



Spring Garden Chores

447 Winthrop Road, Deep River, Ct. 06417
(860) 526-9056 www.acergardens.com
email – acer@acergardens.com

list is only a guide. If you can't get to all the chores, it's not the end of the earth. Your garden will still give you pleasure all summer long.

Basic Chores

1. Blow or rake off the winter debris from the lawn. Drop grass seed onto any bare spots and make a note of trouble areas.
2. Clean up and rake the garden beds. Dead leaves blow around all winter and lodge in bushes and plants. You need to remove these before mice and voles decide to move in. Take this opportunity to cut down and clear off dead daylily and hosta foliage and tidy up in general.
3. Remove the winter mulch from flower beds gradually. Any bulbs coming up now will not be bothered by a late frost.
4. Cut down any perennials you left standing in the fall. Watch for frost-heaved plants and push them gently but firmly back into the ground.
5. Cut the ornamental grasses down to the ground.
6. Weed. It's amazing, but weeds can and do grow in and survive Connecticut winters all the time.
7. April is a good time to start fertilizing your garden beds. Detailed fertilizing instructions are available separately at the nursery.

Spring Pruning

Trees and Shrubs - Always try to preserve the natural form of a tree or shrub.

1. Remove dead or dying branches injured by disease, animals or storms.
2. Do not prune in the early spring because of rising sap.
3. Always prune above a bud facing the outside of a plant. This will force the new branch to grow in that direction,
4. Trees and shrubs that bloom early in the growing season on last year's growth (azalea, forsythia, lilac, magnolia etc.) should be pruned as soon as they finish flowering. Cut out any dead wood and the oldest wood in order to rejuvenate the plant.
5. Shrubs that bloom on new growth like hydrangea arborescens "Annabelle", late-blooming spireas, and buddleia or Butterfly Bush may be cut back in the spring when new growth begins. Cut back to approximately 12"-18".

Roses

Hybrid Teas

1. Most hybrid teas are pruned in the spring, when the forsythia is in bloom.
2. Remove all dead or dying canes, suckers, and thin or weak canes.
3. Cut at a 45-degree angle about ¼” above an outward-facing bud. The cut should slant away from the bud.
4. Your goal is to produce an open-centered plant, allowing the easy penetration of air and light.
5. Leave 3-5 strong canes and cut each cane back to 3-5 buds per cane.

Rugosa

1. Rugosa roses require very little pruning and should not be pruned in the spring. Nip off any obvious dead wood. Good deadheading during the summer will encourage repeat blooming.
2. After the first bloom cycle ends in June, remove old wood at ground level to encourage new shoots.

Old Roses

1. Prune the old rose varieties immediately after flowering unless they are continuous flowering.
2. When in doubt, do nothing except remove dead or sickly material after the rose has flowered. Less is always better with these roses.

Climbers

1. Prune repeat-blooming climbers gently in the spring. Reducing the side shoots or laterals to 3”-6” stimulates flower production.
2. Once-blooming ramblers are pruned right after flowering, in early summer.

If you are concerned about identifying the kinds of roses you are growing, gather as much information about the rose as you can throughout the growing season. When it blooms, photograph it and bring the picture and an actual cutting to the nursery and we'll help you identify it.

Perennials

1. Pull out any dead annuals you overlooked in the fall.
2. Remove the winter protection of mounded earth from the roses.
3. Cut back gaura, lavender, perovskia and Montauk Daisies when you start to see bud break.
4. Now is the easiest time to divide hostas, ferns, mums and asters. Take advantage of the spring rains to help the new plants get established.
5. Feed the clematis vines. You need to know which type of clematis you are growing before you prune. A detailed handout is available at the nursery ... pick it up or call for mailing.
6. Don't plant anything new until the soil is completely friable Grab a handful of soil and squeeze it. If water runs out or the soil compacts into a clump, it's too soon to work it.
7. Re-mulch lightly before the perennials are up and showing green.