
JUNE GARDENING TIPS

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By Jeanne Grunert



June is the first warm month in many gardening zones in the United States, and here in south central Virginia (Zones 6B or 7) it can get downright hot! Your best gardening hours are from dawn until around 10 a.m., and then again in the evening, from around 6 p.m. until sunset. Plan your activities to maximize your time in the coolest hours of the day.

- Finish planting all warm-weather vegetables and annual flowers.
- Pinch, fertilize and stake tomato plants.
- Plant marigold flowers around your tomato plants. The scent of marigolds naturally keeps away tomato hornworms.
- Adding the herb dill to the garden can also help with tomato hornworm control. Predatory wasps are attracted to the dill. They lay their eggs on the tomato hornworm, which kills the worms.
- Water regularly. Set your sprinklers on a timer, or water near the roots if using a garden hose.
- Apply a layer of mulch one to two inches thick throughout the garden to help suppress weeds and maximize moisture retention.
- Harvest the last of the spring vegetables now: radishes, lettuce, spinach and any cool weather veggies. Heat causes many to bolt, or go to seed, or can turn sweet cool weather vegetables hotter than a firecracker. Radishes, for example, can turn scorching hot if left to grow during hot weather!
- Japanese beetles will make their appearance in many gardens in America during June. The best way to control them is to use an old-fashioned method. Clean a glass jar, such as one used for spaghetti sauce, and fill it half or a quarter of the way with a generous squirt of dishwashing liquid and water. Manually flick beetles off the plants into the water. The soap makes it slippery and impossible for them to escape. When all else fails, Neem oil sprays work, as does the insecticide Sevin.
- Spring bulbs looking straggly? Don't cut back the green leaves of daffodils, tulips and others. They need the leaves to make food through photosynthesis to prepare for next year's flowers. Instead, try the Dutch method of braiding, which works especially well on daffodils. Take the foliage of the daffodil plants in your hands and braid it as if braiding hair. When the braid is complete, fold it over and use a rubber band to secure it. It looks neat and clean and still allows the plant to produce energy through photosynthesis.
- While we're talking about fall bulbs, this is your last chance to mark the places in the garden where they grew. Use plant markers to note where your fall bulbs are so that you don't accidentally dig them up. Don't have markers? Make them using old Venetian blinds someone is throwing away or cut up a frosting can into 1" strips. You can also paint flat garden rocks with brightly color spray paint and paint the name of the plant in black or another color on the rock. Finish with a clear protective spray and you've just made an attractive garden marker.
- Weed the garden regularly. Weeding isn't much fun, but it's a necessary task. Hand weeding is by far the best way to control weeds. Wear gloves, and work on a small patch at a time so you can get more done.

Don't compost your weeds, especially if they are flowering; the seeds can actually germinate in the compost if the pile doesn't get hot enough. Instead, bag and discard in the trash.

Blooming Now

- End of spring blooming flowers - tulips, peonies, iris
- Roses start to bloom
- Annuals are blooming

Finish Harvesting

- Lettuce
- Radishes
- Asparagus
- Spring vegetables

Start to Harvest

- Strawberries
- Peaches
- Blackberries



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