

IN THE GARDEN: THINGS TO DO

APRIL

We, in NO WAY, claim to be experts when it comes to gardening so for this checklist we give credit to The Old Farmer's Almanac... something tried and tested since 1792 must be doing something right!

www.almanac.com - visit their website for a smorgasbord of advice and information.

Experts no but eager rookie perhaps. There is something pleasurable about rolling up your sleeves, pulling on your rubber boots and getting down and dirty outside in the garden... and something equally as pleasurable when enjoying that well deserved cold beer at the end of the day!

Below is a checklist for April ... happy digging!

- Prune your deciduous trees and shrubs. Also, thin out spring-blooming shrubs after the blossoms fade.
- Spray apple and pear trees for scab when buds appear, to avoid disease.
- Once dangers of hard frost have passed, prune roses. Remove all damaged wood, spindly canes, crossing branches, and blind shoots without flower buds.
- Fertilize your berry plants. Spray insecticidal soap on strawberries if you spot aphids.
- Fertilize any spring-blooming bulbs and ornamental plants that were not fertilized in March. Fertilize spring-blooming shrubs after they finish flowering.
- Fertilize your lawn. Apply 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn.
- Plant beets, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, chard, lettuce, peas, and potatoes.
- If soil temperature is above 60 degrees, you may plant beans and sweet corn.
- If you have transplants in the yard, be sure to protect them from any late spring frosts with a cover.
- If you're planting, keep an eye out for slugs. Clean up weeds and hiding places quickly. Avoid insecticides that kill beneficials. Use slug control products with iron phosphate.
- Reduce insects and disease in your garden by providing your plants with proper ventilation and removing all weeds.
- Use floating row covers to keep insects such as beet leaf miners, cabbage maggot adult flies, and other insects away.
- Start annuals, such as marigolds, zinnias, and cosmos, indoors.
- Let foliage of spring-flowering bulbs brown. Once died down, divide if desired.
- Consider planting drought-tolerant flowers, such as coneflowers, iris, and sedums.

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Canada

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.COM



PHILIP DUMOULIN
Senior Vice President, Sales
604.787.2114

SANDRA MILLER, PREC*
Senior Vice President, Sales
778.833.1169



*Personal Real Estate Corporation