

# Enjoy the final moments of gardening

As the air turns crisp and thoughts turn from back-to-school to holidays like Halloween and Thanksgiving, we can also enjoy our last moments of gardening before the snow flies. Autumn is the time for cleaning up and putting your home outdoors in order for the long winter ahead.

Clean up your garden by removing debris, diseased foliage and weeds. Plant flower bulbs now that will provide you with welcome blooms from the first hint of spring's warmth through into early summer.

Prune and shape trees and shrubs. Cut off all dead wood and foliage. Fertilize your plants to promote early spring growth. Fall is the perfect time to divide, reorganize and transplant plants, most perennials, shrubs and trees benefit from fall planting, giving them time to anchor and establish new roots. Using a high phosphate fertilizer also promotes root growth. Be sure to add a 2 to 3 inch layer of mulch to new plants. Rake leaves onto flowerbeds and around shrubs

and bushes to create a warm blanket that protects plants against severe cold.

Eliminate potential winter homes for garden pests by ensuring sheds, porches and sheltered alcoves are closed tight and cleared of items that will encourage nesting. Take the time now to ensure gardening tools are in excellent condition to avoid wasting time getting started next spring. Sharpen mower and other tool blades. Clean and dry garden tools with moving parts that can seize or rust if left untended.

Fall gardening provides the opportunity to enjoy the sights and sounds of the season, from the turning leaves to the birds and animals making their own preparations for winter. And the rewards will be great in the spring when you venture back to your garden!

For more fall gardening information and tips visit [www.miracle-gro.com](http://www.miracle-gro.com) or talk with the staff at your local garden centre.

—News Canada



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