

# Fall Garden Checklist

---

Use this checklist to guide your fall garden cleanup and prep. Along with essential tasks, we've included BONUS chores and seasonal prep tips to help you get even more out of your fall gardening season.

## Wildlife-Friendly & Soil-Boosting Tips

- \_\_\_ Chop leaves with a mulching mower instead of bagging them.
- \_\_\_ Spread shredded leaves over garden beds as free mulch.
- \_\_\_ Create refugia with chicken wire and leaves to shelter beneficial insects.
- \_\_\_ Use leaves as mulch between vegetable beds—rake in decomposed matter next spring.
- \_\_\_ Add leaves to worm bins to boost microbial activity.
- \_\_\_ Leave seed heads and grasses for birds and winter interest.

## Bonus Fall Chores

- \_\_\_ Clear vegetable beds—compost healthy plants, discard diseased ones.
- \_\_\_ Water new trees, shrubs, and perennials deeply before the ground freezes.
- \_\_\_ Mow grass one last time at normal height (about 3 inches).
- \_\_\_ Cut back perennials like hostas and daylilies that get soggy.
- \_\_\_ Empty containers, compost soil, and scrub pots before storing.
- \_\_\_ Clean and sharpen garden tools so they're ready for spring.

## Seasonal Prep & Protection

Note: Not all of these chores apply in every climate. Cold-climate gardeners especially benefit from some of these extra protection steps.

- \_\_\_ Mulch tender perennials and roses after the ground freezes.
- \_\_\_ Divide and transplant perennials that have outgrown their spots.
- \_\_\_ Plant spring-flowering bulbs like daffodils, tulips, and alliums.
- \_\_\_ Protect young trees by wrapping trunks to prevent sunscald and critter damage.
- \_\_\_ Bring in frost-tender plants (tropicals, houseplants, succulents).
- \_\_\_ Drain and store hoses, and shut off outdoor faucets to avoid freeze damage.
- \_\_\_ Clean birdhouses and feeders to prepare for winter visitors.
- \_\_\_ Top off compost piles with extra leaves for slow winter breakdown.
- \_\_\_ Check mulch depth around shrubs and trees—maintain 2–3 inches, pulled back from trunks.
- \_\_\_ Store lawn furniture and garden décor to prevent weather damage.

Tip: Remember, a two-phase approach of removing diseased and weedy material now and leaving the rest for spring keeps your garden tidy while also supporting pollinators and wildlife.