

SEASONAL

tips



MAY - The Fast Growth Month

May is one of the most rewarding times of the year. It is when a gardener can truly experience the results the Given Mother Nature was generous with the rains this year, one can almost see the buds expanding and flowering before your eyes. If you didn't finish all your planting in March and April, now is the time to catch up. Heat-loving plants will take off even better in May. Most common landscape plants, which are imported, will be enjoying this season of fast growth. Native plants, however will begin to withdraw. The chaparral is drying up and most wildflowers are going brown and setting seed.

Watering...

The most important task from now until November is to make sure the garden's plants are getting sufficient, deep watering. During drought years, some plants may suffer during the late spring and summer from inadequate water. It is important to determine which plants these are and consider replacing with more drought resistant species. The drought-conscious Southern Californian gardener is constantly thinking of ways to make the garden less thirsty. One way to do this would be to install drip systems in places where you would typically use hoses. This eliminates a great deal of water waste.

Quick Tip

Why it's Okay to Plant Melons next to Cucumbers or Squash.

Gardeners who watch bees visit flowers of a squash and then melon sometimes fear that cross-pollination will affect the sweetness of the fruit, but it has not effect on it. The flesh of the melon will be just as sweet and the texture of the squash will be just as true as if they were self-pollinated. What will be affected is the seed. Do not save the seeds, as the next generation of plants from this mixed parentage will be totally unpredictable.

As for shrub and perennial selections, consider plants that limit leave or flower droppings. Some favorites are New Zealand Flax, Cannas, Ornamental Grasses, Sago Palms, Penstemons, Lavenders, Sea Lavender, Agapanthus, Day Lillies, Gaillardia, Liriope, Philodendron, Bird of Paradise, Society Garlic, Star Jasmine, Aloe, and Agave Attenuata. The best plants for color are the Begonias that flower in white, pink, and red blooms throughout the year. Last of all, if the size of the area permits, turf is an excellent idea for pool areas - it's safe for the kids to play on and around.

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