

April

Yard and Garden Tips

Shrubs and trees

- Water blooming shrubs (such as azalea and rhododendron) regularly. Don't forget to water plants under the overhang of your roof.
- It's time to plant when the ground is soft, around the beginning of April in E TN.
- The last Friday in April is Arbor Day...plant a tree!
- Learn what your soil needs for optimum health. In early spring you can participate in the Soil Testing program provided at a low cost through the County Extension agent. You will get individual recommendations based on your soil test results.

Perennials, annuals and bulbs

- To keep your Easter lilies blooming longer indoors, place them in indirect sunlight in a cool room. When the flowers open up, pinch off the yellow anthers.
- Apply bone meal to crocuses as flowers fade.
- Divide matted iris beds and order later blooming varieties for planting mid-summer.
- Pick faded tulip blooms but allow greenery to die off naturally before removing.

Fruits and vegetables

- Rotate vegetable crops to help control pests and disease and to keep the soil in good condition.
- Plant warm season vegetables indoors now for transplanting outdoors in May.
- Time to set out onion seedlings or bulbs.
- Cool weather veggies such as peas, lettuce and radishes can be planted now.
- Time to plant blueberries, currants and gooseberries. Plant in full sun; keep them well watered until established.
- Prune stone fruit trees such as peaches as soon as buds start to develop. Do not prune these in the winter while they are dormant.

Lawn

- Time to apply a spring type of lawn fertilizer to perk up the lawn and improve its color.
- As mowing becomes necessary make sure the lawnmower blade is sharp to prevent tearing the grass tips.
- Set the blade at 2 ½ inches to avoid scalping your lawn.
- Aerating the lawn will allow water to penetrate deeper into the soil and can reduce the need for watering during the dryer months ahead.

Houseplants

- Rotate your houseplants to get the best sunlight for all sides of your plants to promote even growth and a balanced shape.
- Pinching back the tips of your plants will stimulate new growth and make your plants fuller.
- Spring clean your plants to keep them beautiful and pest free. Rinse the dust from the leaves with the kitchen sprayer.

Odds and ends

- Drive around neighborhoods to see what types of plants and flowers you would like to plant at your place.
- Stand back and enjoy Mother Nature's handiwork as you walk around parks and woods.
- Don't overdo it and make your muscles sore as you work to make your garden the garden of your dreams!