

Annual Landscape Maintenance Calendar



I thought a calendar of activities would be a good topic with which to begin the year and hopefully you'll find it helpful. This is my calendar and you may not agree on the tasks or the timings. I enjoy seedheads and I believe dead stalks on perennials help them overwinter. I also believe dead leaves (if not infected with scale or a disease) return nutrients to the soil so I don't remove them. Almost all of my pruning is done starting in March. If pruning gives the plant a signal to replace the missing limb, then pruning in the spring after most frosts is the preferred time. I check plants for pests and usually wait to see if the beneficial bugs in my garden will make the pests disappear.

Winter (December, January, February)

Early Winter

- Shut down irrigation – run once per month on days that don't go below freezing or twice a month if we've had no rain or snow.
- Remove winter weeds like mustards. They are much easier to remove after a rain or snow.
- Move waterlilies to the bottom of the pond
- Remove **infected** plant debris

Late Winter

- Cut cool season ornamental grasses to the ground and use an ice pick to open the plant for new blades.
- Add soil amendments (compost, dry molasses, worm castings, alfalfa meal) to vegetable beds. Dry molasses helps increase soil organisms and make the soil more fertile. Worm castings

provide some immunity to plants against disease. Alfalfa meal provides nitrogen. Compost fixes everything!

- Remove debris from vegetable beds.
- Transplant cool season vegetables like broccoli or kale.
- Seed cool season vegetables into your vegetable beds (read seed package instructions for zone 7 timing as it may be March or April)

Spring (March, April, May)

Early Spring

- Fertilize bulbs and remove foliage once it browns.
- Hire knowledgeable person to prune big stuff
 - Tall trees – get a certified arborist
 - Summer blooming shrubs and trellised vines
- If you have roses, go to the Rose Society pruning demonstrations at the Tony Hillerman Library, but don't prune yours yet.
- Prune plants on west facing areas first, then south, east, and finally north facing areas. I try to remove dead stems from sundrops, catmint, valerian, culinary sage, English thyme, ornamental oregano, and chocolate flower as soon as I see leaves on them. All these are on the west side of my house and they leaf out first.
- Remove seedheads on fernbush.
- Top off organic mulch
- Crush decomposed leaves as you see them and let them remain in place.
- Remove dead leaves at the base of the plant for red yucca, beargrass, agaves and yuccas.
- Fertilize daylilies with Hookers formula liquid fertilizer (mix fish emulsion, seaweed, Superthrive, Sequestar iron, and 1 T. Epsom salts in a 5 gallon bucket of water)
- Plant more cool season vegetable seeds

Mid Spring

- Trim grasses in meadow with a weedwhacker.
- Prune roses
- Raise waterlilies in the pond and fertilize them using pellets
- Start up irrigation with same settings as fall once daytime temperatures exceed 85 degrees.

Late Spring

- Cut warm season ornamental grasses to the ground.
- Plant warm season vegetable seeds
- Buy annuals for pots (after Cinco de Mayo)
- Put out transplants e.g. tomatoes and hot chiles after Cinco de Mayo
- Prune spring blooming trees and shrubs after they complete their bloom.

Summer (June, July, August)

- Deadhead perennials as blooms fade
- Increase frequency of irrigation when temps go over 85.
- Hand water with a hose in the morning, when temps go over 95

- Water pots

Monsoons

- Remove weeds
- Seed wildflowers
- Plant native perennials and shrubs and continue into the fall if it's too hot for you.

Fall (September, October, November)

Early fall

- Remove seedheads from invasive plants: Russian sage, torch goldenrod, valerian, Maximillian sunflower, and purple prairie clover.
- Dig and transplant daylilies
- Plant hardy trees and shrubs
- Fertilize daylilies with alfalfa pellets

Mid to Late fall

- Plant spring bulbs after first frost
- Reduce frequency of irrigation once freezes are predicted

I enjoy the seedheads from perennials, shrubs, and especially grasses over the winter. With grasses like Little Bluestem, sand bluestem, and blue grama I have color and motion all winter.