

Fall gardening tips can save water and money

With retailers making room for Christmas trees, there's a great opportunity to take advantage of discounted landscape plants. Though fall is a great time to buy plants, be careful because many have been on the shelves for too long. Inspect the roots to make sure they are not root-bound, growing in circles. If that is the case, move on to another plant to inspect.



Transition dormancy

After the hot summer, you need to ease your landscape into dormancy. Warm season grasses such as Bermuda or Zoysia grass don't need a lot of water starting in the fall. Shrubs, groundcovers and trees also require less water as the cool weather starts settling in. Save water by keeping the soil moist around roots but lengthen the time between watering events.



Fall tree plantings

By choosing evergreen trees, such as pines and junipers, your new trees will be able to grow some roots before the first hard freeze. Deciduous trees, or those that lose their leaves in cold weather, can also benefit from the fall sunny days before going dormant.



Seeding wildflowers

If you want wildflowers in the spring, fall is the time to plant seeds. Just make sure the seeds are for our region. Many wildflower mixes are not adapted to our hot desert environment. Seeds require some watering every two weeks or so in order to grow strong. If wildflowers are not your thing, fall is also a great time to plant bulbs.



Mulching time

Take advantage of free mulch by gathering dropped leaves into a compost pile. Placing mulch around planting beds helps conserve water by reducing evaporation. Mulch also acts as an insulator, protecting plants from freeze damage.

Spotlight: Aleppo Pine - (Pinus halepensis)

A great addition to any landscape, this large specimen tree can grow in a variety of soils. The pine thrives in difficult growing conditions, and are drought-resistant and tolerate the harsh desert environment. Remember to plant them in full sun, as they need plenty of sunlight to survive.



Photo courtesy: elpasodesertblooms.org.

This particular tree can take different shapes, so don't be surprised that two Aleppo Pines can look very different. Sometimes they grow in a cone shape, some grow into round-topped trees. They can grow up to 80 feet tall. Before you plant, make sure the plant has ample room to grow.

If you want to learn more about landscape techniques in our area, stay tuned! We have multiple spring workshops in the works.



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