

Garden calendar

January

- ✓ Order seed catalogues or visit seed websites.
- ✓ Plan garden space. Sketch garden plans on paper; include plants you want to grow, their spacing requirements, arrangement and number of plants needs. Remember, the ideal spot needs to have six to eight hours of direct sunlight daily. The ideal garden location has a north-south layout, is level, close to water, and not in competition with the roots of trees and shrubs.

February

- ✓ Test germination of any leftover seeds. Place 10 seeds between a moist paper towel and cover with a thin layer of soil. Keep seeds warm and moist. If less than six seeds germinate, fresh seed should be purchased.
- ✓ Order seeds.

March

- ✓ Prepare supply list for garden, including fertilizer, tools, transplants, materials for staking, and mulch.
- ✓ Take a soil sample for a soil test as soon as it has thawed.

April

- ✓ Prepare soil when it is dry enough. Take a handful of soil and squeeze. If the soil crumbles when you open your hand, it is ready for planting.
- ✓ Fertilize based on soil test recommendations.
- ✓ Plant cool season crops; onion, beets, lettuce, spinach, carrots and radishes.

May

- ✓ Plant seeds of cool weather crops for the second and third times, approximately two weeks apart.
- ✓ Thin seedlings of crops planted earlier to their proper spacing.
- ✓ Harden off transplants by setting them outdoors during the day for seven to 14 days before you intend to plant them. Plants should be in shade and protected from wind for a few days during this process. Maintain soil moisture so transplants do not wilt.
- ✓ Plant warm season seeds after the danger of frost is past ([link to frost dates table](#)), including cucumbers, squash, pumpkins and melons.
- ✓ Plant the hardened-off transplants of peppers, tomatoes and eggplant.
- ✓ Harvest early plantings of radishes, spinach and lettuce.
- ✓ For succession plantings, plant warm season crops where cool season crops have been harvested.
- ✓ Mulch around plants and in rows to keep soil moist and reduce soil compaction.
- ✓ Monitor crops for insect and disease problems regularly. If you discover a problem, identify its source and take control measures if needed. Contact your local Extension office.

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June

- ✓ Thin vegetables seeded in May to proper spacing.
- ✓ Plant successive crops of beans every two weeks until the end of the month.
- ✓ Continue to harvest frequently as crops mature.
- ✓ Remove cool season crops as they bolt (form seed stalks). Additional plantings may be made of lettuce, spinach, radishes; they need some shade and cooler temperatures so planting them under taller crops will extend the harvest.
- ✓ Stake tomatoes for improved health and easier harvest. Remove suckers (branches that form where the leaf joins the stem) when they are one inch to 1.5 inches long.
- ✓ Weed the garden. Weeds compete with vegetable plants for nutrients and moisture.
- ✓ Monitor regularly for insect and disease problems and take needed control measures to limit damage.

July

- ✓ Continue to thin seedlings as seed package directs.
- ✓ Water during dry conditions.
- ✓ Harvest crops regularly to encourage further production.
- ✓ Cover potato tubers, carrot shoulders and onion bulbs with soil to prevent development of green color. Soil or mulch may be used to keep them covered.
- ✓ After harvesting central heads of broccoli, allow the plants to produce side heads for an extended harvest.
- ✓ Garden crops can be given nitrogen fertilizer at the beginning of July. Wait until tomatoes, peppers and eggplant have set some fruit before you fertilize them. Work fertilizer into soil a few inches away from the plants, then water. Do not allow the fertilizer to touch the plant stems.
- ✓ Continue to harvest frequently as crops mature.
- ✓ Keep the garden weeded.

August

- ✓ Harvest crops frequently as they ripen for maximum flavor and continuing harvest.
- ✓ Plant cool crops for fall harvest; radish, spinach, lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts.
- ✓ Don't forget to thin seedlings as directed on seed packages.
- ✓ Continue to monitor regularly for insect and disease problems.
- ✓ Water during dry conditions.
- ✓ Keep the garden weeded.

September

- ✓ Harvest onions and garlic after the tops yellow and fall, then cure them in a warm, dry, well-ventilated area for storage. Their necks should be free of moisture when fully cured in approximately one week.
- ✓ Harvest potatoes after the plant tops yellow and die. Potatoes also need to be cured before storage.
- ✓ Thin fall crops that were planted last month.
- ✓ Pay attention to weather; first killing frost usually happens this month. Cover warm season crops with newspapers, sheets, or some other material that will trap heat overnight. Remove these covers once the sun is up the next morning.
- ✓ Cole crops (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts), carrots, parsnips, lettuce and spinach tolerate some frost.
- ✓ When harvesting pumpkins, gourds and winter squash, cut fruit from vine leaving a portion of stem attached. This will improve the storage life of the fruit.
- ✓ As harvest ends, clean up plants and add them to the composting pile. Do not compost plants suffering from disease.
- ✓ Store leftover garden seed in a cool, dry place. A sealable jar with a layer of silica gel or powdered milk in the bottom works well.

October

- ✓ Complete final harvest of tender crops when cold temperatures become frequent. Partially ripe tomatoes can be picked and ripened indoors.
- ✓ Harvest gourds when stems begin to brown and dry. Cure at 70-80°F for two to four weeks in dry, well ventilated location.
- ✓ Cole crops and root crops taste better after a freeze.
- ✓ Harvest Brussels sprouts as they develop along the stem.
- ✓ Harvest pumpkins and winter squash when rind is hard and fully colored. Store in cool location until ready to use.
- ✓ After a killing frost, clean up vegetable beds and add plant material to compost pile. This will reduce amount of overwintering pests and diseases.
- ✓ Before the ground freezes, plant rhubarb, asparagus, garlic and shallots.

- ✓ Soil may be prepared for spring planting by removing weeds and adding organic matter (compost, leaves).
- ✓ Evaluate your garden and make notes to help plan next year's effort. Note favorite varieties for flavor, disease resistance, and performance. Note location of insect, disease and weed problems. Planting crops in different locations in consecutive years can reduce these problems.
- ✓ Carve your Halloween jack-o-lantern.

November

- ✓ This is an excellent time to have your soil tested because the soil lab is not as busy this time of year.

December

- ✓ Enjoy stored, frozen or canned crops from your garden.

Notes:

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