



The Roosevelt Elementary School "What to do in the Garden" Calendar

January

Winter blooming shrubs brighten dark days

- If the weather is mild, transplant and install shrubs and trees.
- Prune dormant, leafless, deciduous trees when you can see the branch structure. Yank vigorous winter weeds.
- Build a cold frame to protect seedlings and cuttings, and to extend the abundant year.
- Draw your food garden master plan, rotating crop locations from last year.

February

Longer days, but soil and air still cold.

- Finish up pruning. Don't uncover roses, prune or plant when temperatures drop below freezing.
- On mild days, plant bare-root roses and fruit trees. Mid-month, pull mulch partly away from emerging bulbs and perennials.
- Hunt hidden slugs and pearly eggs.
- Start broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower indoors under a fluorescent shop light. At month's end, move starts into a cold frame or sheltered outdoor location to toughen.

March

Leaves emerge, plants awaken.

- Divide perennials. Share extra plants with neighbors or pot up for Roosevelt school plant sale next month.
- Fertilize the garden with slow-release fertilizer. Plants need nutrients now during their growth spurt.
- Dig garden beds deeply. Add fertilizer and compost. Transplant February cabbage-family seedlings outdoors. Sow beets, chard, lettuce, onions, peas, potatoes, radishes, spinach and turnips outdoors. Start tomatoes, peppers and eggplant under lights.

April

The garden in coming alive

- Finish garden cleanup and fertilizing. Plant annual seeds of asters, cosmos, marigolds, zinnias. Take stored fuchsias and geraniums outdoors; cover if frost returns.
- Stake perennials such as peonies and delphiniums that will soar into summer.
- Thin direct-seeded vegetable crops as they sprout. Sow carrots and parsnips.
- Late in the month, plant squash, zucchini, pumpkins and cucumber seeds indoors in large peat pots.

May

Plants growing so fast you can hear them

- Trim spring-blooming shrubs like camellias and rhododendrons after bloom. Remove spent bulb seedpods, allowing bulb foliage to mature.
- Fill containers for summer color. Combine herbs with annual flowers.
- Plant dahlias, gladiolus and calla lilies. Harden tender transplants by putting them out in a sheltered location and bringing them in at night.
- When soil warms, seed corn and beans. Transplant starts of heat-lovers such as tomatoes, peppers, squash and cucumbers.

June

Abundant flowers, color, and scent this month

- Encourage birds in the garden for help with insect control. Plant yarrow, dill, fennel and alyssum to attract beneficial insects.
- Mulch the garden with a thin layer of straw or rough compost after soil warms. Control weeds with frequent light cultivation. Give vegetables an inch of water a week as rains taper off.
- Pick the garlic scapes (blooms) so they send their energy to the bulb.
- Replant replacement crops when early lettuce, mustard greens, bok choy and spinach mature.

July

Plant, harvest, and enjoy the abundance

- Plan for fall flowers. Some annual seeds, such as cosmos, if sown now, will bloom in September. Fertilize container gardens regularly with a liquid food. Nip off dead flowers.
- Harvest beans, cucumbers and summer squash promptly to keep them coming.
- As you harvest peas and lettuce, plant carrots, peas and rutabagas for fall harvest.
- Start cabbage, and over-wintered broccoli, kale and onions for transplant next month.
- Dig, wash and hang garlic in a dry place to cure.

August

Relax in the warm, ripe garden.

- Weed, deadhead and spread fresh compost after watering. Cut out spent raspberry canes. Fertilize and water strawberry plants after harvest. Any summer pruning to do?
- Dig potatoes when green top growth dies back. Pull out finished crops, replenish soil and replant. Sow fall beets, spinach and turnips in the first week. Pull out July-sown crops.
- Plant leaf lettuce, radishes, overwintering spinach and Swiss chard all month.

September

Enjoy the bounty of the harvest.

- Keep flowers picked to keep blooms coming. Divide summer blooming perennials such as iris and early poppies.
- Pick pears when swollen but still green for better texture. Pick up all dropped fruit and compost far away from the tree so pests cannot overwinter in the soil.
- Sow winter choys, mustards, and cabbages early in the month.

October

A busy month of fall chores

- Sharpen shovels and tools. Divide and add new perennials, plant ground covers, shrubs and trees. Transplant from now through March.
- Choose and plant crocus, daffodils, and tulips. Plant garlic cloves before Halloween for a pungent harvest next summer.
- Compost garden wastes as you tidy for winter.
- Sow a green crop such as crimson clover, vetch or field peas, in empty spaces. Green manures suppress weeds and add nitrogen and organic matter when dug in next spring.

November

End of the clean up before a rest

- Finish garden cleanup and weeding; leave some seeds on flowers for birds.
- Move container plants into winter shelter
- Plant out onion transplants sown in July; they'll be ready next June. Finish planting bulbs.
- Pile 2-3 inches of fall leaves over unplanted areas, garlic bulbs, tender perennials, and over any root crops saved for winter eating.
- Spread lime on vegetable gardens when crops are harvested to give it several months to "work" before crops go in. Use 5 pounds of dolomite lime for 100 square feet every two years.

December

Delight in winter birds and berries

- Prune evergreens for holiday decorations.
- Stay warm inside, dream of next year's growing season, and be grateful for the blessing of the garden.