

# GARDENING TIPS FOR MAY

Revised 12/19

## Annuals & Perennials

- Remove faded blooms on spring bulbs. Allow foliage to die back.
- Remove pansies.
- Plant summer annuals. Best to plant in late afternoon so plants can acclimate overnight.
- Site plants according the sun or shade. See definition of shade levels at <http://www.walterreeves.com/gardening-q-and-a/shade-defining-levels-of/>
- Pinch out tips of bee balm, chrysanthemums and Shasta daisies to encourage more shoots.
- Fertilize with a slow-release fertilizer.
- Iris leaf spot: Remove severely infected leaves. Protect healthy leaves with a fungicide.
- Mulch to retain moisture, control soil temperature and diseases.
- Control weeds.

## Fruits

- Fertilize plums, muscadines.
- Pears: Prune out fire blight.
- Check blueberries for “mummy” fruit and botrytis blight.
- Continue spray program for insects and diseases as required.
- Clean up fallen leaves or fruit. Sanitation minimizes diseases.

## Trees and Shrubs

- Snap off old rhododendron flower clusters immediately after flowering just above new sprouted leaf buds.
- Prune climbing roses after their first bloom.
- Remove blooms from shrub roses as they fade.
- Prune spring flowering trees and shrubs after they bloom. Remove dead limbs.
- Prune boxwoods by thinning.
- Remove suckers from base of cherry, dogwood and crabapple trees.
- Fertilize azaleas, camellias, rhododendron, and roses.
- Water deeply spring planted shrubs and trees. Need 1 inch per week. Comply with current watering restrictions as required.
- Diagnosis of plant problems is required in order to take corrective action. Read :Diagnosing Plants [diagnosing problems combined.doc](#)
- Inspect for fungal leaf spots, powdery mildew, root rot and fire blight.
- Check for various pests and diseases and spray if required. Handpick or cut out and destroy galls.
  - Azaleas: Leaf gall, leafminer, flatid planthopper. scale, stem borer, lace bugs.
  - Arborvitae: Needle blight.
  - Boxwood: Leafminer, Indian wax scale, psyllid, flatid planthopper, armored scale. \*
  - Camellia: Leaf gall, canker, stem die back, tea scale. \*
  - Crabapple: Aphids, ambrosia beetles, fire blight, apple scab.
  - Crape myrtle: Aphids, ambrosia beetles. \*Spray with horticultural oil to
  - Dogwood: Spot anthracnose, borers, midges. destroy over wintering mites & scale.
  - Euonymus: Powdery mildew.
  - Gardenia: Armored scale, whitefly, gall. \*
  - Holly: Armored and wax scale, caterpillars, leafminer, black root rot, anthracnose. \*
  - Hydrangea: Bacterial leaf spot.
  - Indian Hawthorne: Leaf spot.
  - Junipers: Tip blight, rusts, bagworms, armored scale, spider mites.
  - Leyland cypress: Bot canker, Seridium canker, needle blight.
  - Pine: Aphids, fusiform rust, needle cast, needle rust, bark beetles, spittle bugs, sawfly larvae.
  - Rhododendron: Leaf gall.
  - Roses: . See rose maintenance guide <http://extension.uga.edu/county-offices/cobb/agriculture-and-natural-resources/gardeners-corner.html>

- Perform a tree survey. Form available at [http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/community-forests/management/trees-storm-safety/HomeownersRole\\_000.pdf](http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/community-forests/management/trees-storm-safety/HomeownersRole_000.pdf)
- Read “Drought and Water Stress” <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/your-garden/help-for-the-home-gardener/advice-tips-resources/pests-and-problems/environmental/drought.aspx>
- The Georgia Forestry Commission’s on line service—“Ask the Arborist”. Complete a form and a certified arborist will answer questions and evaluate conditions.  
<http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/community-forests/ask-the-arborist/>

### **Turf**

- Plant Bermuda or Centipede grass seed or sod.
- Plant Zoysia sod.
- Dethatch Bermuda, Centipede, and Zoysia. Core aerate if needed.
- Fertilize established Zoysia after greenup.
- Fertilize centipede after nighttime temperatures are in the 60-degree range. Do not over fertilize. One pound of nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. per year is sufficient.
- Mow grass at proper height.
- Check for white grubs and green june beetle in the lawn.
- Check for brown patch, dollar spot fairy ring, root rot, slime molds and spring dead spot.
- Apply post-emergent herbicides as required. Apply crabgrass control when weeds are young.
- Sharpen mower blades and service equipment. Torn rather than cut grass blades are more susceptible to disease.
- For detailed information on turf care and diseases go to: [www.georgiaturf.com](http://www.georgiaturf.com)

### **Vegetables**

- Plant warm weather vegetables and herbs.
- Fertilize and water tomatoes regularly for a good harvest.
- Start removing suckers from tomato plants if you want larger tomatoes.
- Mulch between rows to retain moisture, control soil temperature and diseases. Apply before dry spells occur but after plants are well established.
- Check for various beetles, bugs and worms.
- Control grass and weeds; they compete for moisture and fertilizer.
- Keep a logbook of problems so they can be prevented next year.
- For detailed information, see “Home Gardening”:  
<http://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.cfm?number=B577>

**Water** On March 8, 2018, The Director of Georgia Environmental Protection Division lifted the Drought Level 1 declaration. Outdoor irrigation is permitted 7 days a week before 10AM and after 4PM.

Cobb County’s Water Efficiency Program offers information on rebates, leak credits, and Water Smarts  
<https://www.cobbcounty.org/water/efficiency>

- Water slowly and deeply. Deep watering encourages root growth.
- Use drip irrigation or soaker hoses. They use 50% less water than sprinklers.
- Check your irrigation system. (1) Is the timer set correctly? (2) Are all the nozzles working? (3) Are all the nozzles the same type? There is a significant variance in water applied between rotary sprinklers and spray heads.
- Set a timer and/or use a rain gauge when watering the lawn or garden.
- Check outdoor faucets, sprinklers and hoses for leaks. Replace washers as required.
- Select plants that are drought tolerant and have low water needs. Group plants with similar water requirements in the same zone. For a listing see  
<http://www.ecoterrallandscape.com/cgi-bin/ViewTopic.pl?Topic=00-061506dt>
- Use a rain barrel. For instructions to build one  
<http://www.walterreeves.com/landscaping/rain-barrel-homemade-3/>
- Save water and use it wisely. Don’t water the lawn on windy days. Water plants, if required, applying one inch of water per week. **Observe current Georgia watering restrictions.**

**Check with your local water system to determine if they have more restrictive regulations.**

### **Fire**

Burning is **NOT** permitted from May 1 to October 1. For additional information and restrictions in specific areas.

<https://www.cobbcounty.org/public-safety/fire/fire-marshal/outdoor-burning>

### **Environment**

- Non-native invasive plants are a problem in Georgia and the Southeast. It is not only kudzu, Chinese privet, and golden bamboo. Become aware of these exotic pest plants and what you can do to inhibit them. Go to <http://www.gaepcc.org> Click on plant list
- [http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/fia/manual/Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests.pdf](http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/fia/manual/Nonnative%20Invasive%20Plants%20of%20Southern%20Forests.pdf)

### **Other**

- Watch for fire ant mounds.
- Spray herbicide on new growth of unwanted kudzu, ivy and bamboo.
- Eliminate mosquito breeding places.
- Keep birdbath filled. Change water every three days to control mosquitoes.
- Observe guidelines for working in hot weather. Read: <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heattips.html>
- The key to reducing problems with soil insects in the garden is to keep the site clean. Frequent cultivation will help reduce grubs, nematodes and weeds
- Properly dispose of pesticides. Read: <http://www.walterreeves.com/tools-and-chemicals/pesticides-disposing/>
- Build mason bee houses. The mason bee is a non aggressive pollinator. See “Housing for Pollinators: <http://www.walterreeves.com/insects-and-animals/pollinators-housing-for/>
- Watch for carpenter bees. <http://www.walterreeves.com/insects-and-animals/carpenter-bees/>
- Watch for ground or digger bees. [http://caes2.caes.uga.edu/commodities/turfgrass/georgiaturf/LandscapeAlert/Digger%20Bees%20\(5-10\).html](http://caes2.caes.uga.edu/commodities/turfgrass/georgiaturf/LandscapeAlert/Digger%20Bees%20(5-10).html)
- Soil test instructions: [https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20896\\_5.PDF](https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20896_5.PDF)
- Bring 2 cups of the dry combined soil to your Extension Office. Cost is \$9.00 per sample, payable by cash, check or credit card.
- To mail samples directly to the UGA Soil Test Lab go to [www.soiltest123.com](http://www.soiltest123.com)

Specific instructions on fertilizing, pest and disease control and pruning are available from the Extension Office. Call us at 770 528-4070.



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