

## FALL HOME &amp; GARDEN | OUTDOOR PROJECTS

# Fall Makeover: The Garden

The start of cool weather is a good time to start planning next year's garden layout while making needed repairs. Depending on your ideas for either growing or scaling back your garden next spring, there are some simple steps to make sure your harvest is as bountiful as ever.

Before you get busy fixing fencing and laying down ground cover, it's best to take a minute to make an overall assessment of your garden's performance this fall. Did it produce all the fruits, vegetables and flowers you expected?

Were there plants that didn't come up or that weren't as vibrant as years past? Are there signs of damage caused by insects or rabbits? The answers to these type of questions can help you know where to start in preparing your garden for next year.

## REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

The first thing to do when readying your garden area is to make general repairs. Fencing, landscape timbers and other areas may need to be replaced or maintained. Especially if you live in an area with a temperamental wintertime climate, it's best to take care of these issues now ahead of the biting, snowy cold season.

Part of the plan for your preparation may be expanding your garden with new raised beds or a larger overall area. Again, it's best to make these adjustments in the fall to

reduce your workload in the winter or spring, which is when you'd like to be focused on growing your next round of produce.

## ADD SOME SPRING FLOWERS

Your garden doesn't have to be solely dedicated to fresh vegetables and fruits. Many traditional gardeners also like to fill their space with flowers for children to pick and enjoy.

According to Consumer Reports, fall is the time to plant those spring-flower bulbs, such as crocus, daffodils, hyacinths and tulips. Always remember to follow the planting instructions and your climate zone recommendations to make sure your flowers come up strong.

In regions with milder winters, cool-season annuals such as forget-me-nots and sweet alyssum make for great options. Northern gardeners should dig and store tender bulbs such as tuberous begonia and gladiolus. Again, your climate has a big impact on what grows and what doesn't, so check with your nursery specialists for expert, localized advice.

