

SPRING GARDENING TASKS

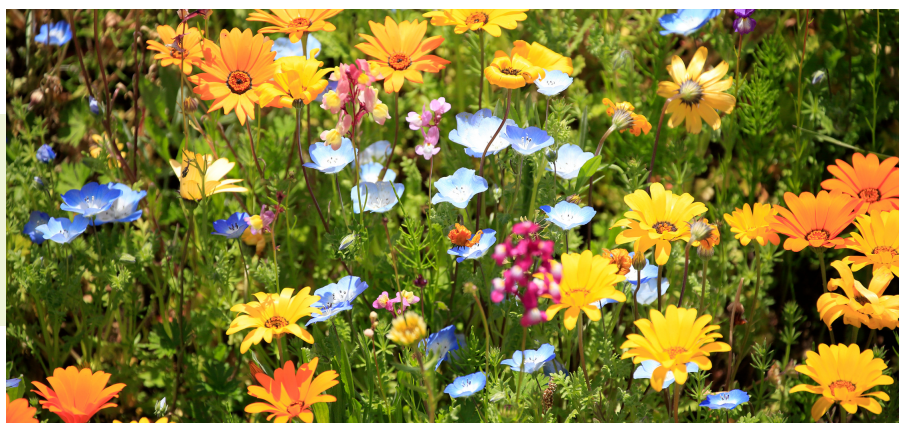


You will soon be engrossed in a frenzy of seed sowing, growing, and caring for your garden as it comes back to life as spring approaches. Spring is a fun time of year because it brings us outside and shows us how beautiful our gardens can be. Hope, new beginnings, and blossoming buds are all part of spring. Celebrate the sun's rise from the clouds and break through the darkness. It is time for us to enter the outside world once more as the ground thaws from the winter frosts.

The first of this year's gardening projects to get ready for Spring will allow you to once more enjoy the outdoors. Even though the right plants are crucial, they can't do everything for you. To grow into a great garden, there is still a lot of preparation and upkeep required. These pointers and suggestions should assist you in getting your outdoor space in top shape because getting your garden ready for spring should be a pleasure rather than a chore.

For the best advice on how to get your garden ready for spring, check out our helpful guide. So, get ready to brave the cold February air, don warm gardening gloves, and continue reading. A checklist of the steps detailed below should help you prepare your garden for spring.

In addition to growing advice, we will offer suggestions for general garden care so that your outdoor area is ready for summertime gatherings of family and friends. Are you prepared to emerge from hibernation? Let's dust off our dungarees and get ready for the warmer weather by rolling up our sleeves. You will have a stunning outdoor space that is bursting with vibrant flowers, bustling wildlife, and flourishing plants by the time summer arrives.

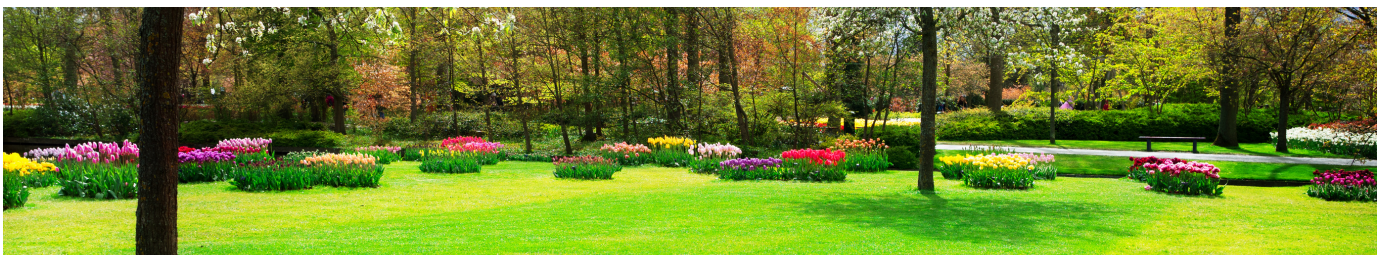


STEPS TO GET YOUR GARDEN SPRING READY

1. Pre-Spring Clean Up

Remember to collect any dead leaves and stalks that have fallen to the ground when “pre-spring cleaning” your garden. These must be removed because they can harbour diseases and provide a breeding ground for bacteria that can infect your plants. That would be an extremely unfavourable beginning to the growing season. Using a leaf blower will make this job easy. You can put most of the organic matter straight into a composter, which is yet another good reason to get rid of it. Because it will make excellent mulch for your flower beds, you can provide your garden with free food.

If you have a patio or deck, your hard landscaping may also need to be cleaned up. If you use cleaning products, make sure to protect your plants by using a thorough sweep and plenty of water. It will brighten up your garden as a whole if you clean your patio and decking after the winter. You probably noticed that they looked a little worse for wear. A pressure washer is your best friend for speed and ease. You don't have to spend an entire weekend scrubbing on your hands and knees to get an excellent finish.



2. Lawn TLC

You'll spend the majority of your time on your lawn in summer, whether you're relaxing on a lounge or playing in the paddling pool. So make time to beautify your garden's red carpet in spring, so you can enjoy it in style by the time the weather warms up.

You can cut the grass for the first time as soon as it starts to grow. To avoid injury, use a mower with the highest setting possible. In addition, you can make use of this time to level out any areas that are uneven and plant new grass seed to give your grass a new look.

Add amendments and compost next. Using a soil test, you can determine the pH and nutrient levels of your soil and what materials you might want to add. To improve the soil's texture, nutrient content, and moisture retention, add a healthy layer of compost if your soil is poor or clay-based. After that, lightly water the level of the soil to help it settle and get rid of any air pockets.

Start making your garden beds ready once the frost has gone away and the soil is dry enough to work with. Since soil tends to become compacted during the winter, the first thing you should do is turn it to loosen it up. Work the soil with a tiller or a sharp spade to a depth of 12 to 14 inches to loosen it. Any well-composed mulch or leaf litter should be added right away, but if it's too fresh, take it out first.

3. Reduce, Reuse & Recycle

When you remove all of the organic material from the garden, one advantage is that you can put much of it in the composter. You should make it a point to rotate the compost pile every spring. The bottom layer, which has been working hard over the winter, will make excellent mulch, which you can use to cover your flower bed. Did you find that you had too much compost? You could always give a portion to someone nearby.

4. Maintain Fences, Gates, Trellis & Decking

When it comes to minor maintenance tasks, late winter or early spring is the best time of year. Check the trellis, gates, and panels of the fence for signs of decay or damage from the elements. You will have more time to spend in the garden in the spring and summer if you fix any broken structures now.

Clean the gates and panels of your fence with a power washer to get rid of mildew, moss, and dirt. To get rid of stubborn grime, use a stiff brush. On a dry day, wait until the wood is completely dry before applying two coats of stain, paint, or wood preservative.



5. Garden Shed Spring Clean

During the winter, clean and sharpen your garden tools. If you take care of your garden tools, they will last longer, which will help you save money in the long run and stop the disease from spreading. Dirty secateurs are well-known for introducing fungi and bacteria to newly cut wounds.

To thoroughly clean bladed tools, make use of a scourer, hot water, and a strong detergent. Your tools' performance will also improve if you sharpen them; they will produce cleaner pruning cuts and be simpler to work with. Oil or WD40 can be applied to the hinges and blades following sharpening.

A thorough cleaning and oiling of hand tools, such as spades, hoes, trowels, and rakes, will also be beneficial. Check out our [Gardening Tools Articles](#) for more information on how to take care of your garden tools. Don't forget, we have a [garden tools section](#) if you need to replace any of your tools or get one of our sets if you are just starting.

You should also take advantage of this opportunity to get new supplies. Make sure you have enough soil amendments and fertiliser on hand. Pre-assemble any structures, like tomato cages, that you want to make for yourself and replenish your supply of plant supports. It is much simpler to complete this task in your shed while the weather is still unpleasant than to have to worry about it later in the spring when there are numerous activities that you would rather do outside.

6. Garden Furniture

The way your garden furniture is set up is a clear sign of what's to come. Pulling out your dining sets and loungers will free up more time later for summer due to the approaching bank holidays and brighter days.

Your wicker, plastic, or wood garden furniture will require some maintenance. Using a sponge and warm, soapy water, you can easily revive plastic. Anything made of wood may require additional assistance. After a straightforward clean, apply the appropriate wood oil to seal and shield it from the elements.

A warm solution of sugar soap and a scrubbing brush will restore wooden furniture to its original condition. The most common issue with metal furniture is rust. Make a thick paste by combining the baking soda with water. Using a cleaning cloth, apply the solution gently and leave it on for about 15-20 minutes. You can now remove it with wire wool.

If some of your furniture has seen better days, be sure to [check out our garden furniture selection](#).

7. Greenhouse Maintenance

To get your [greenhouse](#) ready for spring's seedlings and cuttings now is the ideal time to clean it thoroughly. Use a disinfectant or detergent to clean the outside of your greenhouse to get rid of algae, moss, and general dirt. During the growing season, this will let in more light and eliminate potential breeding grounds for diseases and pests.

Overwintering pests and diseases can thrive in the tiniest of crevices, so disinfect the glass's interior as well.

Use a hot garden disinfectant to clean the benches and floor of any plant debris. Wash pots and seed trays while you're there to help prevent diseases from spreading to your young plants. Over the next few days, make sure your greenhouse is well-ventilated to ensure complete drying.

Take the time to inspect the structure of your greenhouse for any damage to the glass or vents after it has been cleaned and shined, and then replace any broken parts.

8. Water butt Instillation

This winter, put in a water butt in your garden to make the most of the rain that falls during the season. Winter and early spring is when most of the year's rain falls, so now is the time to collect it! For eco-friendly gardening, it is essential to collect rainwater. In the summer, when there is a high water demand, water companies often have to use groundwater reserves and streams, which is bad for the environment and expensive for customers.

Additionally, rainfall provides the best water for plants. Rainwater is best for ericaceous plants like blueberries, Camellias, and Rhododendrons because tap water is often slightly alkaline.

Place your water butt underneath a shed or home downpipe when you install it. To siphon off some of the rainwater, you will need a diverter kit if your drainpipe is closed.

While you're at it, check your gutters and downpipes regularly, especially in the early spring. You need to make sure that your gutters are free of debris and gunk after all of the rain and wind.



9. Setting Up New Planters & Garden Beds

It's easy to become overly excited by the stunning new varieties you see in catalogues and order more plants than you can fit in your garden! To ensure that you have enough space to display all of your stunning new plants now is the time of year to construct garden beds. If you are a little short on space, check out our article on [vertical gardening](#) for some extra inspiration.



10. Pruned To Perfection

This time of year, many trees and shrubs could use some good pruning, especially those that bloom on new wood. Pruning back old wood in the late winter or early spring is ideal because you can shape the plant before the buds come out of dormancy and the plant starts investing energy in its branches. Buddleia, Cornus Canadensis (Flowering Dogwood), Honeysuckle, Hydrangea paniculata, Rose, and Wisteria are among the plants you should prune at this time of year. Additionally, early spring is an excellent time to shape and prune woody ornamentals.

However, there are a few things to think about before going snip-happy. Use a clean rag and some isopropyl alcohol to sterilize your pruners before each cut. By taking this precaution, you prevent accidentally dispersing plant disease throughout the garden. Second, because many plants bloom on old wood, you shouldn't prune them at this time of year. Camellia, Rhododendron (including Azalea), Hydrangea macrophylla (Bigleaf), Syringa (Lilac), Magnolia, Kalmia (Mountain Laurel), and Weigela are examples of plants that should not be pruned until after the blooming season has ended.

When you prune your plants, it's a good idea to give the soil a little fertiliser to make sure they have enough nutrients to heal quickly.

11. Banishing Weeds & Protecting The Soil

While you were away for the winter, the weeds were likely growing! You should remove as many weeds as you can to prepare the soil. You might need to use a weed killer for this, but you could do it by hand. Before any seeds can germinate, any found weeds must be removed from the soil and either burned or placed in the middle of a working compost pile, where the heat will kill them. Weed control fabric can be used to stop and control the growth of weeds in your borders and beds.

Rake the soil in your garden beds to keep the airflow going and ensure that new perennial plants have the best possible growing material when you start planting them. Adding new topsoil to your garden to get it ready for spring is a good idea.

12. Hunt Down Those Garden Pests

Examine the crowns of your perennial plants more closely to look for slug, snail, and aphid colonies that are hiding out for the winter. Check for white-vine-weevil larvae, which live in the compost and feed on plant roots, now if you haven't cleared out the summer bedding pots from last year. Be ready to treat for vine weevils this year with parasitic nematodes or chemical drenches, and destroy any larvae you find.

Even though you've taken the time to keep your garden clean and help keep diseases from spreading, pests sometimes still gravitate toward your plants. Under the leaves, look for flies and insects. While some species can be ignored, others will require specialised pest control.

13. Create A Planting Calendar

Have you ever found that you had to take a moment to try to remember when you planted a particular seed in your garden? Or remember when it was ready for harvest?

In that case, use a reliable notebook to create a planting and harvesting log. It doesn't have to be complicated or high-tech, but if you want to and have the design skills to make it happen, you can go that route. A planting calendar can be made fairly easily. It will assist you with keeping away from all the disarray of development dates, it will likewise give you space to take notes about sicknesses, victories and harvests.

14. Get Ordering

Ordering summer-flowering bulbs and seeds now is the ideal activity for a cold, wet winter day. This year, look for new seed and bulb varieties that will inspire you to plant and grow. Additionally, check out our “[Spring Bulbs Care Guides](#)” for additional bulb planting tips. You should be prepared with either sun- or [shade-loving plants](#), or perhaps a combination of the two, if you have already spent some time deciding where your garden will be located.

If you have been gardening for several years and will be planting your seeds, it is helpful to check the seeds’ condition and quantities. They will not survive if they are mouldy. They will need to be replaced right away in this situation. Pay close attention to the maturation dates because planting too late can result in crops that are not yet mature.



15. Sow Long Season Seeds

You can begin sowing the seeds of peppers, geraniums, and other plants that require a longer growing season in January and February. To ensure good growth, they should be started in a heated propagator or similar container. Some seeds will benefit from being planted inside, in pots, before direct sowing into sun-warmed soil. If you live in a region with shorter, colder summers—essentially, a shorter growing season—starting plants indoors is a particularly effective method for growing more vegetables. There is no need to rush to the store to purchase plastic planting containers. Biodegradable seedling pots can be made with a lot of things you already have at home.

Broccoli, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, cabbage, kale, peppers, and tomatoes are among the easiest seeds to start indoors. The soil will finally be warm enough to meet your seedlings’ needs when it comes time to transplant them outside. Additionally, you will be one step closer to a date with an abundant harvest.

16. Move Deciduous Shrubs

Because they will still be dormant, winter is a great time to move any deciduous shrubs. To prevent the wind from drying out the roots, move shrubs on a still day.

Make a wide berth around the shrub by digging a circular trench. Make an effort to remove as much of the root ball as you can so that it can quickly establish itself in its new location. Remember to water thoroughly after you replant your shrub in its new location. Place it at the same level it was previously in the soil.

17. Divide Perennials

Some perennials have the propensity to crowd out one another, affecting their performance year after year. The early spring division of Daylilies, Daisies, and numerous other plants is beneficial. Follow these easy steps to give these plants room to spread out before the growing season begins.

1. Be careful not to harm the roots by excavating around the clump's perimeter.
2. Lift the plant root ball from the ground by digging under it.
3. Make an effort to manually disentangle the roots and separate the various rootstocks or tubers. The clump will need to be cut up with a knife in some places.
4. Replant the new divisions immediately and evenly space them over a larger area.

This is an inexpensive and simple way to propagate a larger collection, and it will enhance the bloom display of these perennials!

Note: If your perennial clump is too large to remove, you may have to divide it while it is still in the ground by inserting two garden forks side by side into the middle of the clump, carefully pushing them apart, and then lifting out the divisions to replant.





18. Warm Up The Kitchen Garden

If you want to grow your own food, the best time to order seeds is right now. Additionally, you can now cover-sow some vegetables.

You can begin preparing your containers for propagation if you have a greenhouse or a large windowsill. Make your own containers entirely from newspaper, yoghurt pots, or old egg boxes or thoroughly clean any old pots.

19. Protect Your Fruit

Birds and other animals looking for food will be drawn to your fruit trees and bushes as spring approaches. If at all possible, use netting to protect them. Put nuts in a bird feeder as an alternative food source to help birds avoid it.

20. Add Some Annuals

For interest, combine tender perennials, annuals, and sub-tropical plants. Although it requires some effort, it introduces highlights and interesting features throughout the garden. Put them wherever you want to add a little bit of interest at different times of the year or where you have a problem area.

Planting a few annuals is a good way to learn which colours you might like if you want to change your borders but aren't sure how, where, or what colour to use.

21. Liven Up The Space With Pots

A great way to liven up a space or add a touch of style to your garden is to constantly alter your pots. Pots are an excellent tool for experimenting with the most recent colours. Pots are a great way to achieve this and change things up, as many people love to ensure that the views from the house are at their best throughout the year.



22. Early Planting

Finish the first round of planting. This time of year, many plants can be started indoors for spring planting, and especially hardy vegetables like onions, potatoes, artichokes, and some lettuces can be planted now. Take a look at the information about the plants for whatever you want to plant, and if you're planting outside, check to see that the ground isn't frozen.

Planting bulbs and perennials is typically simple—dig, drop, and you're done! Fill in the hole and water thoroughly after digging it to the right depth and spacing, adding any necessary soil amendments, planting the bulb or root ball, and making sure the crown is level with the soil.

Here's a trick for helping those roots settle in with trees and shrubs: the moat approach. Again, dig a hole that is big and wide enough for the plant's roots, add a cone of amended soil for the roots to rest on, and then add more amended soil to fill in the hole. However, before watering in, make a soil ring around the plant that is slightly wider than the original hole. While you water the plant, this ring will act as a berm, allowing you to achieve the necessary deep saturation without turning the entire area into a mud pit.

23. Don't Forget The Mulch

Mulch should be applied thickly everywhere you can. Mulch will be much more effective at preventing the establishment of weeds if applied prior to their growth. You won't be able to get rid of the weeds if you wait too long to mulch an area! We have a comprehensive [mulching guide](#) for you to refer to if you are unsure.



Your Questions

Which plants require trimming prior to spring?

“In preparation for spring, it’s a good idea to trim back woody shrubs in the winter. To tidy and “cleanse” the plant, prune out any diseased or dead growth. When you remove the older stems from shrubs like [Buddleia](#) to encourage new, healthy growth, you allow the younger stems to flower,” says [Chris Bonnett, a gardening expert for The Express](#).

What should gardeners do to protect new shoots of perennials and bulbs that have started to grow early this year?

When a severe frost is anticipated, using garden fleece to cover emerging perennial shoots is the best method for protecting them. During periods of cold weather, using garden mulch around the base of the new shoots would also be beneficial.