

## November Gardening Calendar

10-17-2019

Early in the month fertilize the lawn with a “winterizer” fertilizer with a 3-1-2 ratio. Eighteen-06-12 is a common and effective “winterizer” formula. If you used a preemergent herbicide you may not be plagued by winter weeds but mow the lawn on a regular schedule to keep any weeds under control. Mow the winter lawn at the same height as you did your summer lawn.

November is a good time to plant trees and shrubs in the landscape. The plants get an opportunity to develop a root system before they must face the challenge of a South Texas summer. Dig the hole to the same depth and 2 or 3 times as wide as the root system as it exists in the container. It should never be planted deeper than it is in the container. Use the native soil taken from the planting hole to refill the hole. Using compost or potting mix has the potential to make it easier for water to enter the planting hole than it is to drain from the hole. Such a situation can result in the root system staying soggy and being drowned.

Mulch over the root system to a depth of about 4 inches with leaves, shredded brush or other organic material.

Soak the newly planted tree or shrub with the hose at its base so that the water moistens the soil in the hole and surrounding the root area. After the initial soaking, water the plant to the same extent every time it dries under the mulch.

The mulch is important for reducing evaporation of moisture from the soil and for reducing competition from weeds. The mulch should also make it unnecessary for a string mower to be used near the trunk of the tree. Many newly planted trees are permanently injured from string mowers severing the vascular system of the tree that is under the young bark.

If you have deer in your neighborhood it is also advisable to protect the young smooth bark from the bucks rubbing their new antlers on the surface. Injuries from deer rubbing, string mowers, and equipment wounds often will reduce the trees growth rate be one half and will sometimes result in the tree’s death.

Protect the young tree or shrub from deer rubbing by constructing a fence around the trunk at least 4 feet wide and 4 feet in diameter. The structure must be strong enough to resist the weight of the adult animals and tall enough so they can’t reach over the fence. Another protective option is to use one of the Tree-Guard products manufactured to protect the bark on young trees.

Select shade tree varieties that are drought tolerant, pest resistant, and long lived in addition to having the aesthetic characteristics that you desire. Some species to consider include live oak, Texas red oak, cedar elm, Mexican sycamore, Mexican white oak, chinkapin oak and bur oak.

November is a good month to plant pansies, violas, and Johnny jump ups in the garden. Use transplants and plant them in full sun. Snapdragons, stocks, sweet peas, calendula, dianthus, and ornamental kale can also still be planted. In the shade plant cyclamen and primrose for winter color.

In the vegetable garden the soil is cool enough to plant spinach in addition to, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, kale, collards, and Brussels sprouts as transplants. Use seeds for English peas, radish, beets, lettuce, turnips, and rutabagas.

The first freeze of the year often occurs in November. Last year it was November 14. Visit [plantanswers.com](http://plantanswers.com) for detailed instructions on protecting cold sensitive plants from freezing temperatures. Be prepared to move bougainvillea, oriental hibiscus, and other cold sensitive plants into shelter and to cover citrus and other plants.