

May

Yard and Garden Tips

Shrubs and trees

- Plant ground covers under shade trees that do not allow enough sunlight in to allow grass to grow. Vinca or English ivy grows well in shade.
- To reduce weeds and control fluctuations in temperature, mulch around your newly planted trees and shrubs.
- Prune spring flowering shrubs within 2 weeks after they finish flowering.

Perennials, annuals and bulbs

- Sow annual seeds into beds, continue planting perennials and containerized seedlings.
- Plant summer blooming bulbs like gladiolus, dahlias and cannas.
- Fertilize roses and perennials. Check for aphids and hose them off with water blasts or soapy water, on a cloudy day.

Fruits and vegetables

- Plant summer herb seedlings that were started indoors.
- Transplant tomatoes, eggplant and peppers. Direct sow corn, beans, pumpkins, squash, cucumber and melon seeds.

Lawn

- Seed lawns through the end of May.
- Water bluegrass if the weather is dry.
- Fertilize lawn between late May and early June.

Houseplants

- Most indoor plants prefer a humid atmosphere and indirect light. Plants such as the croton need direct sunlight, while philodendrons will grow under lower light intensities. If plants are not receiving enough light, their leaves turn yellow and die.
- Most indoor plants grow well between 60 and 75 o F. They may become spindly if kept warmer. Always keep plants away from hot or cold drafts, warm appliances, and heat registers. Flowering plants will retain blossoms longer if lower temperatures are provided. Temperatures above 75 o F hasten the death of flowers and make plants spindly as well as less resistant to disease and insect attack.
- When watering, the water should be visible on the surface for not more than a few seconds. If it tends to stand on the surface, mix perlite or sand into the soil to improve drainage.

Odds and ends

- Have protection on hand to cover your young plants in case of late frost.
- Protect those honeybees! When considering honeybees, most of us think of the wonderful honey they produce. However, the most important service honeybees perform is their pollination of our food and other crops. Honeybee-pollinated crops provide roughly one-third of the U.S. diet, and the bees' pollination services are estimated to be worth \$15 billion annually.

Here are some tips on how to protect and maintain your garden hoses:

- Keep it out of the sun.
- Coil it after use, removing any kinks.
- During winter, drain the hose and store it out of the elements.
- Never tug on the hose when trying to eliminate a kink. It may make any tangles more difficult to undo and loosen the hose coupling.
- Remember that sharp bends weaken the hose.
- Keep your hose away from strong chemicals, such as fuels, solvents and acids.