

April Garden Guide

- * Consider planting flowers which may be dried for winter arrangements. Some of the best are strawflower, statice, celosia, and globe amaranth.
- * Do not restrict yourself to buying plants in bloom. Petunias that bloom in the pack are often rootbound or overgrown and, after planting, will actually be set back and cease to bloom for about a month. Plants without blossoms will actually bloom sooner and will grow better as well.
- * To extend the blooming period of gladiolus, plant early, middle and late season selections each week until the middle of June. Choose a sunny location and plant the corms four to six inches deep and six to eight inches apart.
- * Scatter annual poppy seeds in flower borders. The fine seeds need no covering. The plants grow rapidly and provide colorful flowers in early summer.
- * In a sunny location with poor soil, plant nasturtiums for a colorful show. They require warm soil to sprout and start blooming in about 50 days. Too much water and fertilizer produces excess leaves and few flowers.
- * When chrysanthemums show signs of life, dig up and divide large plants. Discard woody portions and replant divisions 12 to 15 inches apart.
- * Cut flower stalks back to the ground on daffodils, hyacinths, and other spring flowering bulbs as the flowers fade. Do not cut the foliage until it dies naturally. The leaves are necessary to produce strong bulbs capable of reflowering.
- * Don't add organic matter to the soil when planting trees. It does not help the plant become established and it may create conditions that encourage the roots to stay inside the planting hole instead of spreading to surrounding soil. Do dig a large planting hole, but fill it with the original soil removed from it.
- * The last Friday in April is National Arbor Day. Plant a tree, or support an organization which does.
- * Prune spring blooming shrubs such as forsythia and spirea after they have completed flowering.
- * Remove sticks, rocks and other debris from your lawn to prevent damaging your lawnmower or injuring yourself when mowing. Check your lawnmower and other lawncare equipment in preparation for the coming season.
- * Put a birdhouse in the garden to attract insect-eating friends.

* Measure the rainfall with a rain gauge posted near the garden so you can tell when to water. The garden needs about one inch of rain per week from April to September.