

## Gardening Calendar for November

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November is an excellent time to plant trees and shrubs. Trees and shrubs planted in November have a maximum period of cool temperatures and moisture to develop a root system before the challenges of a hot, dry summer arrive.

Recommended trees and shrubs are capable of adapting to planting situations where the soil is shallow and/or low quality. In such situations select the transplant size to fit the amount of soil that is available for the planting hole. In other words, if you have limited soil and it is hard to dig a large hole, be content with a small transplant and small hole. The smaller transplants will usually adjust more quickly to the limited soil situation and grow faster than a large specimen stuffed into an inadequate hole.

As a second piece of advice, do not create a planting hole that will stay soggy because you filled it with potting mix or compost. This is a special problem in heavy soils. The water flows into the hole filled with potting mix but does not drain out. Return the native soil to the planting hole. Well adapted plants will grow in it effectively, and they must develop a root system out into the native soil if they are going to grow to full size. There is no advantage in survivability and growth rate in the long term if you fill the planting hole with potting mix.

There is an advantage, however, if you place 3-4 inches of mulch over the root system of newly planted trees and shrubs. Water them in well at planting, and water again when the soil dries under the mulch, usually every 10 days. Fertilize with a cup of slow release lawn fertilizer spread around the planting hole next spring.

For shade trees consider live oak, Mexican white oak, Texas red oak, shumard oak (if it is from an alkaline grown seed source) cedar elm, Mexican sycamore, bur oak, or chinkapin oak. For shrubs consider standard and dwarf Burford holly, standard and dwarf yaupon holly, Sandankwa viburnum, dwarf Chinese holly, standard pittosporum, and Texas mountain laurel. Visit [plantanswers.com](http://plantanswers.com) for more information on more recommended plant choices and about final size, growth rate, shade tolerance, and deer feeding preferences.

It is not too late to fertilize the lawn but it should be done during the first half of the month to achieve maximum efficiency in achieving winter hardiness and contributing to fast spring green up. Use a "winterizer" brand with a 3-1-2 ratio of nutrients, such as 18-6-12.

In the vegetable garden there is still time to plant all the winter vegetables. Use transplants for spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, collards, kale, and chard. Plant carrot, beet, turnip, radish, rutabaga, and lettuce seed. Do not bury the seed too deep. Lettuce seed must be planted on the soil surface.

For wildflowers use a Texas appropriate mix or individual packets of your favorite wild flowers. Spread the seed in full sun on a site where the seed can reach the soil. Wildflowers do not do well on sites where there is sod or other heavy plant growth. The soil does not have to be prepared for the seed. Consider transplants for bluebonnets.

It is best if you have waited until November to plant pansies and cyclamen. They both decline if they are subjected to the hot spells that sometime occur in October. Use cyclamen for containers or beds in the shade and pansies for plantings in full sun. Snapdragon, stock, calendula, dianthus, ornamental kale, primula, and alyssum can also be planted.

November is the best month to thin and replant iris. The drought tolerant plant makes a decorative blooming groundcover that the deer usually do not eat. Plant them in full sun with the top of the rhizome at the same depth as the soil surface.