



July

GARDENING TIPS

for San Antonio

**Mulch is beneficial for ALL plants (inground and containers)
It conserves soil moisture by preventing evaporation,
suppresses weeds that compete for moisture and nutrients and helps
regulate soil temperature around roots of plants.**

Annuals:

- Vinca (periwinkle), torenia, begonia, purslane/portulaca, gomphrena, bat face cuphea, and a few more hot-weather-loving annuals can still be planted IF and only IF you can commit to keeping soil somewhat moist daily for a few weeks. Extra care is needed to keep them watered through the hot summer.
- Annuals, especially in containers, need consistent fertilizer to keep them looking their best. Fertilize but don't over-fertilize, and ALWAYS water well after feeding. We like the Nelson Plant Food line, there is a fertilizer for everything.
- Shear back leggy annuals to promote new, fuller growth, then offer fertilizer and a deep watering.
- Pinch of flowers on coleus and caladiums. You're growing these for their gorgeous flowers, not blooms. Pinching creates fuller, lush growth.

Perennials:

- Water perennials thoroughly this month; slow and deep waterings. Thoroughly" means the soil should be moist 4"- 6" down.
- Don't freak out if your perennials aren't quite performing the way you want this month, the heat shuts down the production and growth of many plants.
- Pinch back mums and asters to get them ready for fall blooms.
- Perennials that are still blooming beautifully are: Duranta, Esperanza, Pride of Barbados. Keep the rootball of these plants evenly moist (not soggy) if you plant them this month.

Roses:

- Make sure roses have 3-4" of mulch around their bases. This goes a long way in the hottest of summer months to regulate soil temperature, prevent weeds, and to help stretch out your watering days.
- Continue deadheading roses, but no hard pruning needed this month.



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Herbs:

- Avoid drought stress, check and replace mulch layers, and pinch back blossoms.
- -Enjoy harvesting dill, cilantro, basil and other annuals that go to seed in the heat. Feed basil after harvesting.

Fruit:

- For blackberry canes that produced this year summer pruning this month is essential for future harvests. Search "blackberry" on our website for help.
- Deep, infrequent watering is crucial, especially during dry spells, mulching helps retain moisture and regulate soil temperature (do NOT pile mulch up against the trunk).
- When watering: For young trees, create a moat around the base with mulch to retain water. For older trees, water at the drip line (the area that extend to the reach of the furthest branch).

Ornamental Grasses:

- Ornamental grasses can still be planted this month, but regular watering to get them established is imperative.

Veggies:

- You might not want to hear this, but you should already be thinking of your fall veggie gardens.
- Begin seeds inside or in a bright shady spot outside for cole crop transplants to plant in early fall. Acclimate them to full sun over a period of a couple of weeks until they are used to being in it full time.
- If you want to plant okra or sweet potatoes, do so by the first week of July.
- Offer veggie gardens at least an inch of water a week, rain or irrigation. New transplants will need water more often.
- Want pumpkins for Halloween? Plant pumpkin seeds no later than mid-month.



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Turf:

- Be hyper-vigilant about watching the lawn for signs of chinch bugs. Lawns can be destroyed quickly by these soil-dwelling pests. (Treat with insecticides that have Imidacloprid as main ingredient, or beneficial nematodes..as long as soil temps are below 95°)
- If you've suffered from gray leaf spot in your St. Augustine, avoid nitrogen fertilizer mid June to September to help reduce outbreaks. Apply labeled fungicides (F-Stop, etc..), to control; multiple applications may be needed.
- Look for areas of turf that are in decline. Could pruning a tree open your lawn up to receiving more sunlight? If that's not an option, you may think of replacing sections of turf with a more shade-tolerant groundcover.
- Water lawns when needed, but don't over-water as this can increase the likelihood of fungal problems, and water only in the morning hours.

Trees and Shrubs:

- Best to hold off on planting shrubs and trees until fall. They will struggle to establish their roots in the hot temperatures.
- However, crape myrtles are in bloom and it's the best time to choose them for their color. If you don't want to plant them now because of the heat, at least go see them at the nurseries and take note of your favorite color's name. We have tips for buying in summer and planting in fall, just search 'crape myrtles' on our website.
- If rain has not occurred in a week, offer young trees a thorough soaking.
- Palm trees can still be planted through August.
- If you are trying to push some shrubs into faster growth (non-mature shrubs that were planted in spring), you can fertilize this month with a 3:1:2 ratio slow-release fertilizer. Make sure to **water thoroughly** afterwards.