

Phoenix Gardening Calendar

There are two main growing seasons in Phoenix: from mid-February until the end of May, and from September to mid-November.

January

- The only winter month in Phoenix.
- Spray dormant shrubs.
- Last chance to plant bare roots trees and shrubs.
- Prune roses and deciduous fruit trees.
- Monitor freeze warnings
- Plant summer bulbs.

In the vegetable garden

- Plant bare roots asparagus and strawberries.
- Plant cabbage, carrots, lettuce, potatoes, radishes.

February

Possible frosts until mid-February. The growing season starts then in Phoenix. Since the growing season is so short, don't lose time. We need to give as much time as possible to plants and trees to grow before the punishing summer heat.

- Weed prevention with pre-emergence herbicide.
- Complete rose and deciduous tree pruning.
- Start spring planting.

After the 15:

- Start fertilizing: use a calendar to keep track of your fertilization program.
- Start planting frost tender plants and shrubs.

In the vegetable garden

- Plant beets, bush beans, cantaloupe, carrots, corn, eggplant, lettuce, peppers, potatoes, radishes, summer squash, tomatoes, watermelon.

March

- Weed prevention: weeds are starting to grow fast, that's when they are easier to control.
- Keep on with spring planting.
- Start planting for summer.
- Check your watering system, everything needs more water.
- Fertilize

In the vegetable garden

- Plant beets, bush beans, cantaloupe, corn, eggplant, peppers, radishes, summer squash, tomatoes, watermelon, winter squash, basil

April

- **Weeding:** April and May are the worst months. If you have done your homework in winter, you should be all right, else do your best and plan for more prevention next year.

- **Planting:** Except for bedding plants, your summer planting should be finished now: summer really starts in May in Phoenix, so it is your very last chance. It is the best month for tropical plants like Bougainvillea, Lantana, Citrus, etc.
- **Lawn:** Weed and feed your Bermuda grass lawn. It starts growing when the night temperature stays above sixty. Re-seed bare patches.
- **Roses:** Remove dead flowers and fertilize roses after each bloom period for a final crop before hot weather.
- **Citrus:** Check that all the trunk parts of citrus and young trees that are exposed to the sun are painted white. This keeps them cooler and protects them from sunburn. Use white latex paint diluted with water (1 volume white flat latex paint for 1 volume water)

In the vegetable garden: Plant cantaloupe, eggplant, peppers, pumpkin, summer squash, watermelon, winter squash.

May

- **Weeding:** summer is coming, bermuda grass is actively invading flower beds.
- Stick to your fertilizing program. It is a good time to use acid fertilizer with plants needing it. Check plants for chlorosis (yellowing of the leaves).
- Thin fruits, to increase their quality and prevent them from dropping as the heat sets in.
- Mulch wherever the sun is shining directly on the dirt to keep the roots cool.
- Protect your Sago palms from direct sun to prevent them from yellowing.
- Check your potted plants, except for the toughest most resistant, they might need to be watered twice a day. Keep the pot out of direct sunlight to avoid cooking the roots.
- **Maintenance and cleanup:** Check your drip watering system for the coming summer heat. Verify the ground humidity around all plants. Check your drippers every other day to see if any popped out now that heat is making the hoses softer.
- Replace bedding plants like petunias that won't take the heat.
- Finish the cleanup of last winter frost damage.
- **Citrus:** Check that all the trunk parts of citrus and young trees that are exposed to the sun are painted white. This keeps them cooler and protects them from sunburn. Use white latex paint diluted with water (1 volume white flat latex paint for 1 volume water).

In the vegetable garden:

- Plant cantaloupe, pumpkin, winter squash.

June

A hard month for young plants, it is very hot and very dry. Concentrate on helping your plants survive.

- Stick to your fertilizing program.
- Check that all the trunk parts of citrus and young trees that are exposed to the sun are painted white. This keeps them cooler and protects them from sunburn. Use white latex paint diluted with water (1 volume white flat latex paint for 1 volume water).
- Cut your grass higher (2 to 3 inches) to decrease the water use.
- Check your drip watering system. Verify the ground humidity around all plants. Check your drippers every other day to see if any popped out now that heat is making the hoses softer.
- Plant pumpkin, winter squash.

- Start collecting spring bulbs after their leaves die naturally. The exceptions are daffodil bulbs that can stay there, flourish over summer. Daffodil bulbs are toxic, so they are generally safe in the ground.
- It is a good time to plant palm trees.

July

Even hotter than June until the monsoon arrives. Humidity starts arriving from the gulf of California. Gardening is almost at a standstill.

- Stick to your fertilizing program
- Check all your plants on a regular basis to see if they get enough water. It is good to check the drippers every 2 weeks to see if they are not clogged. Deep water your trees.
- Check your drip watering system. Verify the ground humidity around all plants. Check your drippers every other day to see if any popped out now that heat is making the hoses softer.

In the vegetable garden

- Plant bush beans, cantaloupe, eggplant, pumpkin, summer squash, watermelon, winter squash. They will produce in the fall. Shade your young plants.

August

The monsoon is bringing little relief, so the air is not as dry. This is the beginning of the summer growing season in the desert.

- Hold on trimming plants for another month to prevent sunburn.

In the vegetable garden

- Plant bush beans, corn, eggplant, peas, summer squash, tomatoes.

September

The weather is cooling down, but the monsoon is finished, water needs are still high. Planting is not as hard on the plants if you wait until the night temperature falls in the 70's to do your plantings.

In the vegetable garden

- Plant beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, eggplant, garlic, lettuce, peas, radishes.

Your lawn:

It is time to decide if you are going to overseed your lawn with winter grass. If you are not, high nitrogen fertilizer will keep it green longer.

October

The weather is cooling down, that's now that you want to plant citrus, but also your winter bloom and vegetable.

- A great month to do your planting, the nurseries are loaded with container grown plants.
- It is also the right time to divide perennials
- Time to sow wild flowers.
- Plant impatiens in shady, frost protected area of the garden

In the vegetable garden

- Plant artichokes, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, garlic, lettuce, peas, radishes.

Your lawn:

The nights are getting cool enough, it is time to sow winter grass. If you don't do it, fertilize again your Bermuda, to keep it green as long as possible.

November

- Get ready for freeze warnings that can happen any time from the very end of November until mid-February
- Citrus start being ready to pick.
- When the nights start cooling down, sow winter grass (annual rye grass) if you want your lawn to stay green.
- Plant spring bulbs tulip, daffodils, hyacinths, muscaris.

In the vegetable garden

- Plant artichokes, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, lettuce, peas, radishes.

December

- Plant artichokes
- Plant bare root trees and shrubs when they become available at the end of the month.
- Rake the leaves fallen from the trees, most deciduous trees like ashes, elms, apricot trees, peach trees start losing them after the first frosts. They keep losing them until the end of December. Beware that any frost sensitive plants growing in their shade will be losing their protection.

In the vegetable garden

- Plant artichokes, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, lettuce, peas, radishes.