

October Garden Tips

GENERAL

- ☼ Remove plant debris from the garden and compost.
- ☼ [Have garden soil tested](#) every 3 to 5 years.
- ☼ If overwintering planted containers, either move to area that won't freeze or mulch entire container.

HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- ☼ Pot spring-flowering bulbs to force into bloom indoors.
- ☼ Water indoor plants less frequently, and discontinue fertilizer as plant growth slows.
- ☼ Prepare [holiday cactus](#) for blooming. Buds form at 50-60°F and prefer at least 13 hours of darkness each night.
- ☼ Keep poinsettia in total darkness for 15 hours each day for eight to 10 weeks until red bracts begin to show.

LANDSCAPE (Lawns, trees, shrubs and flowers)

- ☼ Fall is a good time to control certain broadleaf weeds in the lawn, such as dandelion and ground ivy.
- ☼ Dig tender garden flower bulbs and tropical plants, such as [elephant ear](#) and [banana](#) for winter storage in a cool location free from frost.
- ☼ Complete planting of spring-flowering bulbs.
- ☼ Continue mowing lawn as needed.
- ☼ Remove fallen leaves and compost or shred for use as mulch.
- ☼ Keep watering perennials, trees, shrubs and especially evergreens until the ground freezes.
- ☼ Fertilize trees and shrubs after leaves have fallen.
- ☼ Protect tender evergreens with burlap screens or anti-desiccants.
- ☼ Apply barriers to control rabbit and mouse damage, only if needed.
- ☼ Apply rose protection after leaves drop and soil is near freezing.
- ☼ Fall is an excellent time to plant trees. Consider using native plants and choose according to mature size.
- ☼ New research finds that tree wraps do NOT protect trunks and may, in fact, increase pest problems.

GARDEN (Vegetables, fruits and herbs)

- ☼ [Plant garlic](#) and shallots.
- ☼ [Apply winter mulch to strawberry plants](#) when plants are dormant, before temperatures drop below 20°F.
- ☼ Harvest remaining vegetables, pumpkins and squash before frost. Store in a cool location until used.
- ☼ Harvest mature, green tomatoes before frost, and ripen indoors in the dark.
- ☼ Cure pumpkins, butternut and Hubbard squash at temperatures between 70-80°F for two or three weeks immediately after harvest, then store in a dry place at 55-60°F.
- ☼ Clean up the orchard and small fruit plantings, removing dried fruits or mummies that carry diseases.



Sunira Moses on Unsplash



Illinois Extension

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October To Do List

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October Weekly Planner

Week of _____



Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

October Weekly Planner

Week of _____



Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

October Weekly Planner

Week of _____



Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

October Weekly Planner

Week of _____



Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

October Notes



October Pictures/Sketches/ Observations

