

Amateur Hour's

FALL PLANTING GUIDE FOR ZONE 6 GARDENERS



Tips and tricks
for your Zone 6
garden in Fall

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Understanding Zone 6 Climate

Before beginning your fall garden, it's important to familiarize yourself with local frost dates. In Zone 6, the average first frost occurs around late September to early October, while the last frost is typically in late April to early May. Understanding the nuances of Zone 6 climate is key to fostering optimal crop growth and yield.



Ideal Fall Crops

Vegetables like **broccoli**, **carrots**, **lettuce**, and **spinach**, as well as herbs like **parsley** and **cilantro**, are excellent choices for your Zone 6 fall garden.

Summer Just Isn't Enough

With thoughtful choices, you can extend your harvest season and cultivate an assortment of produce through the year.

Zone 6 gardening in Fall can be a rewarding experience that allows you to enjoy fresh produce even as the weather begins to cool. Remember, gardening is a blend of science and art — so observe your garden closely, adapt to its needs, and delight in the joys of nurturing life from seed to table all year round.



Transitioning your garden from Summer to Fall

1. Clear out any spent summer plants and remove weeds to create space for your upcoming crops and prevent competition for nutrients and space.
2. Gently mix compost into the top few inches of soil to improve soil structure, promote drainage, boost nutrient content.
3. Identify a location for your garden that receives a minimum of 6 hours of sunlight per day; sunlight is crucial for the growth and development of Fall crops.

Sow seeds directly into the soil or use transplants. Follow seed packet instructions for proper planting depth and spacing. Keep the soil consistently moist during germination. Mulch around your plants to retain moisture and regulate soil temperature.





Extend the Season!

Consider using row covers or cold frames to protect your plants from early frost. These structures trap heat and provide insulation. Planting in succession, where you plant a new batch of seeds every few weeks, can also extend your harvest period.

Caring For Your Fall Garden

- **Regularly inspect your plants** for signs of pests or diseases, and take action promptly if needed.
 - **Use organic fertilizers** rich in phosphorus and potassium to encourage root and flower development.
 - **Water deeply but less frequently** to prevent waterlogging.
 - **Apply a layer of organic mulch** around your plants to retain moisture, regulate soil temperature, and suppress weed growth.
 - **Trim back** any dead or diseased plant parts.
 - **Deadhead flowers regularly** to encourage healthy blooming and redirect the plant's energy toward healthy growth.
 - **Leverage the benefits of companion planting** by strategically placing compatible plants next to each other.
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Try a new technique — three tricks to try this Fall

1. **Practice succession planting.** As you clear summer crops, fill in the gaps with fast-growing fall varieties like radishes and arugula to ensure a continuous supply of fresh greens and root vegetables throughout fall.
2. **Experiment with overwintering crops.** Plant hardy crops like garlic and onions in the fall, so they establish a strong root system during the cooler months, resulting in robust growth and an early yield the following spring.
3. **Create a fall container garden.** Choose compact varieties of vegetables like mini peppers, compact lettuce, and dwarf carrots. Fill containers with well-draining soil mix and strategically place in sunny spots.



Remember, your Zone 6 Fall garden is a canvas where science and nature unite. By adhering to these care tips, you'll be nurturing a flourishing garden that not only thrives during the fall but also sets the stage for a vibrant spring ahead.



Maturity Matters

Choosing varieties that have shorter maturity dates is advisable to ensure your plants have enough time to grow before the winter sets in. You can do this by checking how long each plant variety needs to mature and then counting back from the estimated first frost to determine your optimal planting dates.

Always refer to local gardening resources or cooperative extension services for more specific planting advice based on your exact location in Zone 6.



Ideal Plants for Zone 6 Fall Gardening

Need to know what to plant? We've got you covered. Review this list of suitable plants for your garden this fall.

Leafy Greens

Lettuce | Spinach | Arugula | Kale | Swiss chard | Mustard greens | Collard greens

Root Vegetables

Carrots | Beets | Radishes | Turnips

Cruciferous Vegetables

Broccoli | Cauliflower | Cabbage | Brussels sprouts

Herbs

Parsley | Cilantro | Chives | Rosemary | Thyme | Sage

Alliums

Garlic | Onions (for overwintering)

Legumes

Peas

Flowering Plants

Daffodils | Tulips | Crocuses (bloom in Spring)

Zone 6 Fall Companion Planting

- **Pair cool-season crops**, like lettuce and kale, with each other, as they have compatible growth habits and temperature preferences.
- **Plant aromatic herbs** like rosemary and thyme to serve as natural pest repellents and add flavor to your dishes.
- **Intersperse flowering plants** like marigolds and calendulas to add beauty to your garden and deter harmful insects.
- **Combine plants of varying height** to maximize space, like growing tall sunflowers next to low-growing crops like carrots.
- **Combine crops of varying root depth**, like planting shallow-rooted plants like lettuce next to deep-rooted plants to avoid competition for space.



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Happy Planting!

