

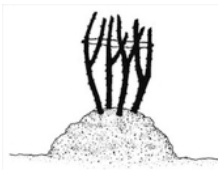


Basic Gardening Tips for October

- ❖ After the first frost, dig and bring in cannas, dahlias, and gladiolus. Dry, clean, and store them in a cool location free from frost. To keep them from mildewing, do not store them in plastic containers. Paper bags or boxes work fine.

- ❖ Clean birdhouses.

- ❖ Care for your roses. In our zone, all roses need protection to survive the winter, but those growing in a sheltered area may survive more easily. The main threat is drying wind and sudden temperature fluctuations. Repeated freezing, melting, and refreezing do far more damage to plant tissue than a single long-lasting freeze. To protect your roses



from winterkill, wait until after a good frost and mound 6 to 8 inches of soil around the base, covering the lower branches. The soil should be brought in from another part of the garden so as not to expose the roots. You can add mulch on top but do not use leaves as they may have diseases. Snow on top of this mulch is further insulation. Do not prune, cut, or feed the roses before you mulch them. Since they are continuously blooming, deadheading or pruning will encourage the bush to produce more growth, which is very tender and easily killed by cold and wind. It is fine to water them, however. Climbing roses are more difficult to protect from wind, but you can place the canes on the ground and cover them along with the bottoms of the rosebushes.



- ❖ Pick green tomatoes before the frost. Wash the tomatoes in diluted bleach water. Air dry. Wrap in newspaper. Unwrap as needed and let ripen.
- ❖ Give your Christmas cactus about 13 hours of complete darkness at night to get beautiful flowers in December.
- ❖ Place a net over garden ponds to catch falling leaves and other fall debris.
- ❖ Remove older undergrowth from evergreen ferns and evergreen perennials.
- ❖ Rake and compost leaves to help control insects and diseases.
- ❖ Remove dead annuals.
- ❖ Deadhead late summer flowering shrubs and perennials.
- ❖ Plant narcissus with tulips to discourage rodents.
- ❖ Plant or refresh pots and window boxes with fall color plants.
- ❖ Pansies or flowering cabbage and kale can be planted over bulbs for winter color.
- ❖ Early October is still a good time to plant lawns, trees, and shrubs.

- ❖ Do not put your hoses away for the winter yet. **IMPORTANT:** Water your shrubs well. Water deeply at least three times before winter.
- ❖ When using marigolds in flower arrangements, remove all the leaves to eliminate the odor.