



Gardening Quarterly

Spring 2019

GET YOUR GARDEN SPRING-READY

The frost has thawed and the sunshine feels warmer. Spring is here and while you may be ready to stop and smell the roses, your garden needs some TLC first.

In order for your garden to thrive, it needs some help focusing its energy on new growth, holding moisture and protection from invasive weeds.

What You Need:

- Mulch
- Rake
- Shovel
- Pruning shears
- Gardening gloves

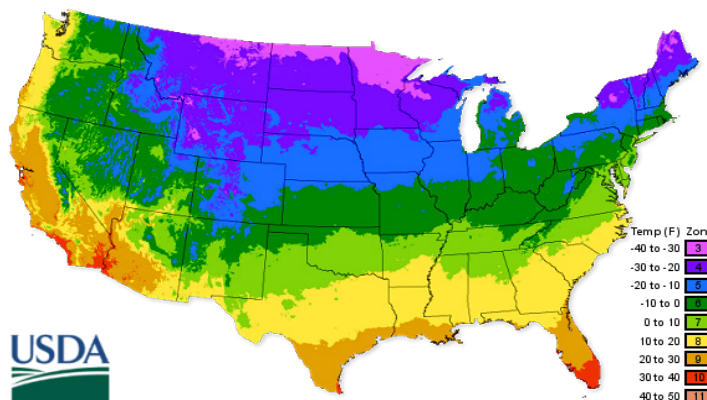
Before doing any spring cleanup work in your garden make sure you have your garden gloves on at all times to prevent injury. Start by clearing away any dead foliage or stems from the previous growing season by using your pruning shears. Now that the temperatures are warmer, vital garden critters don't need them for shelter and your plants need to place their energy on new growth.

Next, remove any invasive weeds -- in particular winter annuals -- so your plants aren't competing for nutrients. While winter annuals die back in the summer heat, it's best to take care of the problem now before your garden becomes overwhelmed.

Finally, to retain moisture, place a layer of mulch in your garden, careful not to cover incoming spring blooms. Any type of mulch will do. Most common mulch materials are typically wood chips or shredded leaves. Either one will help your garden soil lock in moisture and regulate temperature fluctuations.

Now that your garden is ready for the growing season, you can kick back in the sunshine and enjoy the spectacular color show of this spring and summer.

KNOW YOUR ZONE



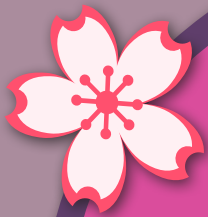
Understanding your plant hardiness zone will help you plot the right garden with the right plants at the right time. Your plant hardiness zone is determined by the USDA based on the average winter temperatures your location experiences.

Each zone is assigned a number from 1 to 13 with a 5-degree F temperature range. For example, if you live in Miami, FL, you're considered zone 11a and have 40- to 50-degree F average winter temperature. Or, if you live in Chicago, IL, you're in zone 5b and experience an average winter temperature range of -15 to -10 degrees F. Quite a difference, right?

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Knowing your zone helps gives you the upper hand in maintaining your best garden possible. You can plant the right flowers that tolerate your zone and learn how to care for them. This includes noting which bulbs to dig up and overwinter before the first frost and the right time to sow seeds and plant summer-flowering bulbs.

To find your plant hardiness zone, visit <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov>.



What's in Bloom?



HYACINTHS



DAFFODILS



SIBERIAN SQUILL