

Home Gardener's NEWSLETTER

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all Gardening Tips

- 1. Fall is the perfect time to PLANT!** Cooler temperatures and fall rains make for easier maintenance and quick plant establishment.
- 2. It's fall feeding time!** Fertilize lawns with *Best Turf Supreme*. For trees and shrubs feed with *Gro-Better Organic All Purpose Fertilizer*. Ask us what to use for other plants.
- 3. As the weather cools,** plant leafy green vegetables like Swiss chard, spinach and lettuce. Also put in onions, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, beets, peas, and carrots.
- 4. Trim back lavender** when finished blooming. Trim to the outer sections of the plant where there are a lot of leaves. If you cut the old woody plant it won't resprout so easily.
- 5. Feed roses** one last time this year. Many varieties bloom heavily at this time of year.
- 6. Apply John & Bob's Soil Optimizer** to shrubs for the second (and last) time this year.
- 7. Compost** fallen leaves.
- 8. Delicious winter tomatoes** are arriving in September! Don't miss out on these!

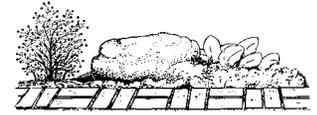
Fall Watering Tip

One benefit of our great California fall planting time is that Mother Nature eventually takes over most of the watering chores. However, recently planted trees and shrubs have not yet grown the extensive root systems needed to absorb enough water during the hot, dry, windy days of Indian summer.

One way to insure constant, strong root growth is to water deeply so the water evaporates more slowly and is available longer to the plant's roots. One way to do this is to punch a small hole in the side of a 5 gallon bucket and fill it with water. Place the bucket next to the plant and allow the water to trickle out slowly. Do this a couple of times around the plant, more for very large trees. For most trees and shrubs, water should percolate down at least 12 inches.

Improving Your Edges

When planning or improving a garden an often overlooked element is the edging on flower beds, paths, and lawns. An **informal style** usually features plants as borders. A **formal look** is created when all the boundaries are sharply defined by permanent hardscape materials such as bricks, benderboard, logs, stones, narrow pavers, or tiles, as well as cement mowing strips.



For a **natural edge**, use plants instead of rigid materials. Boxwood is the traditional plant used to form a low hedge border, but many dwarf varieties of shrubs are available, such as nandina, natal plum, and euonymus. Low, mounding plants make good edges, many providing the added benefit of colorful flowers and/or foliage. Excellent ones to use include certain varieties of heucheras, cuphea (false heather), cotoneaster, hebe, and society garlic.

An even more informal and interesting border can be made up of a row of low-growing plants occasionally interrupted by a higher-growing plant such as ornamental grass or fern, and/or a trailing groundcover like vinca minor or lamium.

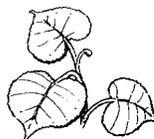
Containers Create Autumn Drama!



Although the gorgeous containers you enjoyed through the summer may look a little tired, this is no time to quit! Color-filled containers are exactly what's needed to brighten the fall days ahead. Refresh your pots, window boxes and other containers now and you'll have color throughout fall and into winter.

Our excellent selection of flowers begins arriving in September, for immediate planting in containers or the ground, including pansies, violas, snapdragons, stock, Iceland poppies, alyssum, calendulas, chrysanthemums, cyclamen, dianthus, diascia, leucanthemum, calibrachos, salvia, sedum, asters, and primroses. Select plants that are compatible according to the amount of sun or partial shade they will receive. Include plants with colorful foliage (try ornamental cabbage and kale, coleus, lamium, or variegated ivy) to make the arrangement more interesting.

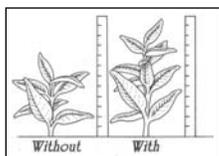
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Fertilizer Deficiencies



As fall fertilizing time approaches and some of your plants appear unhealthy, check them for a common nutritional deficiency. Here are some clues:

Nitrogen: Growth is slow and foliage starts yellowing, beginning with the more mature leaves.

Sulfur: Young leaves, especially the leaf veins, are pale green to yellow, while older leaves remain green. Watch for this especially during dry years.

Phosphorus: Leaves are smaller than normal, although dark green until the later stages when they turn dull green, then develop a purplish tint; reduced fruit yields.

Potassium: Weakened stems, older leaf margins appear scorched; delayed maturity followed by slow defoliation.

Iron: Yellowing leaves with veins remaining green; dry leaf tips; citrus, fruit and shade trees are especially susceptible.

Did You Know

① Hot, spicy chili peppers have been around for 6,000 years according to new research done on ancient grindstones and cookware, making them one of the oldest domesticated food sources on this continent. Evidence reveals that the chilies were grown and traded throughout the Americas before Europeans arrived and proceeded to export chilies around the world. The extract of one type of pepper has become a best-selling topical pain reliever, and the latest research on hot peppers shows the chemicals are toxic to the two-spotted spider mite, the most common mite pest of plants.

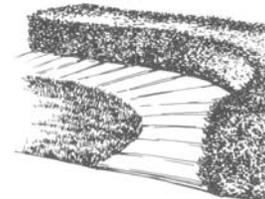
② Getting ready for winter pruning? Try the method used by a nursery in Virginia. Crews strap on stilts (the same kind used by some drywallers) so they can prune higher up in trees without spending time climbing up and down ladders or repositioning them. Training on stilt use usually takes less than a day!

③ If you notice the tips of tree branches being clipped off, the culprit may be twig girdlers or squirrels. Girdler damage looks like a beaver has fed on the branch, leaving the cut smooth and cone shaped. Squirrel damage is more tattered and cut at an angle.

Although squirrels don't eat the branches, it is thought that they sharpen and clean their teeth on the branches.



Betting on Hedges



Hedges have the advantage over fences. Both can enclose your yard to give you privacy and provide shelter from wind, but a hedge provides a softer border that blends with other plants to unify your property. Fall is an excellent time to get started on your living boundary. Ask yourself these questions, then come to the nursery to make your selection.

How many hours of sun and/or shade will the plants get every day?

How tall do you want the plants to grow? If privacy is your main requirement, choose plants that will grow 10-12 feet high, which is above the allowed height limit for fences. Be sure the site can accommodate these wider-growing plants. Some species stay low—up to 2 feet high.

Do you want the plants to lose their leaves in winter (deciduous) or stay green year 'round (evergreen)? Generally deciduous plants grow faster and often provide colorful flowers.

Is your garden's style formal or informal? Formal hedges require frequent pruning or shearing, while informal ones are allowed to grow into a more natural shape.

Basil, Bacon & Tomato Minis

1 tomato, finely chopped
3 Tbsp fresh basil, finely chopped
½ onion, finely chopped
½ cup mayonnaise



6 slices cooked bacon, crumbled
½ cup Swiss cheese, shredded
1 tube (12 oz) refrigerated butter-milk biscuits (separated into 10 biscuits)

In a medium bowl combine all ingredients except the biscuits. Lightly spray a miniature muffin pan with Pam. Split each biscuit into three layers; press each layer into a miniature muffin cup. Spoon in tomato mixture. Bake at 375° for 10 minutes. Tastes especially good while watching a football game on TV!



Billion Tree Campaign

A worldwide effort to plant at least a billion trees is underway. Led by the *United Nations Environment Programme*, its purpose is to combat the undesirable effects of global warming, deforestation and erosion. The "Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign" encourages the planting of trees in four key areas: 1) degraded natural forests and wilderness areas; 2) farms and rural landscapes; 3) sustainably managed plantations; 4) urban environments.

Plant trees in your landscape and reap the many benefits they provide! Trees clean the air, lower energy bills through the cooling shade they provide in summer and the insulating warmth they provide in winter, mask unwanted noises and views, provide habitat for wildlife, prevent soil erosion by slowing rainfall runoff, lessen the pollution in our streams and rivers, and add beauty as well as value to your home.

Tree trivia: Knocking on wood for good luck originated from primitive tree worship, when rapping on trees was believed to summon protective spirits in the trees. By the way, there are about 20,000 tree species in the world. The U.S. has one of the largest treasuries, second only to India.