

Minnesota Gardens & Landscapes

APRIL 2016

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Spring has arrived in Minnesota! Now that winter weather is (hopefully) behind us and the days are growing longer, we're able to spend more time tending to our gardens, lawns, and landscapes. Not quite sure where to start or need some inspiration? We've provided some helpful guidelines, ideas, and tips to help your yard work and gardening go smoothly.

Scheduling garden and landscape tasks

No matter where you live, yard work looks the same; the only difference is when you do it. With so much to be done come springtime, it's hard to know where and when to start. The University of Minnesota has made it easy for us by [designing garden and lawn care calendars](#) specific to the Upper Midwest. Of course, it's hard to cover everything, especially when our state spans approximately 407 miles north to south, but these schedules are a great guide for planning tasks like planting, mulching, and fertilizing.

Gardening Calendar

GARDEN CARE	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV
START SEEDS INDOORS	SUMMER VEGS								
DIRECT SEED COVER CROP**		---					---		
DIRECT SOW SEEDS				SUMMER VEGS		FALL VEGS			
PLANT ANNUALS			---		---				
PLANT PERENNIALS			---		---				
DIVIDE PERENNIALS*		---		---					
WATER		---							
MULCH BEDS			---					---	
PLANT SPRING BULBS							---		
PLANT SUMMER BULBS				---					
WEED CONTROL			---						
FERTILIZE			---		---				
DEADHEAD			---		---				
CLEAN UP VEGETABLE GARDEN								---	
CUT BACK PERENNIALS	---								---

LEGEND
 --- Indicates the **best time** to perform this garden activity for optimal results.
 - - - Indicates acceptable time to perform this garden activity.

Take the guesswork out of scheduling your garden activities by using this calendar made by the University of Minnesota. It outlines the acceptable and optimal times for each task to ensure the most fruitful results.

Lawn Care Calendar

LAWN CARE ACTIVITY	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV
SEEDING		-----			-----			-----
SODDING		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	
FERTILIZING		-----	-----		-----	-----		
MOWING		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
WATERING		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	
AERATION		-----			-----	-----		
DETHATCH		-----			-----			
WEED CONTROL: Crabgrass*		Pre-emerge -----	Post-emerge -----					
WEED CONTROL: Broadleaf			-----			-----		

LEGEND

----- Indicates the **best time** to perform this lawn care activity for optimal results.

----- Indicates acceptable time to perform this lawn care activity.

* Pre-emergence herbicides are applied before crabgrass seedlings have emerged from the ground. Do not apply if you have seeded. Post-emergence herbicides are applied to the visible crabgrass plants and should be applied when crabgrass plants are small.

Did you know the best time to fertilize grass is in late summer/early fall? Follow this schedule to efficiently maintain your lawn year-round.

Watering your lawn and garden

Watering your garden and lawn seems simple enough, but too much or too little water can damage plant and grass roots beyond repair. To make sure this doesn't happen to you, follow plant care instructions and consistently monitor your plants for signs of over or under watering. Each plant, grass, shrub and tree has specific water needs, but there are some general practices that make efficient use of water and promote plant growth.

If your grass looks wilted, flattens when you step on it (doesn't bounce back quickly), or begins to change yellow color, it needs to be watered. Also, feeling soil beneath the surface can help you gauge moisture. Water early in the day and no later than early afternoon. Cool morning temperatures prevents water from evaporating too quickly, but allows enough time to dry before dark. Watering your lawn in the evening will keep your grass excessively wet for a long period of time, promoting development of disease. Wait as long as possible between watering. This encourages root growth, creating deep root systems use water efficiently and are resilient in times of drought. Avoid overwatering by stopping before water begins to pool or runs off the surface. Adding a layer of mulch or compost to the soil surface soaks up excess water and prevents evaporation.

Saving your [c1] lawn from urine damage

Though we love our dogs, the urine burns they can leave on our lawns is an unfortunate consequence. The burn is caused by the high concentration of nitrogen in dogs' urine so even though you may want to grab your

fertilizer, it will only further the problem. Once the damage is done, it's best to allow the grass to grow back on its own. The best way to reduce burns on your grass is by diluting your pup's urine. Water spots where they've eliminated and keep them from frequently urinating in the same spots. When walking your dog, you can bring a spray bottle along to keep your neighbors' lawns burn free as well.

Find other information on repairing common lawn damage like molds, salts, and more on the University of Minnesota's Extension website.

Selecting your plants

A beautiful landscape requires the right plants. To help you choose the best plants for yours, check out the excellent tool developed by the [University of Minnesota Extension](#). This program, called Plant Elements of Design is specifically tailored to the Upper Midwest and features plants that work well in the colder climate of Minnesota. The database allows you to search by plant, zone, soil type, landscape use and much more! Learn more about the database and try it out for yourself [here!](#)



Minnesota Grown Nurseries & Landscaping

Purchase Minnesota grown seeds, mulch, shrubs and the rest of your planting needs from one of 174 farms, nurseries and garden stores in the 2016 Directory, available both [in print](#) or [online](#).

In spring, you can also find garden seedlings, bedding plants, hanging pots and many other garden plants at farmers markets!

No yard? No problem.

Are you lacking outdoor space for your own garden? Don't let that stop you! Community gardens allow neighbors to rent a plot for the summer to plant whatever they'd like and are perfect for those without land access. Community gardeners not only benefit from the nutritious produce they harvest, but also have the opportunity to meet other members of their community, form relationships, and share their gardening knowledge.

To find a community garden near you, check out Gardening Matters' [directory](#). Their website also features terrific [resources](#) for coordinating, funding, and establishing a community garden in your area!