drain gasoline from lawn mowers and other power garden tools and run the engine until fuel in the carburetor is used up. Also, drain and store any garden hoses and watering equipment that will not be used again until next spring.