



January Monthly Reminder

Planting

- Plant bare-root roses. Purchase only high quality plants from reliable garden centers. The planting bed must be amended with organic matter such as compost, peat moss, or aged manure to a depth of 18". Add a root-promoting fertilizer. Plant roses so that the swollen graft union near the base of the canes is above ground. (Refer to: *Rose Care in the Low Desert* [AZ1305](#) & *Rose Selection and Planting in the Low Desert* [AZ1304](#))
- Plant bare-root deciduous fruit trees such as apple, apricot, peach, and plum trees. (Refer to: *Training and Pruning Newly Planted Deciduous Fruit Trees* [AZ1668](#))
- Prepare vegetable and flower beds for spring planting. Plant artichoke crowns, asparagus, cane berries, onion sets and strawberries. Vegetable seeds such as beets, carrots, radish, leafy greens, peas and onion seedlings may be planted now, as well as cool-weather flowers such as stock, snapdragons, pansies, and alyssum. Start seeds indoors for tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant. (Refer to: *Ten Steps to a successful Vegetable Garden* [AZ 1435](#))

Fertilizing

- If winter vegetables are showing signs of slow growth or yellowing foliage, sprinkle nitrogen (ammonium nitrate or ammonium sulfate or fish fertilizer) near the roots and water it in completely.
- Bearded iris may be fertilized toward the end of the month; scratch fertilizer into the soil near the bulbs and water in thoroughly.

Watering

- Wildflowers planted in the fall may require supplemental watering if winter rains do not cooperate. If there is little rain, also water shrubs and trees. Water trees deeply every 3 weeks.

Maintenance

- Prune rose bushes around the middle of the month. Cut canes back by 1/3 to 1/2, just above outward-facing buds.
- Deciduous trees and shrubs may be trimmed this month while they are dormant. Remove broken or crossing branches, but never more than 1/4 of the total branch area. Do not prune citrus unless branches are broken or impeding a pathway. Grapevines should be pruned now. (Refer to: *Pruning Deciduous Shade Trees* [AZ 1139](#))
- Do NOT prune frost-damaged plants yet. Even frozen branches will protect the plant somewhat. In mid-March when plants begin to leaf out, you will be able to tell what part of the plant is still alive. Do not prune spring-flowering plants until after they bloom.
- When freezing temperatures are predicted, continue to cover frost-sensitive plants with frost cloth or old sheets. Never use plastic. In Tucson, March 15 is considered to be the average date of the last frost, so do not be fooled by moderate temperatures this month! (Refer to: *Frost Protection* [AZ 1002](#))
- Garden cleanup is more pleasant in the cooler months. Be vigilant with weeds sprouting due to winter rains.
- Do annual check and repair of your irrigation system(s). (Refer to: *Drip Irrigation Basics* [AZ 1392](#) and *Watering Trees and Shrubs: Simple Techniques for Efficient Landscape Watering* [AZ 1298](#)).
- It's not too late to prevent winter weeds. Before winter rain arrives, apply a pre-emergent herbicide to your landscape.