



## WHAT TO DO NOW

There is always something to do in the garden. At Town and Country Gardens we have everything you need to make your plants happy and healthy. Below is a simple guide of some of the tasks that could be undertaken to keep your garden healthy and looking fresh.

### January

January is usually too hot to do anything strenuous in the garden. However, special attention should be paid to watering and mulching at this time.

- Feed your roses across summer to encourage another flush of flowers in Autumn
- Apply liquid fertiliser to summer vegetables every fortnight to ensure bountiful crops across summer
- Treat roses for aphids and fungus and citrus for scale and citrus leafminer.
- Treat roses for aphid and black spot over the warm
- Treat scale and aphid infestations that may be attracting hordes of ants

### February

February is often quite humid, resulting in increased weeds, pests and diseases in your garden. Protect your plants from the persistent heat while dealing with these little undesirables

- Apply slow-release fertiliser to your plants to give them a little extra energy over the Summer period
- Prune hydrangeas that have finished flowering
- Cut back wisteria and jasmine that has gone wild with the heat
- Lightly prune roses to encourage an Autumn flush of flowers
- Pruning perennials now will give you another flush of flowers during Autumn
- Spray azaleas and rhododendrons for azalea lacebug
- Watch for caterpillars, snails and slugs which are prevalent at this time of year

### March

As March progresses, the weather begins to cool and stabilise. You can return to the garden as the days get shorter and cooler. Be careful though, March is notorious for late summer bursts that can harm tender new plants.

- As the weather cools, apply fertiliser to your garden, pots and lawns to encourage strong growth over Autumn
- Deadhead and lightly prune roses, petunias, lavender and geraniums to encourage more flowering
- Treat aphids and pests taking advantage of the new Autumn growth
- Remove summer annuals and vegetables that have finished and prepare for winter plantings by incorporating compost and manures
- Rejuvenate tired and damaged lawns by over-sowing and fertilising
- Put tulip bulbs in the refrigerator for a 'cooling off' period before planting in May

## April

April is one of the most pleasant months of the year in the garden. The weather is cool, the flowers are out and motivation is high. Now is the time to visit Town and Country Gardens to see the deciduous trees in full colour and glory.

- Deadheading is a common activity of April. Remove spent flower stalks of belladonna lilies, deadhead summer annuals and cut back perennials as they finish flowering
- Fertilise camellias and azaleas in readiness for their flowering
- Although the weather has cooled, outdoor pots may still need extra water if there is little rain
- Stay on top of weeding in your garden. Weeds create competition for water, light and food while providing a safe haven for pests and diseases.

## May

Nights are crisp and days are clear during May. The weather is ideal for gardening and with an abundance of Autumn leaves for mulching there is plenty to do. Now is the time to prepare your plants for their winter sleep.

- Feed Annuals and vegetables with liquid fertiliser to get them to last just a little longer
- Rake up leaves and use as mulch or in your compost
- Prune hedges, hydrangeas and remaining summer perennials. Do not be tempted to prune shrubs at this time of year as the older growth will protect young shoots from upcoming frosts.
- Prune or lift dahlias that are past their best
- Protect your plants and bulbs from snails and slugs who love the cooler weather
- Fertilise camellias, azaleas and daphnes who are putting a lot of energy into flowering at this time of the year.

## June

Winter has arrived, soil temperatures have dropped and generally plant growth is slowing down. Delicate and young plants need protection from frosts and overwatering.

- Prune grape vines, deciduous climbers and hedges and cut back summer and autumn perennials.
- Transplant trees and shrubs while they're dormant and less likely to suffer from 'transplant shock'
- Protection of plants is the key at this time of year. Protect from frost, snails, slugs, caterpillars and aphids attacking new growth, particularly on annuals.
- Spray citrus with horticultural oil
- Cut back or lift and divide canna, ginger lilies and herbaceous perennials
- Fertilise annuals and winter vegetables with liquid fertiliser to encourage winter growth
- Indoor plants can be divided and repotted during winter. Make sure they are not overwatered while the weather is cool.

## July

Winter is in full swing and most of the garden is sleeping. Now is the time to prepare your garden for spring while you have the time. Make sure the weeds are under control and prune your deciduous trees, shrubs and climbers.

- Prune roses and deciduous trees, shrubs and climbers to encourage a thicker habit in spring. Take care not to prune deciduous trees already showing new buds as you may eliminate spring flowers.

- Deadhead camellias, azaleas and other Autumn flowering plants
- Move your indoor plants to a position with more natural light while keeping them away from heaters
- Feed cymbidium orchids to prolong flowering
- Divide delphiniums, aquilegias and other Autumn flowering perennials

## August

August shows signs of the end of winter but don't be fooled by the bright sunny days. The soil is still cold and often quite wet. Now is the time to prepare the soil and plants for the coming spring growth.

- Fertilise winter annuals and vegetables, citrus, hydrangeas and bulbs
- Protect fruit trees by spraying with a copper fungicide
- Protect plants from snails, slugs, caterpillars and aphids that will attack new growth on your roses and seedlings
- Prune roses and winter-flowering trees and shrubs such as camellias and azaleas.
- Remove weeds in lawns before the spring so that lawns are lush and green with their new growth.
- Deadhead spring annuals and perennials as they flower to encourage thicker growth and prolonged flowering.
- Hang sticky insect traps in your citrus trees to help control citrus gall wasp.

## September

Spring has arrived and the busiest time in the garden is upon us. Spring means the soil is warming up and new growth and flowers are everywhere. With warmer weather, there are also increased pests and diseases. Keep on top of small infestations before they get out of control. Unfortunately Spring also means wind, so make sure weak trees and shrubs are staked effectively and garden beds and pots don't dry out too much.

- Fertilise practically everything. Annuals, perennials, shrubs, trees and bulbs will all appreciate the extra energy while they're putting on their new growth.
- Prune frost damaged plants and winter flowering shrubs such as camellias and azaleas.
- Treat aphids, thrip, azalea lacebug, mites, snails and caterpillars, all of which are prevalent once the weather starts to warm up and new shoots appear on plants
- Watch for fungus and pests on new growth, especially roses and rhododendrons.
- Make sure your garden is getting enough water to cope with all the increased growth and flowering. Check that your irrigation system is ready for the warmer months and apply soil wetter where necessary.
- Replace potting mix and apply slow release fertiliser to pots and baskets to rejuvenate your potted plants.

## October

With the warmer weather becoming more common and some Spring rains, the garden is looking its loveliest at this time of the year. Climbers such as wisteria and jasmine are flowering and filling the air with amazing perfume. Beneficial insects such as bees and ladybirds are working hard too.

- Continue fertilising your garden to encourage lush new growth and an abundance of flowers. Liquid fertilising vegetables will ensure a healthy and plentiful crop
- Cut back spring flowering prunus, climbing roses and natives after flowering to encourage a thicker, bushier habit
- Fungal diseases become more prevalent with Spring humidity. Treat azaleas and rhododendrons, roses and annuals with fungicide

- Insects such as aphids, thrip, lacebug, pear and cherry slug, caterpillars and borers swell to almost plague proportions at this time of the year. While birds and ladybugs will do their share, some treatment may be required to keep numbers and damage under control
- Regularly mow lawns and remove invading weeds to ensure a strong, lush lawn. Planting new lawns should be done now while the weather is not too hot and rains are more common.

## November

November is the time to prepare for the oncoming summer by improving soil and applying mulch. With flowers in bloom and fragrance in the air now is the perfect time to be out in the garden.

- Lightly prune shrubs, hedges and climbers after flowering to encourage new, thicker growth
- Fertilise tomatoes, summer vegetables and annuals
- Winter flowering shrubs such as camellias, azaleas and daphnes should be fed and watered to help them recover after their hard work
- Indoor plants should be moved out of sunlit positions to prevent scorching
- Try to control pest and disease infestations in your garden. Young plants are at particular risk.
- Keep lawns mown and over-sow bare patches to stop weed invasion.
- Remove dead foliage from spring flowering bulbs and lift if necessary. Keep fertilising bulbs until all foliage has died off to ensure good flowering next season.

## December

The beginning of summer brings unsettled weather with bursts of extreme heat followed by periods of considerable cold. Make sure your garden is prepared for the oncoming Summer by installing drippers, applying compost and laying mulch to keep the garden bed moist and cool.

- Treat fungus and pests such as aphids, caterpillars and snails which attack summer vegetables and new growth on shrubs and roses.
- Fertilise summer annuals and vegetables to encourage strong growth over the hotter months. Harvest vegetables while young to encourage more crops and deadhead annuals to help with repeated flowering.
- Make sure you protect yourself from sun damage while out in the garden over summer. Wear a hat and plenty of sunscreen and remember to drink plenty of water to remain hydrated. You need watering as much as your garden!