

## May Gardening To-Do List

Welcome to May, one of the most volatile months of the year here, weather-wise. We can experience an entire year's worth of seasons in this one month. From warm, sunny days to blustery cold and snowstorms, to hail-producing thunderstorms. Never a dull moment in May! So along with being prepared to cover or protect delicate plants if bad weather moves in, here are some other things to keep you busy in the yard and garden this month:

1. **WEED!** Weeds are sprouting up all over, so stay on top of them and pull or dig them out before they flower and go to seed. The more you dig up this year, the less you will have to deal with next year!
2. **PLANT** shade and fruit trees, shrubs, perennial herbs and flowers, and frost tolerant annuals. Wait to plant warm season annuals in the ground until nighttime times are consistently above 40 degrees; usually by the 3rd week of May.
3. **HARDEN OFF** seedlings of warm season vegetables (tomatoes, peppers, eggplant) you've started indoors by slowly introducing them to the outdoors. Place them in a shaded, protected area to start with, then gradually expose them to more sun and leave out for longer periods of time until they eventually are out all night (assuming nighttime temps are consistently above 45 degrees - generally no earlier than Memorial Day unless you are using season extenders).
4. **DIVIDE** perennials, such as iris, Shasta daisies, daylilies, bee balm, vinca, etc. Add them to other areas of your garden or share them with neighbors. (The Gardening with Altitude group on Facebook is a great place to post if you have plants you want to share!)
5. **TUNE-UP** your lawn mower. Sharpen the blades, change the sparkplug, oil, filter.
6. **FEED** your established trees, shrubs, and perennial beds with a slow release, all-purpose fertilizer.
7. **REMOVE** the spent flowers of any spring flowering bulbs, but do not cut back the leaves. Allow them to die back naturally, as this will provide the energy needed for next year's blooms. If you want to divide or move any bulbs this fall, make sure to mark their location now so you will be able to find them in October.



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