

May Gardening To-Do List

It's May! The sun is shining (most of the time), the days are getting warmer, and the garden is waking up. It is finally time to get outside and play in the dirt! Here are a few of the things that need to be done now:

1. **ASSESS** your flower beds. Do you have perennials or ornamental grasses that are getting overcrowded? Now is the time to dig them up and divide them. If you don't have a place to plant the divisions, share them with a friend or neighbor. Are there bare spots in your garden bed? Spring is a great time to plant perennials; their root systems will be well established before the heat of summer kicks in. Or fill those spots with annuals for season long color. Remember that some shrubs and perennials take longer to 'wake up' from their winter nap. Don't count something as dead until at least mid-June. If there is still no sign of life by then, it is probably safe to assume it didn't survive.
2. Continue to **PLANT** trees, shrubs, and perennials. Summer flowering bulbs such as Dahlia, Gladiolus, and Lily can be planted now if the soil temperature is above 50 degrees F. Start hardening off your tender annuals and vegetable seedlings. Continue to sow cool-season crops such as spinach, peas, and kale outside through the end of the month. Start cucumber, melon, and squash seeds indoors.
3. **SUPPORT** potentially floppy perennials like Delphiniums, Hollyhocks, or Peonies, with cages or stakes before they get too tall, to prevent damage to tender shoots or flower stalks.
4. **OVERSEED** your lawn if you have bare spots or the lawn is looking a little thin. Rough up the area to be seeded with a rake, then cover the seed with no more than ¼ to ½ inch of soil. Wait at least 4-6 weeks after germination to fertilize your lawn.
5. **ENJOY** all that Spring has to offer in the garden. Grab a cup of coffee, or a glass of wine, take a walk around your gardens, and appreciate the beauty of new beginnings.



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