



There is a harmony in  
autumn, and a luster in its  
sky, which through the  
summer is not heard nor  
seen, as if it could not be,  
as if it had not been!

*Percy Bysshe Shelley*



*UW's Washington Park  
Arboretum near Seattle offers  
beautiful views of fall colors.*



*Fall-blooming mums*

## Preparing for Autumn:

### Tips for getting your plants, soil, and tools ready for cooler weather

Fall is just around the corner... Trees give us a spectacular show of colors, just before the leaves fall, carpeting the sidewalks and streets. The air grows crisper, our breath coming out like plumes of smoke. The air smells faintly of nutmeg and spice as we add mittens and scarves to our attire. We are ready for autumn! But are our gardens as prepared as we are?

As the temperatures drop, it's time to consider putting most of our gardens to bed for the winter. Now is the time to remove any debris and seeds that have the potential to last through winter and encourage pests, disease, and weeds. Get rid of the old compost and start fresh. Additionally, spreading compost over veggie beds will help protect them over the winter. It's also a good idea to remove spent plants and vegetables as well as any dead or diseased plants and fruits. Don't give in to the urge to prune, because the fragile plant that is left behind may not be able to harden before the winter arrives. And don't abandon your garden just because it's stopped yielding crop.

Be sure to take care of your tools and hardware. Clean metal and wooden tools properly so they will be ready to use again in the spring. Remove, clean, and store stakes and trellises until the weather warms and dries a bit. Winterize your water features and lawn furniture. Don't forget to clean out your garden shed, properly disposing of any chemicals that are past their shelf life.

Just because summer is over doesn't mean that you can't continue to both plant and harvest plants that will thrive in the colder seasons. There are many veggies that can flourish up to the first freeze, such as cabbage, garlic, peas, spinach, and many others. Flowers can thrive during fall as well: pansies, marigolds, snapdragons, goldenrods... just to name a few. Nurseries stock covers and frames to protect cool weather gardens. Autumn is also the best time to seed new grass; conditions are ripe for growing: more rain, warm days, and cool nights.

Tending to your garden in fall will not only keep it healthy for spring, but can continue to return bountiful harvests throughout the season!

## What's Growing On? New & Noteworthy

- On 09/19 we will attend our first workshop at the Washington State Convention Center in preparation for the upcoming NW Flower and Garden Show. It is really exciting, and we will keep you posted!
- On 10/16 Jeff will be presenting at the Green Gardening IPM Workshop at South Seattle Community College. His topic is alternative-fuel equipment. We are one of the first companies in the Pacific Northwest to offer a carbon neutral maintenance solution which includes natural gas mowers and battery operated hand-held equipment.

## Fall Garden Tips

- It's not too late to visit your local farmers' markets before they close for the season. Support your local growers and stock up on supplies to spruce up your beds.
- Mums are a colorful perennial that can continue to give color to your garden even after your annuals are spent.
- Many of your outside herbs can be transplanted and brought inside as houseplants: oregano, basil, rosemary, thyme... just to name a few.