



Winter Garden Tips

Winter is an important time for gardens. Many people think of winter as a time to forget about gardening and outdoor spaces. Since we spend our time indoors during this season, often our gardens and patios get neglected.

Here are some things to consider about the garden in the winter. These activities can help ensure that next spring will produce the beautiful results that we anticipate and expect.

PREPARATION

Winter represents an important spoke in the gardening life-cycle. Winter is the time of preparation. During this period in nature, the ground will usually be covered with decaying debris left over from the Autumn months. This debris breaks down and returns to the top-soil providing important fertilization for the upcoming spring growth. Another thing that you can do to help this fertilization process is to add some cover foliage. This foliage can help hold nutrients in place and when it dies, it too provides fertilization.

If you live in areas where winter is fairly warm, then you may not have to treat this period much differently than you would treat the other seasons. But even if you live in areas where winter climates are frigid, there are many plants that can do well. A couple popular plants that do well in these temperatures are annuals and evergreens. Some vines are also evergreen and can provide a lush vibrant look to an otherwise gray and bleak season.

WATERING

Watering is sometimes still important in the winter. You should consider watering the ground anytime that it is not frozen and will accept water. This keeps valuable moisture in the soil and supports any other plants that may be holding on until spring. Also, if you have evergreens, they will need this water during the winter.

TRIM IT BACK

Trim or prune away dead foliage from the various areas in the garden where it may have accumulated during the fall and early winter. Dead grasses,

leaves, limbs and vines can make a garden appear drab and depressing. This will also make room for the new growth when Spring time rolls around again. The debris can also be mulched up and used as bedding in flower beds or fertilizer for any other garden areas.

CLEAN IT UP

Remove leaf buildup from flower beds, ponds and other garden features. The leaves that fell in autumn along with other dead plant debris can also clog up the rain gutters on your home. They can wreak havoc on ponds, pump systems, pools and other water features as well. Winter is a great time to get all this stuff cleaned up and ready for spring. Keeping these things well maintained will protect your investments.

Another thing to remember is to disconnect those hoses and other accessible irrigation equipment. Open up the connections and drain out any water that you can. Sometimes this water can freeze inside hoses and sprinkler lines and cause damage as it expands. Finding broken fittings and lines in the spring is quite common when proper care was not taken during the frozen months.

PROTECT LIVING PLANTS FROM FREEZING TEMPERATURES

Ice can do considerable damage to your plant life. Remove ice buildup from plants and trees carefully to prevent damage to limbs and branches. Take care not to break frozen limbs.

This is also a good time to focus on those indoor plants. If you have potted plants outside, bring them in. Many of these plants will provide nice decoration for the interior of your home during the cold season. Caring for indoor plants during this season will keep you in a gardening frame of mind and when spring comes around.

Taking care of your winter garden is not difficult, but it does take a bit of work. Just remember that the effort is worthwhile, and you will thank yourself in the spring. 🌳

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