



“From the Potting Shed”

Riverview Garden Club - Helpful Hints
September 2026

The summer season is slowing down, evenings are becoming cooler, and sunsets arriving earlier. September brings an abundance of cutting back, cleaning up, and planting in your garden. Planting in fall will give your perennials a big head start on their spring growth, so be sure to make the most of this time!

THINGS TO DO IN THE GARDEN THIS MONTH...

- 1. Dig in!** Add perennials and spring-blooming (fall-planted) bulbs to your garden. Perennials planted in the fall can establish healthy roots, resulting in bigger growth and earlier blooms in the first season. Bulbs like Tulips, Daffodils, Allium, and more need the overwintering period in order to bloom in the spring.
- 2. Make notes in your garden journal.** Take note of what grew well, and areas where you'd like to make changes. This will be a big help when you are planning your garden over the winter months.
- 3. Weeding.** Be sure to keep up with weeding. Diligent weeding helps prevent weeds from going to seed in your garden, and helps prevent disease in next season's garden.
- 4. Stop pruning and fertilizing.** At this point in the season, pruning and fertilizing only promotes new green growth that most likely will not survive through the winter.
- 5. Encourage annuals to self-seed.** Stop deadheading in September and let the flowers go to seed. Annual Poppies, Zinnias, Sunflowers, and more will drop their seeds and, in the right conditions, can come back next year.

6. Leave seed heads standing. Perennials include Echinacea, Sedum, Ornamental Grasses, and Clematis standing to provide habitat for pollinators and food for birds over the winter months. These also provide texture and visual interest to the winter garden.

7. Clean up plants as they fade. Cut back any perennial that is diseased and dispose of the trimmings in the trash, rather than your compost pile, to prevent the spread of the disease. Cut back yellowed foliage on perennials such as Daylilies, Iris, Peonies, Bee Balm, and more.

8. Divide and conquer perennials that spread. Dig up and divide Daylilies, Iris, Hostas, and more in September if they have become overcrowded or outgrown the space.

9. Mulch. Adding a layer of mulch in your garden beds to provide a nice layer of protection to prevent soil erosion, add some organic matter to the soil, and protect plants from snow and ice over the winter months.

10. Plant cover crops. Build your garden soil for next year by adding quick-growing cover crops. Plant Clover, Vetch, and Austrian Winter Pea as “green manures” to help build nutrients and get the soil ready for next spring’s planting.

11. Keep harvesting vegetables. Continue to pick cucumbers, squash and tomatoes. Remove any vines and stalks that have stopped producing. Compost these if there is no signs of disease.

The more you accomplish in September, the less work you'll have to do in spring!

- If you're thinking of adding a pollinator garden to your landscape, try to prep the area and get as much planted as you can this fall. Come spring, the plants will be much larger and that area will be primed and ready to add in annuals and other varieties.
- The more weeding and mulching you do in September, the less weeds you'll have to deal with in the spring. Take advantage of the gorgeous weather that September brings and get yourself in a great position to start next season off running.

Resource:

September Gardening Chores, American Meadows Learning Center, August 3, 2026.

Article:

"How to Divide 45 Favorite Perennials", Garden Gate Notes, Weekly Newsletter, August 27, 2026.

https://www.gardengatemagazine.com/articles/how-to/divide/how-to-divide-45-favorite-perennials/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=GDT++NL++Garden+Gate+Notes&oly_enc_id=9507D5465278D3T

Happy Fall Gardening!

