

FALL GARDEN TASKS



WSU EXTENSION
Cowlitz County



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FLOWERING PLANTS - Dividing Perennials:

1. General rule of thumb - divide spring and summer blooming perennials in the fall and fall blooming perennials in the spring.
2. Information on dividing perennials: [DIVIDING PERENNIALS](#)
3. Propagating Perennials - [PROPAGATING PERENNIALS](#)
4. OSU Dividing Plants -
<https://today.oregonstate.edu/news/divide-and-conquer-plants-keep-them-healthy-and-productive>
5. Spreadsheet - How to Divide Specific Perennials -
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1S6yqog4CnN_zqwG02uiOo28HT-is_LIP/view
6. Perennials that need winter mulch, and those that don't
<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/flowers-shrubs-trees/winter-care-perennials-central-oregon>



FLOWERING PLANTS - Overwintering Dahlias

- For details: [Digging, Dividing, and Storing Tubers – The American Dahlia Society](#)
- Take stem cuttings from mums, fuchsias, and geraniums to start new plants for next year.
- Dahlias - wait 2 weeks after they die down from the first freeze. Use a garden fork to dig up the tubers. Rinse them with a hose, and let them dry for 2 - 3 days on a wire rack.
- Discard any dead or diseased tubers.
- Divide as described in the article above.
- Store in a moist medium as described in the article - e.g., in moist vermiculite in a plastic bag.
- Temperature should be cool but above freezing - 40°F - 45°F



FLOWERING PLANTS-Overwintering Fuchsias, Begonias, and Geraniums:

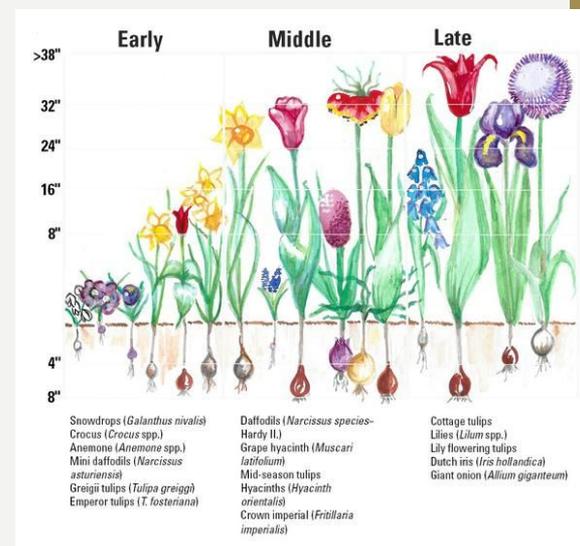
- **Fuchsia:** After bringing them in, gradually cut back on watering them until they enter a semi-dormant state, in which you only water occasionally. Indoor temps of 45° to 55° are best, with indirect light.
- **Fibrous Begonias:** Dig up before killing frost, cutting the stem to 1". Let them dry for 2 weeks, then brush off soil. Place in a box, covered top and bottom with vermiculite or sawdust. Store at 40° to 45°.
- **Geraniums:** Option 1 - Repot in fresh potting soil before the first frost. Cut back the plant by ½. Place in a cool place with indirect light. Water when the soil starts to get dry. Pinch off off as needed.

Option 2 - Place the entire plant in a paper bag and store in a darkened location at 45° to 50°. Each month, soak the roots for 2 hours, then return to storage. Replant in spring.



FLOWERS - Plant Spring Bulbs

- Rules of thumb
 - a. Plant bulbs 2-3 times as deep as they are long.
 - b. Always plant pointy side UP!
 - c. Plant in groups for a mass of color.
 - d. Full sun is best.
- Bulbs that naturalize - [Naturalizing Daffodils](#)
- Forcing bulbs to bloom in winter - <https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/forcing-bulbs-indoors/>



<https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/extension-gardener-handbook/10-herbaceous-ornamentals>



HOUSEPLANTS

- Bring your houseplants indoors well before the first frost. Most houseplants don't like temps below 50° F.
- Give them a thorough rinsing off, and check carefully for insects and diseases.
- Quarantine your plants away from plants that have been indoors, and check frequently to make sure there are no developing insect or disease problems.
- Stop fertilizing from now until March, and cut down on watering, as the plants will not be actively growing again until spring.



<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2073/2014/03/Winter-Houseplant-Care.pdf>

https://lancaster.unl.edu/hort/articles/2005/winter_houseplants.shtml

“Christmas” cactus blooming

- It takes 8 weeks to bloom. Plan accordingly.
- To bloom in 65° night temps, the plant must be in complete darkness for 15 hours a day. A closet, black cloth, or black plastic bag may be your best bet.
- Do not fertilize, and allow the soil to get nearly dry before watering thoroughly.
- Christmas cacti like a humid environment. Place the plant on a tray lined with pebbles, and pour water over them to evaporate. Do not let the pot sit in the water.
- Once blossoms appear, carefully move the plant to a location with bright but filtered light.



<https://extension.umn.edu/houseplants/holiday-cacti#pruning-and-growing-cuttings-1431366>

SHRUBS AND TREES - Winter Care

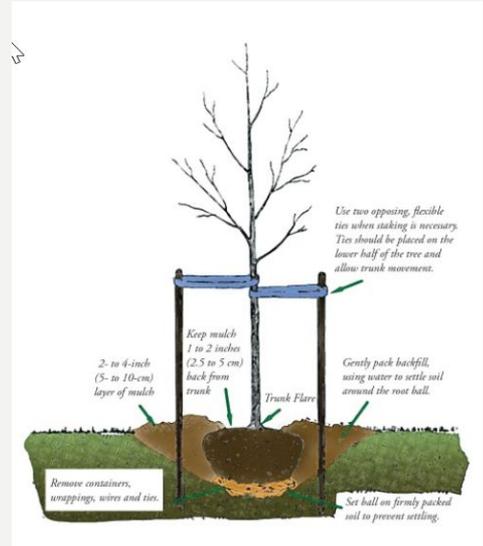
- **Sanitation is critical in reducing plant disease** - clean up plant debris under all trees, shrubs, and perennials.
- Prune off dead, damaged, or diseased branches. Disinfect pruners with Lysol or alcohol between cuts.
- Mulch around plants, but keep about 6 - 8 inches from the base/trunk of the plant.
- Protect the trunks of young trees from winter sun injury. Either 1.) wrap the trunk with white tree wrap or 2.) paint the trunk with a 50/50 mixture of water and white interior latex paint to about 4 ft. high. This will reflect the sun's heat from the vulnerable trunk and help prevent splits.



<https://extension.umn.edu/planting-and-growing-guides/protecting-trees-and-shrubs-winter#sunscald-1263860>

PLANT NEW SHRUBS AND TREES

- Best time to plant! Soil is warm, watering is not a problem, and roots will have months to establish.
Nurseries are having sales right now!
Choose the right plant for the right place!
- Plant correctly—don't put a \$100 plant in a \$10 hole! Hole should be 2 - 4 times wider than the root ball and slightly shallower.
Do **NOT** use soil amendments in the planting hole. The only thing that should be backfilled with the plant is the original soil and water.
- To help you choose:
 - WSU—Gardening with Trees and Shrubs
<http://gardening.wsu.edu/trees-and-shrubs/>
 - OSU—Landscape Plants :
<https://landscapeplants.oregonstate.edu/native-and-naturalized-woody-plants-oregon>
 - Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden—Great Plant Picks
<https://www.greatplantpicks.org/plantlists/search>



<https://www.treesaregood.org/treeowner/plantingtree>

FRUITS TREES and SHRUBS

- **Critically important!** Pick all diseased fruit from tree. Pick up all plant debris and fruit from beneath tree as soon as it falls and dispose of it—do not compost. Sanitation can prevent the spread of diseases and insects, such as apple scab, powdery mildew and codling moth.
- **Prune** any diseased, damaged, or dead branches from the tree. Clean pruners between cuts with Lysol or alcohol.
- **Mulch** around the the plant to keep weeds down. Keep the mulch about 8 inches away from the trunk/base of plant.
- If you had **Peach Leaf Curl** this spring, **spray with a copper fungicide when 50%** of the leaves have fallen.

Peach Leaf Curl





FRUITS: Disease Prevention

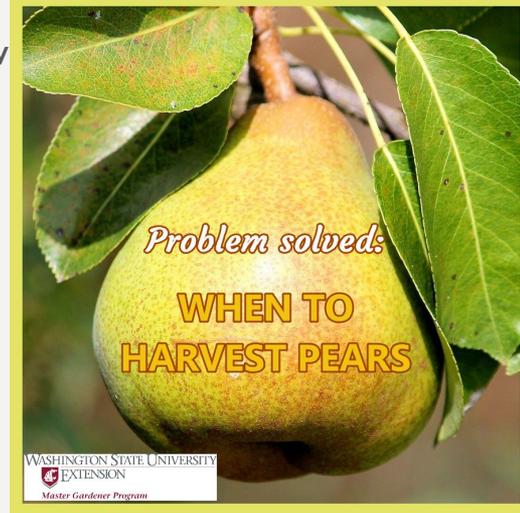
Raspberries:

- Cut the canes that had fruit (floricanes) to the ground.
- Secure the new green canes that grew this year (primocanes) to your trellis system. They will flower and bear fruit next year.
- Keep them watered--1-1.5 inches per week. Avoid overhead watering.
- **Peaches:** If you had [peach leaf curl](#) or [coryneum blight](#), spray with a fungicide containing chlorothalonil or copper in late October. Start again in January and apply 3 times at three week intervals.
- **Apples:** If you had [anthracnose](#), apply a fixed copper fungicide two weeks before harvest (before the fall rains).
- Fantastic resource: [Managing Diseases in Home Orchards](#)

ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW ALL LABEL DIRECTIONS!

PEARS: When to Harvest

- **What's the biggest mistake?** Letting the pears ripen on the tree, because they ripen from the inside out! If they "feel" ripe, they are mush inside. So how do they ripen?
- Summer/Fall pears like Bartlett and Orcas ripen in August, and can finish ripening on your counter.
- Winter pears such as Bosc, Comice, Highland, and Anjou are usually ready to pick mid-September through October, and need a resting period in cold storage immediately after harvesting. They won't ripen unless they're in cold storage for 8 - 10 weeks.
- The best indicator of ripeness is the "lift test." Gently lift the fruit horizontally. If it easily breaks away from the spur, it's ready to harvest. If you have to yank it, the fruit isn't ripe.
- Immediately after picking, store unbruised, undamaged fruit in unsealed perforated plastic bags in a cold location—30°F - 32°F. Keep away from ripe fruit, onions or potatoes in storage.
- After cold storage, place the pears you want to eat on the kitchen counter for 3 -10 days to complete the ripening process.



<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/fs147/html>

<https://extension.wsu.edu/maritimefruit/tree-fruit-harvest-storage-tips/>

SLUGS - Mating Season Alert:

- Mating takes place between September and November.
- Eggs are usually laid in the soil and look like tiny translucent (1/8 to 1/10 in.) pearls.
- Set traps with beer in a shallow pan or place a board where you usually find them, then check under it in the morning and destroy them. Monitor every day for best results in lowering the population next spring. [More info and ideas from OSU.](#)
- You also have the option of using a slug killer, but if you do, **use one with the active organic ingredient Iron Phosphate.** AVOID METALDEHYDE products—they are very toxic to pets and birds. Read the directions—more is NOT better. Protect yourself, other creatures, and the environment.



SLUGS--

- This is a list of organic slug bait/killer with iron phosphate that are labeled for use by homeowners in Washington →
- For more information:
- <https://agsci.oregonstate.edu/slug-portal>
- <https://agsci.oregonstate.edu/slug-portal/education/q-questions-and-funnies>



WORRYFREE L/M FERRAMOL SLUG & SNAIL BAIT /ORGANI...	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4)
MONTEREY SLUGGO [27]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4)
BONIDE SLUG MAGIC MAKES SLUGS DISAPPEAR [109]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4)
SLUGGO PLUS /ORGANIC GARDENING [57]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4);SP...
BONIDE BUG & SLUG KILLER [194]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4);SP...
BAYER ADV DUAL ACTION SNAIL & SLUG KILLER BAIT RTU ...	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4)
BUG-N-SLUGGO INSECT, SLUG & SNAIL BAIT [32]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4);SP...
BRANDT ANTIXX PLUS ANT & CRAWLING INSECT KILLER [19]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4);SP...
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LOVELAND LEAF LIFE SLUGGO SNAIL AND SLUG BAIT [317]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4)
SLUGGO MAXX BRAND [126]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4)
NATRIA SNAIL & SLUG KILLER BAIT [71]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4)
NATURAL GUARD BY FERTI-LOME SLUG & SNAIL BAIT [253]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4)
NATURAL GUARD BY FERTI-LOME BUG, SLUG & SNAIL BAIT...	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4);SP...
ESPOMA ORGANIC BRAND SLUG & SNAIL BAIT [20]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4)
SLUGGO SLUG & SNAIL BAIT [22]	IRON PHOSPHATE (FEPO4)

Source: <https://picol.cahnrs.wsu.edu/>

Extending the Growing Season:

With cooler temperatures coming in September through the rest of the year start to plan on how to extend the production of your garden.

Here are a few great sites that can help you out immensely:

<https://extension.wsu.edu/snohomish/plastic-culture-to-extend-growing-season/>

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/pnw548.pdf>

<https://extension.umn.edu/planting-and-growing-guides/extending-growing-season>

<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/extending-garden-season/>

WSU Master Gardener Training Manual (Chap 6 & 25).

How to build a hoop house:

<https://www.motherearthnews.com/organic-gardening/low-tunnel-construction-mini-hoop-house>

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/ec1627.pdf>

From GARDEN to TABLE or FOOD PROCESSOR!

How do you know when to pick your vegetables?

When garden produce is ready to harvest don't hesitate.



Frequent picking encourages more produce in some plants.

- **Onions**-stop watering when the stems turn yellow, and knock them down. They will start their ripening process. Pull them up about 10 days later. Set them out to dry in a well ventilated area until their skins turn papery.
- **Winter squashes** are harvested fully mature when the skins feel hard and waxy. In autumn, there is no hurry to harvest winter squashes unless excessively cold or wet weather is approaching. Pick winter squashes with stems attached. Cure in a warm, dry place and store at room temperature. Under these conditions, winter squashes store between 3 to 5 months.
- **Potatoes** start to die back in late summer or early fall, when the tubers are mature. Stop irrigating after the tops die back naturally or you cut them off. Dig your potatoes approximately 2 weeks after the vines have died back.
- **Garlic** is ready to harvest after the leaves on the lower third of the plant have turned yellow. Remove garlic with stalks intact from soil and place in cool dry ventilated place to dry.
- **Cabbage** should be harvested when the head is small and firm. More mature cabbage can be woody.

When to Harvest Vegetables:

- The links below will help you to determine when to harvest:
 - [When to Harvest Vegetables](#)
 - [Planting and harvesting times for garden vegetables](#)
 - [When to Harvest Fruits and Vegetables](#)
 - [Harvesting Carrots](#)
 - [Harvesting Corn](#)



Putting your Garden to Bed:



Planning

Mow Low

Mulching

Cover Crops

Tool Repair/Sharpening

Removing Plants

Amending Soil

Lime

Covering Beds

Tool Stowage



https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/four_easy_steps_to_put_your_school_garden_to_bed

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2051/2017/09/Time-to-Put-the-Yard-and-Garden-to-Bed-for-the-Winter.pdf>

<https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/home-lawns>

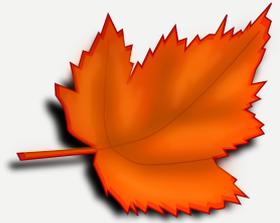
Cover crops

<http://pubs.cahnrs.wsu.edu/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/publications/FS111E.pdf>

[Putting your Garden to Bed PowerPoint hyperlink!](#)



Give your garden a head start!

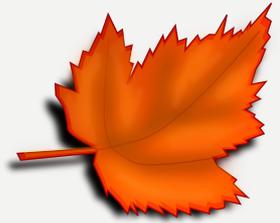


Mulch your garden with shredded leaves.

- No spring weeds
- Adds nutrients to the soil
- Improves soil oxygen
- Improves soil moisture holding capacity



Give your garden a head start!



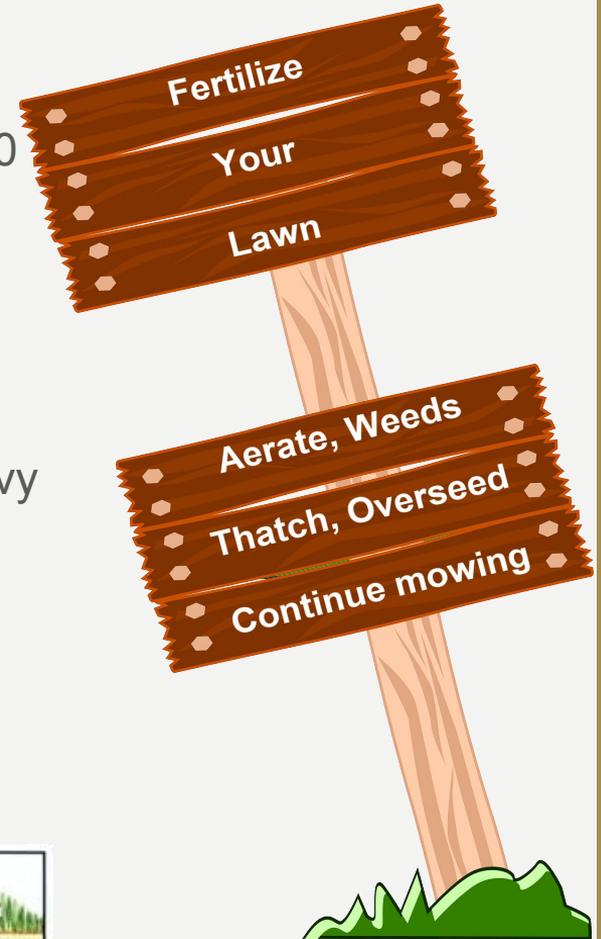
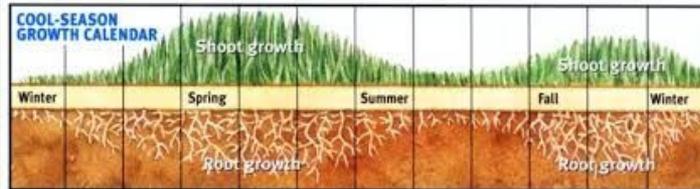
**Cover with a tarp
to hold the leaves
in place.**

**Leaves will
compost over the
winter.**



Lawns:

- Apply a late-fall (Thanksgiving) application of 24-0-10 of slow release granular fertilizer.
- Aerate if necessary.
- Control perennial weeds like dandelion and ground ivy
- Thatch if necessary and overseed where thin during September.
- Keep mowing if the grass greens up after summer drought.



Vertebrate Pests:

In the Pacific Northwest there are numerous vertebrate pests that a gardener has to be aware of and plan to deter:

Birds, chipmunks, deer, elk, nutria, opossums, mice, moles, raccoons, rabbits, skunks, voles.

Links for [Vertebrate Pests](#)



Gardening Tips by month January through December

- cowlitzcomg.com/gardening-tipsmonth-by-month

Always choose the LEAST TOXIC OPTIONS!

- [SIMPLE, HOLISTIC, COMMON SENSE METHOD OF MANAGING GARDEN PESTS & DISEASES](#)
- [Home Vegetable Gardening in Washington WSU EM057E](#)
- <https://pub.extension.wsu.edu/home-vegetable-gardening-in-washington-home-garden-series> (click on DOWNLOAD NOW)

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Visit our website
Tons of great gardening information
Recordings and slides from past workshops.
cowlitzcomg.com/workshops-videos

Scan QR Code



UPCOMING WORKSHOPS



HAVE A GARDENING PROBLEM? ASK A MASTER GARDENER!



SUBSCRIBE TO OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL-SEE WORKSHOPS YOU MISSED!



MONTH-BY-MONTH GARDEN TIPS



LANDSCAPE GARDENING



FRUITS



VEGETABLE GARDENING



LAWNS/TURF/PASTURE



COMPOSTING



POLLINATORS, SPIDERS, BENEFICIALS, INSECT PESTS



HOW-TO DEMONSTRATIONS- for adults and kids



WEEDS

DIAGNOSTIC RESOURCES

- **Hortsense:** <http://hortsense.cahnr.wsu.edu/Home/HortsenseHome.aspx>
- **Pestsense:** <http://pestsense.cahnr.wsu.edu/Home/PestsenseHome.aspx>
- **PNW Handbooks:**
- **Insect Management** <https://pnwhandbooks.org/insect>
- **Plant Disease Management Handbook:** <https://pnwhandbooks.org/plantdisease>
- **Weed Management Handbook:** <https://pnwhandbooks.org/weed>
- **WSU Plant Pest Diagnostic Clinics:**
- **CAHNRS Plant Pest Diagnostic Clinic, Pullman**
- **WSU Puyallup Plant & Insect Diagnostic Laboratory**