

April – Gardening Calendar for Temperate Australia

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April brings us well into autumn, and the days are now getting shorter. While the soil is still warm, it's a good time to plant trees, shrubs, and herbs, as their roots will have a chance to take hold before winter.

This is also the last chance to harvest fruit such as apples and pears (if they are ripe) before they're damaged by frost. *(To tell if an apple or pear is ripe, lift the fruit up gently in the palm of your hand, and give it a slight twist. Ripe fruit will come away easily with the stalk still attached to the fruit).*

Things to Do This Month:

- Plant new trees, shrubs, climbers, annuals and perennials.
- Gather and compost autumn leaves.
- Divide overgrown perennials, collect their seeds, prune those that have finished flowering,
- Relocate evergreen shrubs (can be done either in autumn and early spring).
- Prune tall shrubs to reduce their height to better resist winter winds.
- Collect and sow seeds from berry producing trees and shrubs.
- Propagation of hardwood cuttings is done in autumn - prune off 30cm long shoots of current season's growth, cut off the soft growing tip, cut off the bottom end below a bud, and dip end into rooting hormone. Make a 'slit trench' by pushing a spade into soil and rocking it back and forth. In clay soil, add some coarse sand for drainage. Put cuttings in so 2/3 is below the soil, and press the soil down around them. Cuttings will root and be ready to plant next autumn.
- Dig in cool season green manures that were sown in early autumn (such as rapeseed, broad beans, fenugreek, linseed, lupins, mustard, oats, subclover, and vetch) before they flower.
- Prune brambleberries after they finish fruiting – cut out the canes that fruited, and tie in the newly grown canes to the support wires on the berry trellises.
- Blackcurrants (and brambleberries) can be pruned from now till winter time.
- Continue planting garlic, strawberry runners and shallot bulbs.
- Harvest and store root crops - continue lifting beetroot and carrots and finish lifting potatoes. Leave parsnips in ground, they need some cold to taste the best.
- Cut down asparagus foliage that has turned yellow (if it wasn't done in March) and top-dress the asparagus crowns with compost or manure.
- Empty compost bins into the garden to prepare soil for next season.
- Cover ponds with netting to prevent autumn leaves rotting in the water. Also, feed the fish less food, as they are less active as the days shortens and uneaten food will foul the water.

Vegetables and Herbs to Sow:

Sow in April		Harvest (weeks)	Sow in April		Harvest (weeks)
Beetroot	ds	7-10	Mustard greens	d	5-8
Broad beans	d	12-22	Oregano	s	6-8
Burdock	d	17-18	Pak Choy	d	6-11
Carrot	d	12-18	Parsley	ds	9-19
Chives	ds	7-11	Peas	d	9-11
Corn Salad	d	5-8	Radish	d	5-7
Endive	ds	10-11	Rocket	d	21-35 days
Florence Fennel	d	14-20	Shallots	d	12-15
Garlic	d	17-25	Silverbeet	ds	7-12
Kale	ds	7-9	Snow Peas	d	12-14
Kohlrabi	d	7-10	Spinach	d	5-11
Lettuce	ds	8-12	Swedes	d	10-14
Mizuna	d	35-50 days	Turnip	d	6-9

Key: d = sow directly into ground, s = sow in seed tray, ds = sow directly into ground or seed tray

May – Gardening Calendar for Temperate Australia

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May is the last month of autumn, when the weather starts cooling down. This is a time for pruning, taking cuttings for propagation, divide perennials, and t put in new trees, shrubs and vines. The soil is also still warm enough for moving and relocating plants around the garden.

It's also the time to clean up the garden, to remove all the dead and dried leaves, branches and plants, which is a great source of organic matter for mulching and composting!

Things to Do This Month:

- Continue planting new trees, shrubs, climbers, annuals and perennials.
- Continue gathering and composting autumn leaves.
- Continue cool season green manures crops, which will be cut down and dug into the soil in spring.
- Continue collecting and sowing seeds from berry producing trees and shrubs.
- Continue lifting and dividing overgrown perennial plants.
- Continue planting garlic, strawberry runners and shallot bulbs.
- Continue pruning brambleberries after they finish fruiting – cut out the canes that fruited, and tie in the newly grown canes to the support wires on the berry trellises.
- Winter pruning of deciduous trees and shrubs can be done in autumn or winter and can begin now.
- Check citrus for galls caused by gall wasp and prune to remove.
- Cut back bamboo, and use the canes next season as plants supports and stakes in the garden.
- Repair trellises now that leaves have fallen from deciduous plants, allowing better access. Check tree ties, stakes and supports. Install windbreaks and tree guards around vulnerable plants.
- Relocate evergreen shrubs (can be done either in autumn and early spring).
- Lift rooted hardwood cuttings produced last autumn (the year before) and plant them out to a permanent location.
- Some perennials plants with long fleshy roots such as horseradish can be propagated by root cuttings, take root cuttings from this time in late autumn until late winter.
- Propagate blackcurrants, redcurrants whitecurrants and gooseberries from hardwood cuttings.
- Propagate vines such as grapes using hardwood cuttings or 'eye cuttings' with a single bud.
- Propagate rhubarb by lifting root, dividing it so each piece has one or more buds and replanting.
- Harvest and store root crops - now is the time to begin lifting parsnips from the ground, exposure to cold improves the taste.
- Ponds should be cleaned of old plants, and overgrown marginal plants around the pond can be divided.

Vegetables and Herbs to Sow:

Sow in May		Harvest (weeks)	Sow in March		Harvest (weeks)
Broad beans	d	12-22	Oregano	s	6-8
Carrot	d	12-18	Pak Choy	d	6-11
Chives	ds	7-11	Parsley	ds	9-19
Corn Salad	d	5-8	Peas	d	9-11
Florence Fennel	d	14-20	Radish	d	5-7
Garlic	d	17-25	Rocket	d	21-35 days
Kohlrabi	d	7-10	Shallots	d	12-15
Lettuce	ds	8-12	Silverbeet	ds	7-12
Mizuna	d	35-50 days	Snow Peas	d	12-14
Mustard greens	d	5-8	Spinach	d	5-11
Onion	ds	25-34	Strawberry Plants	d	11

Key: d = sow directly into ground, s = sow in seed tray, ds = sow directly into ground or seed tray