

MONTHLY GARDENING IN THE UK



12 FREE guides
by Jack Bennett



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The following guide contains some important high level tips for your gardening in the UK and elsewhere in Europe on a month by month basis.

Please visit my blog at Gardendad.co.uk to get some more detailed insights.

I. GARDENING IN JANUARY

Hopefully you enjoyed the holiday season last month, but it's not going to be so nice when you step into the garden. After all, January is known for being the most vicious month of the year as far as the weather is concerned.

It's still going to be ice cold, the wind will be so cold it hurts, and unless you're really lucky it's going to snow. Gardening in January isn't something you can ignore, so let's look at the top jobs you should be working on.

FLOWERS AND TREES



1 – Recycle Christmas Tree: All the presents have now disappeared from underneath the tree, but it doesn't need to go to waste. You'll be able to shred your Christmas tree in order to use it for mulch.

2 – Dig Up Vacant Plots: You should hopefully still have lots of vacant plots in your garden. Locate those areas and begin to dig them up so they'll be prepared when you're ready for them.

3 – Begonia, Dahlia, and Canna: You'll have to start inspecting the stored tubers of any begonia, dahlia, and canna. You will find they sometimes have a tendency to rot or dry out, so they must be examined.

4 – Sowing Your Seeds: There will be a few seeds that will only germinate if they're covered in frost. If you plan on sowing any they'll need to be taken care of now before it's too late.

5 – Begin Planting Roses: You can begin to plant roses, but you still have to be careful. To avoid replant diseases you shouldn't plant any where you've already grown them in the past.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Apple and Pear Trees: Your apple and pear trees won't look so pretty at the moment because they're not bearing fruit, but it's a great time to start pruning so they're ready to get going.

2 – Start Forcing Rhubarb: If you have rhubarb in your garden you can reduce the time you have to wait until they're ready. Start forcing them now if you want to see the first crop in early spring.

3 – Vegetable Crop Rotations: Are you still unsure about what your exact vegetable crop rotations will be for the coming year? Well now is the ideal time to begin planning everything out.

4 – Protect Peaches and Nectarines: Those with peaches and nectarines in their garden will have to construct a simple polythene shelter for them. It will stop them from succumbing to peach leaf curl.

5 – Green Leafy Vegetables: Do you want to make sure you'll always have a supply of green leafy vegetables available? Start growing spinach and salad leaves on an indoor windowsill with lots of light.

LAWNS AND STRUCTURES



1 – Feed the Animals: When you're gardening in January you will have to keep remembering to leave food out for the animals. Not only will you attract wildlife into your garden, but you'll also save a few lives.

2 – Clean Pots and Greenhouse: Spring is going to sneak up on you quicker than you think, but at the moment you'll not be ready for it. You can begin to make life easier for yourself by cleaning your pots and greenhouse.

3 – Repair/Replace Lawn Edges: This is especially important on the lawn edges around flower and shrub beds. An easy solution is to use turves cut from other various places throughout your garden.

4 – Remove Snow from The Roof: If there is any snow on your greenhouse or conservatory roof it should be removed. If it doesn't melt it will stop all the light from getting inside.

5 – Ventilate the Greenhouse: There are going to be some sunny days, even if it's only for a while and the heat is barely noticeable. To prevent fungal infections you should ventilate your greenhouse on those days.

II. GARDENING IN FEBRUARY

The worst of the weather is behind us for another year, and you'll even be able to see a hint of spring hiding around the corner. The lighter days are going to get longer as the month goes on, the temperature is gradually improving, and the wildlife will even begin to come back in numbers.

Gardening in February is exciting because there is so much you can do, but let's take a look at the top jobs you should be taking care of this month.

FLOWERS



1 – Divide Your Snowdrops: Start to divide your snowdrops and other such bulbs. Planting them in the green is one of the easiest ways to increase your collection without spending a lot of money.

2 – Prune Wisteria: To prune the wisteria properly try to cut back the sideshoots to around two or three buds. While you're doing this it's important to avoid cutting any flower buds off.

3 – Pruning Conservatory Climbers: You don't want to prune conservatory climbers like bougainvillea until now, because it means they won't get damaged by frost. Just make sure your conservatory is regularly at least 10C inside.

4 – Maintain Minimum of 5C: You'll need to make sure the temperature in your greenhouse doesn't drop below 5C to stop tender plants from dying. Any tropical plants will need even higher temperatures.

5 – Protecting Your Bulbs: Some of your bulbs might still benefit from protection if it snows and rains a lot. You can give them the security they need by covering them with Perspex which should sit on bricks.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Chitting Your Tubers: No doubt you'll want a quicker and bigger harvest for your lovely potatoes. The only way you'll be able to ensure it happens is by chitting your tubers now.

2 – Vegetable Seed Beds: Gardening in February carries on from the plans you made in January. Start preparing your vegetable beds now, and once they're ready you can begin to sow the first batch under cover.

3 – Peaches, Apricots, and Nectarines: If you're lucky you'll be growing peaches, apricots, and nectarines in your garden. Make sure you protect the blossom to ensure they turn out okay.

4 – Net Fruits and Vegetables: Now that the birds are flocking back in numbers, your fruit and vegetable crops might not be safe. The easiest way to stop birds from getting to them is to net everything off.

5 – Cucumber and Tomato Plants: If you're looking for tasty cucumbers and tomatoes for your summer salads now is the time to start preparing for them. Sow your seeds now in the warmer conditions.

TREES, SHRUBS, AND LAWNS



1 – Winter-Flowering Shrubs: If you have any winter-flowering shrubs they should have finished flowering by now. Instead of standing around admiring them you should begin to prune the shrubs.

2 – Pruning and Renovating: Now is a good time to start pruning those hardy evergreen hedges. At the same time you'll be able to begin renovating your overgrown deciduous hedges too.

3 – Remove Dead Grass: After the worst of winter you'll have to begin taking the dead grass away from your evergreen grass, and you can cut back the deciduous grasses while you're at it.

4 – Cutting Your Lawn Edges: In January you concentrated on the edges around flower and shrub beds, but now you can take care of all the lawn edges. Your garden will look nicer and it will save you work in the future.

5 – Look Out for Moles: If you're going to see moles it's usually in February when they mate and build nests. Remove the large hills and make sure the ground is firm before seeding your grass in spring.

III. GARDENING IN MARCH

The weather won't be perfect in March, but it will be a lot better than anything you've experienced so far this year. Spring usually hits around the middle of the month, so you've got something to look forward to.

Those sunny days gardening in March are going to be fun, although it's not all good because you'll be busy. There are lots of jobs you'll need to focus on before the month comes to an end, but let's drill down on the most important ones.

FLOWERS



1 – Plant Summer-Flowering Bulbs: Summer will come around quicker than you think, but you'll have to start getting ready for it now. All of your summer-flowering bulbs should be planted in March.

2 – Sort Out Perennials: You'll need to divide clumps of perennials that have lost all their shape, have grown too big for the space you have available, or that you want to propagate.

3 – Add Fresh Compost: It's time to top dress all of your containers with fresh compost. You should only have to take out around 2-inches of the old compost, which shouldn't amount to much work.

4 – Cornus and Salix: To make your garden as colourful as possible during winter you might have grown cornus and salix. Now would be a good time to start cutting them back.

5 – Climbing and Bush Roses: Everyone should strive for an abundance of roses in their garden, but it does take a lot of work. Begin pruning your climbing and bush roses now to achieve your goal.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Shallots and Onion Sets: If you want a good crop this summer you should begin to plant your shallots and onion sets now. While you're at it you can also plant garlic sets at the same time.

2 – Early Potatoes: Potatoes are the one thing everyone should plant in their garden, because they're so filling and full of calories. Get your early potatoes into the ground now.

3 – Chili Peppers and Sweet Peppers: One quick way to add a little spiciness or sweetness to any dish is by adding in some peppers. If you'd like to start growing them now you'll be able to do so indoors.

4 – Cauliflowers and Brussel Sprouts: They're the vegetables kids hate most, but they're nutritious and perfect for supplementing meals. You can begin to grow both of them as long as it's under cover.

5 – Growing Aubergines: One of the bad things about aubergines is the fact they need a long growing season. That means now is a good time to start the seeds off in your propagator.

GENERAL GARDEN MAINTENANCE



1 – Watch Out for Slugs: When gardening in March you'll come up against another enemy looking to ruin your hard work. Slugs are known for attacking new spring shoots, so you'll have to protect them.

2 – Hoe and Mulch Weeds: You haven't touched your weeds in a long time, so you'll find there is more than usual once the weather gets better. Hoe and mulch everything you can find.

3 – Start Mowing the Lawn: It's possible you'll need to start mowing the lawn this month to ensure your garden looks great. Only tackle this job if it's needed, and you should obviously just do it on dry days.

4 – Return of the Water Features: You can begin to use your pond fountain again, plus the pond heaters should be removed. Remember to feed your fish and the pond will be looking great in no time.

5 – Clean Things Up: You're going to begin spending a lot more time in the garden, so give your tools, pots, greenhouse, and other things a clean now. Use disinfectants to avoid the spread of diseases and pests.

IV. GARDENING IN APRIL

Spring is finally here and you'll be able to see it when you look outside your window. We might still have a few bad days in store, but the daffodils and flowering trees are really starting to bloom rather nicely.

In between all the rain showers the sun will begin to appear more regularly. You'll be able to do a selection of things in the garden you couldn't up until now. Gardening in April is always enjoyable, but there are a few important jobs you can't forget about.

FLOWERS, TREES, AND SHRUBS



1 – Rambling and Climbing Roses: Rambling and climbing roses should be tied in until they're almost horizontal. Restricting sap flow will ultimately lead to more flowers further down the line.

2 – Divide Bamboo Plants: Dividing bamboo plants is best carried out in mid-spring, and could involve splitting clumps with an axe. Just make sure you choose plants that are no more than a few years old.

3 – Sowing Hardy Annuals: Maybe you had lots of success with them last year, but they'll be gone now and it's time to start again. April is a good time to begin sowing your hardy annuals.

4 – Shrubs and Roses: It's good practice to begin feeding now that we're approaching mid-spring. They get really hungry and taking care of them every few weeks will work wonders for your garden.

5 – Sowing Wild Flowers: Do you want your garden to look as bright and lively as possible this year? If so, you should start to think about sowing wild flower seeds now to give them time to grow.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Pruning Fig Trees: I know you can't wait until you can eat all the figs from your trees, but there is still work to be done first. When you start gardening in April you should begin to prune the branches.

2 – Feeding Citrus Plants: It won't be long until it's time to begin receiving your daily dose of vitamin-C. Now is the time to feed your citrus plants if you want to end up with great fruit.

3 – Be Wary of Late Frosts: We've already mentioned how the cold weather hasn't disappeared for good. You'll need to protect your fruit blossom from any frosts that suddenly come back.

4 – Sow Herbs Outdoors: If you want your meals to taste as good as ever you'll need to sow herbs. The biggest difference in April is the fact you'll be able to start sowing them outdoors.

5 – Planting Sweetcorn Seeds: The risk of frost is still something to consider when planting sweetcorn seeds. To make sure they're protected they should be grown in modules under cover.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE JOBS



1 – Control Your Weeds: You will see a lot more weeds this month than you've seen in the past. If you want your garden to prosper you must take care of them before they grow unsightly and steal all the water.

2 – Work on Your Pond: There will be a big difference in the pond because of the change in weather recently. If you have any waterlilies you can start to divide and replant them when they eventually grow.

3 – Looking after Houseplants: You've been restricting the amount of water your houseplants have been getting during the colder months. It's warmer now, so they must receive more water from now on.

4 – Taking Care of Your Lawn: From the middle of the month you can begin to fix your lawn in time for summer. This involves over-seeding any dead patches and sowing new lawns until everything is covered.

5 – Allow for New Growth: The plants inside your greenhouse will experience new growth, therefore they must be given more space. This will help prevent disease and insect infestations.

V. GARDENING IN MAY

It feels like summer is just around the corner, and if you look hard enough you can see it too. All those bulbs have suddenly disappeared and parts of your garden are starting to liven up. It's now time to get your head down and dive back into work, especially if you live in areas where the weather is pretty good.

You'll start appreciating the hot days again, but when you're gardening in May it's not all a bed of roses. Take a look at the top jobs it would be a good idea to focus on this month.

FLOWERS, TREES, AND SHRUBS



1 – Protecting Tender Plants: The only thing you can guarantee about the British weather is that it's unpredictable. Late frosts might still arrive in May, so make sure you protect your tender plants.

2 – Your Summer Bedding: If you live in a part of the country with warm weather feel free to plant your summer bedding towards the end of the month. Don't proceed with this if you live in a colder area.

3 – Be Careful with Water: You'll need to start watering everything in the morning and at night. The sun is going to evaporate it a lot more quickly starting from now and it could have an impact on your work.

4 – Dangerous Beetle Grubs: Keep a watchful eye on leaves to make sure there are no dangerous lily and viburnum beetle grubs. They're not going to do your plants any favours when they are around.

5 – Spring-Flowering Bulbs: Work hard to keep on top of your spring-flowering bulbs this month. Things like overcrowded clumps of daffodils will need to be lifted and divided.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Earthing Up Potatoes: Don't forget to earth up any potatoes, because it's still a crucial part of the growing process for multiple reasons. If any are still remaining you should plant them too.

2 – Growing Watercress: Watercress is one of the easiest things you can grow inside little containers. You just have to make sure they're always lying in roughly 2-3 inches of water.

3 – Hearty Vegetables: You'll be able to start growing hearty vegetables like swedes and turnips now. Once they're ready they'll keep you warm later in the year inside lovely soups and stews.

4 – Growing Juicy Melons: One of the cool things you can do when gardening in May is to begin growing melons. Try to make sure you choose a variety that will thrive in a British climate.

5 – Planting Nutritious Greens: Broccoli, sprouts, and cabbage can be planted outdoors. Remember to put a net over your cabbages to keep the cabbage white butterflies away from the leaves.

GENERAL GARDEN MAINTENANCE



1 – Recycle Your Water: In most areas of the country we don't tend to suffer from water problems, but it doesn't mean you shouldn't try to recycle it. Why waste water when you can use what you collect?

2 – Mowing the Lawn: You've reached the point in time when you'll have to crawl out of bed weekly to mow your lawn. Hopefully it's hot on weekends and you'll be able to do it when you're off work.

3 – Ventilating the Greenhouse: You should open the vents and door of the greenhouse on days when it's warm outside. Make sure you keep doing this sporadically throughout the month.

4 – Hoeing Your Weeds: If you thought last month was bad, it's not going to get any easier for you. There will be lots of weeds hurting your garden and you'll need to keep on top of them.

5 – Check for Nesting Birds: There are probably going to be birds nesting in your garden, especially deep inside your hedges. Look out for them before carrying out any work so the nests don't get damaged.

VI. GARDENING IN JUNE

Summer has finally arrived and it's time to celebrate. Your garden will be bursting with life, the sky will stay bright long into the night, and this month even gives us the longest day of the year.

Unfortunately it's hard to celebrate for too long, because the extra light and heat means gardening in June will be packed with lots of things to do. There are always some jobs a little more important than others, which we'll discuss now so you know what to do.

FLOWERS, TREES, AND SHRUBS



1 – Plant Out Summer Bedding: We talked about this last month, but it was only those who lived in warmer areas who could implement it. Anyone gardening in June will be able to start planting out their summer bedding.

2 – Spring-Flowering Shrubs: I know it's a long time until next spring rolls around, but you'll have to be prepared. You'll be able to start pruning many of your spring-flowering shrubs this month.

3 – Stake Certain Plants: If you have any tall or floppy plants you'll need to make sure you stake them. If the wind gets a hold of them they'll never be able to survive the onslaught.

4 – Spreading and Trailing Plants: If any plants are looking tatty it could be because they're spreading or trailing. Trim them back to tidy everything up and encourage new growth.

5 – Summer Hanging Baskets: Did you take down all your summer hanging baskets once the flowers died last year? Well now is the perfect time to add style to your garden by setting them up again.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Tending to Tomatoes: You'll need to pinch out the side shoots on your tomatoes to keep the focus on the fruits. It's a bushy plant and failure to take care of the side shoots will mean they end up everywhere.

2 – Harvest Radish and Lettuce: Hopefully you're looking forward to your summer salads, because you'll be able to start harvesting your radishes, lettuce, and other salad vegetables you've been growing.

3 – Get Those Early Potatoes: You'll have to wait another month for your second batch of potatoes, but the first batch of early potatoes should be ready to lift some time in June.

4 – Direct Sow Carrots: If you're going to sow carrots make sure you place them in rows. They'll also need to be protected with something in order to prevent carrot fly attack.

5 – Growing Beetroot: Beetroot has many health benefits and it tastes great, so it's no surprise it is popular to begin growing it in June. It should be thinly sown directly into the ground.

GENERAL GARDEN MAINTENANCE



1 – Mow the Lawn Weekly: On The plus side it means your grass should be growing rather quickly, but it also involves more work for you. The lawn should still be mowed at least once per week.

2 – Shade Your Greenhouse: Your greenhouse is designed to help your plants grow in the heat, but it's not meant to scald them. To prevent this from happening you should shade the greenhouse.

3 – Be Careful with Your Water: It's going to get even hotter in June even though the weather in Britain isn't the best in the world. A lack of rain means you should try your utmost to conserve water.

4 – Hoe the Weeds Again: The weeds will keep on getting worse if you don't pay attention to them, so make sure you're doing it regularly. Pay special attention to the borders around your garden.

5 – Stocking Up on Fish: After your plantings have finally been established in your pond you'll be able to start stocking it with fish. Make sure the water isn't too cold when you do it.

VII. GARDENING IN JULY

You know summer is progressing along nicely because you've been spending more time outside on non-gardening duties. We don't always have the greatest weather each year, but this month is the first you've seen the sun regularly for a long time and it feels good.

The flowers in your garden are looking fantastic too. Don't let the weather get to your head because gardening in July is still important. Let's discuss the top jobs you should be doing so you don't forget anything.

FLOWERS, TREES, AND SHRUBS



1 – Deadhead Your Plants: This applies to the repeat-flowering perennials and bedding plants, which you must take the time to deadhead. It will ensure they continue flowering beautifully throughout the months.

2 – Watering Tubs and Plants: There is a chance you'll need to keep your tubs and plants watered, but this will only apply if it's dry. Make sure you're careful with the water if they do need help.

3 – Check for Clematis Wilt: Keep a close eye on any suspect signs of clematis wilt this month. If you fail to do this your seemingly healthy plants might collapse for no apparent reason.

4 – Maintain Established Bamboos: Anyone with established bamboos will need to take the flowering stalks off them promptly. Not only do they look horrible, but the bamboo will weaken.

5 – Caring for Houseplants: If you're like other people you might be packing your bags and heading off on holiday in July. Don't forget to make sure your houseplants are cared for while you're away.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Courgettes to Marrows: If you're planning on picking any courgettes this year you better do it now. Wait too long and they'll turn into marrows, so tackle the job if they're around 15-20cm in length.

2 – Deal with Apple Scab: You'll need to deal with apple scab, which is caused by fungus and spread by airborne spores. The last thing you want is fruit rot hurting things like apples and pears.

3 – Nectarines, Peaches, and Apricots: You worked hard pruning your trees and now it's about to pay off. You'll be able to harvest your juicy nectarines, peaches, and apricots in July.

4 – Sow Perpetual Spinach: If you want to turn into Popeye the Sailor Man in autumn and winter you'll need your spinach. Sow it now to make sure it's going to be ready to pick after summer.

5 – Plant Out Winter Veg: If you want your usual winter vegetables they should be planted out some time in July. This will include veg like kale, leeks, and hardy cauliflowers.

GENERAL GARDEN MAINTENANCE



1 – Monthly Pond Duties: When you're gardening in July you'll need to remove blanket weeds, debris, and algae from your pond. Keep an eye on the water level of your pond and top it up too.

2 – Start Ordering Catalogues: Now is the time to start planning what your garden will look like next year. Your first job is to order catalogues to get your spring-flowering bulbs.

3 – Feed Your Lawn: You've been caring for your lawn in the last few months, but it might need to be given a quick-acting feed during summer. It's even more important if you didn't do it in spring.

4 – Mowing Your Lawn: When you're mowing your lawn this month try to set the lawnmower a touch higher. It's going to be hotter than early summer and it will stop your lawn from drying too quickly.

5 – A Boiling Conservatory: Your conservatory is going to get very warm throughout the month, so it would be wise to move plants onto your patio. This will prevent them from being baked alive.

VIII. GARDENING IN AUGUST

It's going to be hot this month if you're lucky, so take advantage of it because summer will be fading away. You'll probably notice the lack of rain in August, which means you'll need to work overtime to keep your garden looking great.

Every month is always full of jobs you'll have to do and gardening in August is no exception. Take a quick look at the most important things you should be focusing on first.

FLOWERS, TREES, AND SHRUBS



1 – Wisteria and Climbing Shrubs: After your wisteria and climbing shrubs have flowered you'll want to start pruning them straight away. This will help them look even better in the future.

2 – Deadhead Flowering Plants: When you're gardening in August you'll spend a lot of your time deadheading flowering plants. It will ensure your garden stays bright as we move quickly into autumn.

3 – Start Collecting Seeds: You can begin to store all the seeds you collect from the hardy annuals and perennials in your garden. They'll be handy when you need to sow them later on once autumn arrives.

4 – Protect Ornamental Grasses: Take care of the flowerheads on your ornamental grasses instead of getting rid of them. They'll give you something nice to look at later in the year.

5 – Nurturing Hanging Baskets: It might only be a few months until your hanging baskets will lose their beautiful looks. You can delay the process by continuing to feed, water, and deadhead them.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Pruning Your Fruits: It's now the time to prune any of your fruits trained as restricted forms, which is usually apples and pears. Do it before the end of the month because growth will have already slowed down.

2 – Harvesting Your Vegetables: Sweetcorn and other vegetables you've got growing will be ready to harvest, so you'll now get to taste them after looking forward to eating them for ages.

3 – Cutting Back Raspberry Canes: After your raspberries have been harvested in the summer you'll have a lot of empty canes left. Keep cutting them back as new ones appear throughout the month.

4 – Rooted Strawberry Runners: Strawberries can be propagated now, so don't leave it until the end of August to complete the job. Place your strawberry runners into pots of compost after they've been pushed into the beds.

5 – Planting Out Cabbages: You can plant out spring and winter cabbages this month. It's especially helpful to plant the spring cabbages because there won't be a lot of other vegetables ready when they are.

GENERAL GARDEN MAINTENANCE



1 – Don't Stop Watering: You'll need to spend a lot of time watering everything, especially containers and new plants. Just make sure you try to use as much recycled water as possible to help the environment.

2 – Look After Your Pond: It's likely been hot for a while now, so you should check the pond level in case it needs to be filled up. Check the water level in any other garden water features you have too.

3 – Feed Your Soil: Start to feed your soil with lots of green manures to help its structure and give it the valuable nutrients it needs. They will also help to smother any weeds trying to pop through.

4 – Damp Down Greenhouse: You've been ventilating your greenhouse for a while now, which you should keep on doing. Also think about dampening your greenhouse when it's boiling to maintain humidity levels.

5 – Dealing with Your Lawn: Begin to dig over the parts of your lawn you want to be grassed over once autumn arrives. It will give weeds a chance to regrow and you'll be able to get rid of them before seeding.

IX. GARDENING IN SEPTEMBER

September is the month when it will finally hit you summer won't be back for another year. The days will be noticeably cooler and the wind will pick up, so your chances of experiencing many warm days is low.

Thankfully the weather isn't too bad yet, which means gardening in September can still be pleasurable. You'll also be kept busy because there are lots of fun things to do. Let's look at all the jobs you should have at the top of the list to guarantee none are missed accidentally.

FLOWERS, TREES, AND SHRUBS



1 – Dividing Herbaceous Perennials: If you want your plants to keep performing on a yearly basis you'll need to work on it, which means dividing your herbaceous perennials on a regular basis.

2 – Collecting and Sowing Seeds: Hopefully you did it last month, but keep collecting seeds from hardy annuals and perennials. You can also begin to sow them when you're gardening in September.

3 – Spring Flowering Bulbs: Summer might be gone for a while, but the nice weather will be back quicker than you think. Plant your spring flowering bulbs to make sure the garden looks great when that time arrives.

4 – Bring Tender Perennials Inside: As we approach the end of the month there is more chance of it getting really cold. If you want to protect your tender perennials bring them inside.

5 – Watering Houseplants: You had to start watering your houseplants more often a while ago, but the opposite is now true. Thanks to the temperature drop they'll retain water for much longer.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Dig Up Potatoes: The slugs are eventually going to ruin all of the potatoes you have left, which would be a complete waste. Dig up the remaining ones now so they can't get to them.

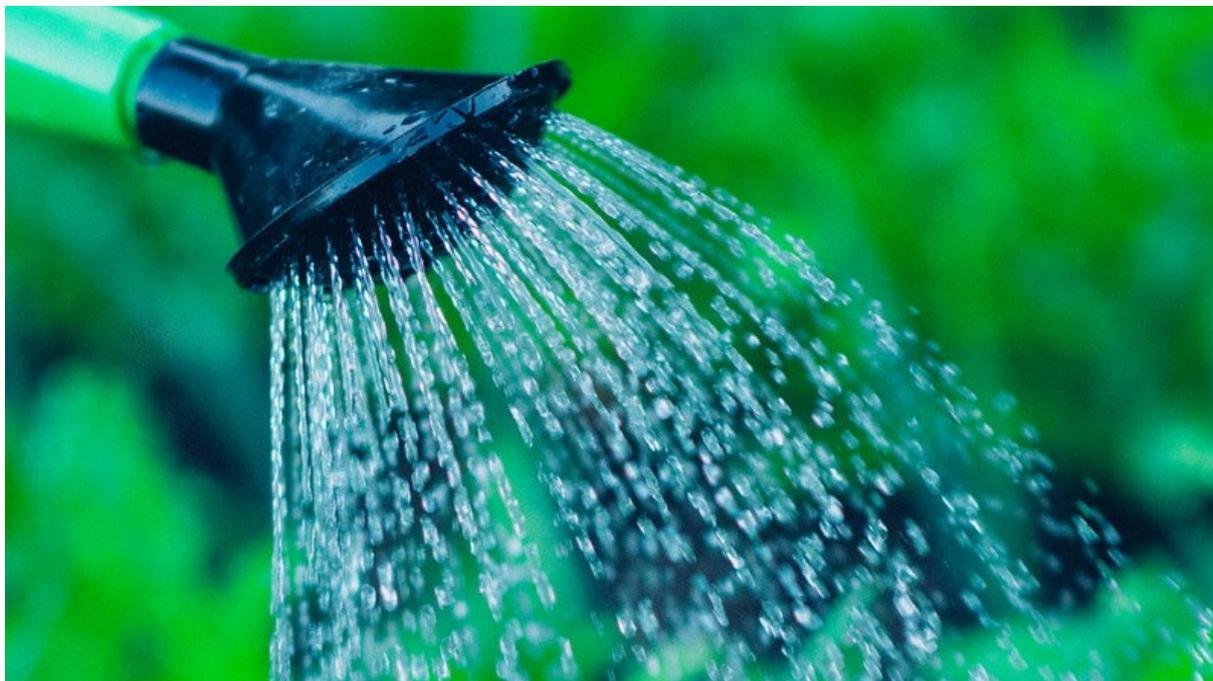
2 – Covering Vegetable Plots: All of those leafy vegetables in your garden must be making your mouth water by now. You'll need to cover them in bird-proof netting to stop any from being attacked.

3 – Picking Autumn Raspberries: Raspberries are one of the more popular fruits to grow, so hopefully you have some in your garden. You should begin picking them this month for your daily dose of antioxidants.

4 – Planting Garlic Bulbs: Garlic is one of those things you can add to lots of dishes, so you'll benefit greatly from growing them. Do it this month and they'll be ready for you next year.

5 – Winter-Hardy Spring Onions: If you want to enjoy the taste of spring onion next year you should sow winter-hardy varieties now. They'll be ready as soon as spring rolls around.

GENERAL GARDEN MAINTENANCE



1 – Netting Your Ponds: Sooner or later the leaves are going to begin flying off the trees. You don't want them to end up in your ponds, so make sure they're covered with nets.

2 – Cold Frames and Greenhouses: Your cold frames and greenhouses might not be in the best condition, but you'll need them to be for autumn. Clean them out soon and you will be prepared in advance.

3 – Looking After Water: You'll need to keep watering your garden, especially those new plants. Try to make sure you keep using the water you've collected or recycled yourself to prevent waste.

4 – Mowing Your Lawn: This month you can begin to reduce the amount of times you mow the lawn. Also raise the cut height if you don't want the lawn to be damaged once the wet weather arrives.

5 – Pests and Diseases: There could be a selection of plants you're planning to bring indoors in September, but don't forget to proceed with caution. Check them all carefully for pests and diseases first.

X. GARDENING IN OCTOBER

The wind is picking up and leaves are falling off the trees quicker than you're able to scoop them up, but at least like spring the changes in colour you'll experience is beautiful.

Sadly, you won't get to enjoy the occasional hot days September usually offers. Gardening in October is still of the utmost importance as there are a few crucial things you need to do before winter blows in, so let's take a closer look at exactly what they are.

FLOWERS



1 – Cutting Back Perennials: Now is the right time to start cutting back the perennials that have slowly died down over the last couple of years to keep them looking gorgeous.

2 – Your Herbaceous Perennials: You can also begin to divide up your herbaceous perennials in order to take full advantage of them for the coming year, because the soil will now be moister than it was in summer.

3 – Move Plants Inside: If you have any tender plants unable to handle the harsh British winter, including water plants, now would be a good time to move them into your greenhouse or conservatory.

4 – Pruning Climbing Roses: If you have climbing roses now is the time to start pruning them while they're dormant. The end result will be lots of late-season flowers.

5 – Hanging Basket Maintenance: If the flowers in your hanging basket are over the hill you can bring them back to life with winter heathers and trailing ivies, plus add spring-flowering bulbs.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Harvest Fruits And Nuts: It's now time to start harvesting your apples, grapes, pears, and nuts. When sorting through them throw away any showing signs of disease.

2 – Divide Rhubarb Plants: Start to divide all of your old rhubarb plants into 3 or 4 separate crowns, so you'll end up with a lot more plants in the future.

3 – Plant Spring Cabbages: If you start planting out your spring cabbages now it will give them enough time to turn into tasty treats for next year.

4 – Start Sowing Herbs: You should be able to start sowing herbs like parsley, chives, and basil now. They'll grow easily on your windowsill throughout the winter.

5 – Onions And Garlic: Try planting onions and garlic now and they should be ready in time for next summer. Winter lettuces and broad beans are good if you want something sooner.

TREES, SHRUBS, AND LAWNS



1 – Mowing Your Lawn: It's finally time to get your lawnmower out on the first dry day you're available to work in your garden, because it might be a while until you get another chance.

2 – Renovate Your Lawn: While gardening in October, you can also take the chance to renovate your lawn if you have patches where the grass is gone or has nearly disappeared.

3 – Trim Your Hedges: Trim all your hedges to keep them tidy during the winter, and you can also do the same thing with tree branches so the wind won't affect them.

4 – Check On New Trees: If you're growing new trees you'll need to check their ties and stakes, because if you don't they'll easily get damaged by the strong winter gales.

5 – Destroy Affected Leaves: When you're raking up the leaves from your lawn, it's important to ensure any diseased ones are thrown away instead of being put on the compost heap.

XI. GARDENING IN NOVEMBER

Every time you look outside your window the weather seems to be getting worse than the day before. If the rain and high winds weren't enough, the air is also cold enough to hurt your skin as soon as you step into the garden.

You can't sit around and do nothing as there are lots of jobs to be done before the end of the month. Gardening in November is difficult and you'll need to force yourself outside, but here are the top tasks you'll need to complete once you're out there.

FLOWERS



1 – Lift Plant Pots Off The Ground: It's impossible to tell how much rain we'll see over winter, but if there is lots your plant pots could end up waterlogged. It would be a wise move to lift them off the ground and insulate them.

2 – Plant Tulip Bulbs: I'm sure you'll want lovely tulips in your garden once winter has come and gone. If you'd like to see them next spring, now is the perfect time to start planting the bulbs.

3 – Prune Your Roses: You don't want the wind to destroy the roots of your roses by causing the stems to swing around. You can limit the amount of damage by pruning the roses to make them more resistant to the wind.

4 – Put Netting Over Brassicas: When you have brassicas in your garden and there are pigeons around it's going to cause trouble. You can put a stop to it by laying netting over them.

5 – Plant Winter Bedding: You might not get another chance if we're unfortunate enough to have a white winter, so when gardening in November plant your winter bedding before time runs out.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Encouraging Winter Birds: Before you take care of your own fruits, vegetables, and nuts you should remember to put bird feed out. It will encourage the winter birds to flock into your garden.

2 – Protect Your Fruit Trees: Moths can be a problem during winter and they can cause a lot of damage to your fruit trees. To prevent this from happening you can wrap grease bands around the trunks of the trees.

3 – Start Growing Mushrooms: If you've never tried growing mushrooms before now is a good time to set it up. You also have the option of growing your mushroom log indoors.

4 – Plant Your Berries: Strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, blackberries, and currants can now be planted. You'll have a garden full of beautiful berries you can eat next year.

5 – Under Your Cloches: Hopefully you already have cloches in your garden, because you'll be able to plant spring onions and pak choi underneath them during the winter months.

TREES, SHRUBS, AND LAWNS



1 – Deal With Fallen Leaves: There will still be a lot of leaves lying around on your lawn, in ponds, and scattered throughout your beds. Now you can finally get rid of them before they're covered in snow.

2 – Build A Bonfire: If you're allowed to build a fire in the area where you live, you can burn everything you can't put on the compost heap. If you can't do it in your garden there will be lots around on the 5th.

3 – Remove Any Toadstools: It's around this time of year you'll begin to see toadstools on your lawn. Although they won't cause much fungal problems, it's always best to get rid of them anyway.

4 – Remove Any Algae Too: This problem should only occur if your lawn doesn't have good drainage and there is lots of shade. If any algae has formed you should remove it from the grass.

5 – Tree And Shrub Transplant: You'll already know if any trees and shrubs are growing in less than ideal locations inside your garden. Now is the time to move them to more suitable locations.

XII. GARDENING IN DECEMBER

By now you're probably beginning to wake up to heavy rain and strong winds more often than not. It will also be frosty, so there will be a thin layer of ice lying outside when you look out the window.

It lasts longer than normal due to the sun only staying around for a while if at all. If you're very unlucky it might even be snowing, but gardening in December still has to be done. Here is a list of the top jobs you'll need to take care of this month.

FLOWERS AND TREES



1 – Inspect Your Winter Protection: You'll already have carried out a number of jobs to keep your plants and trees secure during winter, but you must check them when gardening in December to make sure they're still in place.

2 – Don't Water Your Houseplants As Much: The daylight hours will be getting shorter and it won't be as warm throughout the day, so you'll be able to reduce the amount of water you give your houseplants.

3 – Plant And Move Trees: If you have deciduous trees and shrubs in your garden you can still move them to a more appropriate place, plus you will have time to plant new ones.

4 – Birches, Vines, And Acers: You need to remember to prune your birches, vines, and acers before Christmas. If you don't do this it could result in them bleeding.

5 – Remove Hardwood Cuttings: You can begin to remove hardwood cuttings if you haven't started to do so already. For the best results you should choose healthy stems about the same width as a pencil.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



1 – Prune Apples And Pears: Start pruning the apples and pears in your garden if they're currently open-grown. Those that are trained against your walls should be left alone.

2 – Harvest Root Crops: You can now begin to harvest your winter cabbages, parsnips, sprouts, leeks, and any other winter root crops you're currently growing in your garden.

3 – Be Aware Of Mice: Once winter fully sets in you're going to find mice trying to get their paws on your stored produce. If you plan on eating it you'll need to prevent them from getting to your food.

4 – Exhibition Onion Seeds: Start to sow your exhibition onion seeds as soon as possible. This will ensure the bulbs have plenty of time to grow so they end up as large as possible.

5 – Plant Rhubarb Crowns: Earlier in the year we talked about splitting rhubarb crowns, but if you don't have any you can start to grow them. You'll need to add in lots of organic matter.

LAWNS AND STRUCTURES



1 – Check Greenhouse Heaters: If your greenhouse heaters are working fine everything inside will be okay. Unfortunately they can sometimes break down, so you must ensure they're still operational.

2 – Insulate Outdoor Taps: Now is the time to insulate your outdoor taps to prevent your pipes from freezing or bursting. If they burst it could ruin your lawn and flood your home.

3 – Don't Let Ponds Freeze: If it gets too cold your ponds are going to freeze up. Keep a close eye on them to make sure this doesn't happen, especially when it's extra cold outside.

4 – Clean Your Gutters: It's crucial to remove any twigs and leaves from the guttering around your greenhouse and garden shed. It will let the water drain away and they won't fall down.

5 – Remove Algae from Paths: You're going to have a hard enough time walking on your paths if they're covered in ice. Remove any algae from them or they'll always be slippery.

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