

# GreenScapes Seasonal Planner



## SPRING

March | April | May

### Flower and Vegetable Gardens

- ❖ Prepare new planting beds and gardens by mixing in one to three inches of compost.
- ❖ Pull weeds when they first start growing, while soil is moist and roots are short, before they go to seed.
- ❖ Buy plants that resist disease and use less water.

### Tree and Shrub Beds

- ❖ Prepare new tree and shrub beds by mixing compost into the entire bed (not just planting holes).

### Lawns

- ❖ Start mowing, about three inches high for most lawns in northern states; two inches for lawns in southern states. “Grasscycle”—leave the clippings for free fertilizer.
- ❖ For lawns in poor condition: aerate, overseed and top-dress with a quarter-inch to half-inch of compost.
- ❖ Fertilize lawns if needed in May with “natural organic” or “slow-release” fertilizer.

### Watering

- ❖ Check soil moisture at plant roots before watering—don’t water until they need it.
- ❖ Lay out soaker hoses in beds and cover with mulch.
- ❖ Prepare sprinkler systems by testing, adjusting and repairing leaks.

### Composting

- ❖ Harvest compost from your bin. Throw any uncomposted sticks or stalks back in for another cycle.



## SUMMER

June | July | August

### Flower and Vegetable Gardens

- ❖ Mulch flower and vegetable beds with compost or grass clippings to conserve water and control weeds.
- ❖ Use fabric row covers to keep pests off sensitive vegetables.
- ❖ Identify bugs before you spray, squash or stomp—they may be “good bugs” that eat pests.

### Tree and Shrub Beds

- ❖ Mulch shrub and tree beds with shredded wood, leaves or bark once a year to conserve water, reduce weeds and feed the soil.

### Lawns

- ❖ Mow regularly, and leave the clippings on the lawn.
- ❖ Keep mower blades sharp to reduce lawn damage and brown tips.
- ❖ Consider saving water by letting some lawn areas (ones that don’t get heavy traffic) go brown and dormant until fall.

### Watering

- ❖ Water at dawn to reduce evaporation.
- ❖ Water lawns one inch per week, if no rain, or let go brown and dormant (but water enough to moisten root zone once a month).
- ❖ Start and re-check watering systems, and adjust for weather. (Don’t water when it rains).

### Composting

- ❖ Add yard debris to compost pile; water pile to keep it moist. Place pile in shade or cover to hold moisture.

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## FALL

September | October | November

### Flower and Vegetable Gardens

- ✿ Pull emerging weeds in beds when ground is moist and before they develop deep roots.
- ✿ Mulch garden beds with leaves or compost to reduce winter weeds and feed the soil. Or plant winter cover crops in open beds.
- ✿ Prepare new planting areas by digging in compost.

### Tree and Shrub Beds

- ✿ Mulch tree and shrub beds with leaves, shredded wood or bark.
- ✿ Plant trees, shrubs and many perennials in early fall to give them a good start.

### Lawns

- ✿ Improve thin areas of lawn in September–October by aerating, overseeding and top-dressing with compost.
- ✿ Fertilize lawns with “natural organic” or “slow-release” fertilizer in September to develop healthy roots and crowd out weeds.
- ✿ Plant new lawns to give them the best start before next summer.

### Watering

- ✿ Reduce watering during cooler weather.
- ✿ Shut off and drain watering systems if you expect a freeze.
- ✿ Put away exposed soaker hoses, or re-cover with mulch if left out.

### Composting

- ✿ Clear unwanted garden growth and compost it for spring. Keep pile as moist as a wrung-out sponge.



## WINTER

December | January | February

### Flower and Vegetable Gardens

- ✿ Rake winter leaf mulch back onto beds if winds blow it off.
- ✿ Weed beds once during winter to prevent weeds going to seed.

### Tree and Shrub Beds

- ✿ Prune fruit trees and other woody trees and shrubs while they're dormant (December–February). If you have questions, check with your local Cooperative Extension office or a nursery.

### Lawns

- ✿ Tune up yard equipment; sharpen mower blades. Plan drip irrigation or soaker hoses for beds and container to conserve water.
- ✿ Winter is the time to plan for spring.
- ✿ Check storage areas for unwanted chemicals, and dispose safely. Call your local solid waste agency for details. Plan to replace plants that have disease or pest problems.

### Watering

*Let nature do the work.*

### Composting

- ✿ Continue to add fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, egg shells, nut shells, and house plant leaves and stalks from inside your home to your compost pile year round.