

Garden Checklist

March

Lawns

Warm Season Grasses

Bermuda and Zoysia

Late March: Resume mowing to about 2-3 inches high if needed and bag the clippings to help bring turf out of dormancy. Apply a pre-emergent in early March if not done in February to control the annual spring weeds. Re-apply the pre-emergent in 8-10 weeks.

March- April: When the grass begins to green up, set the mower to cut at 1 inch to 1 ½ inch. If possible, dethatch the lawn to stimulate root growth. Fertilize the lawn with 5-5-15 just before the second pre-emergent application. Be weather aware, if too much nitrogen is used and an unexpected frost hits, it can damage the turf. Water lawns in the morning with 1 inch of water per week (unless raining) to prevent disease.

Take a soil test in March-April to determine the correct nutrients needed for your lawn.

Tall Fescue

March-May: Since this is a cold season grass, set the mower deck height to cut the grass at a height of 3 inches to prevent the grass from wilting/ burning up. If mowed frequently, there is no need to remove grass clippings. Fertilize at a rate of ½ pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet if needed is needed in this time period. Water lawns in the morning with 1 inch of water per week (unless raining) to prevent wilt as air temperatures warm up. Apply pre-emergent herbicides as necessary to control weeds.

Take a soil test in March- April to determine the correct nutrients needed for your lawn.

Annuals

- You can begin planting cool season annuals such as Sweet alyssum and Nasturtiums this month. Cool season annuals should last through May.

Perennials

- Towards the middle of March, remove winter protection from any perennials you had in place.
- Plant summer blooming bulbs. Make sure to read plant specifications about specific planting requirements such as sun exposure, depth, and spacing. Plant bulbs every 2 or 3 weeks if a long blooming season is desired.
- Prune roses if they weren't done in February.

Shrubs and Trees

- Late shrub plantings may be made, particularly if they were purchased in a container.
- Begin fertilizing shrubs, particularly roses. Wait to fertilize camellias and azaleas until after flowering.



Fruits and Vegetables

- Start seedlings indoors of tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant
- By the end of March, you should be safe to start the process of hardening off for transplant outside of your onions, parsley, and any other cool-season crops that are at least 5 weeks old. Select smaller rather than larger plants of the cold crops (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts) since overly mature plants exposed to low temperatures early in the season tend to bolt into flower too early.
- Fertilize all fruiting plants.
- Raspberry canes that will produce this year's crop should be pruned back by 1/4 before growth resumes. Last year's fruiting canes should have been cut down to the ground after harvest last year but if not, do it now.
- Start planting blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries. If you want to feel confident in a good fruit yield, wait until after the last freeze date of April 15th.

Miscellaneous

- The longer days and shorter nights will stimulate your houseplants to start growing again. Now is a good time to re-pot them if needed and give them a good feeding if you haven't already done so.
- Add organic matter to the soil to improve soil and drainage.
- Be careful working your garden soil! Working soil when it is still too wet creates compacted clots. Wait for dry spells or frequency of rain similar to once per week.
- Clean up any leftover dried debris from garden beds and toss in the compost pile.
- Get a soil test if you haven't already done so.
- Monitor shrubs for harmful insects.
- Watch new growth on roses for aphids.
- Mulch your flower beds with bark or leaf mulch or pine straw.