

# — Winter garden guide —

## Herbs for a winter garden

Herbs that tolerate the cold are easy to grow in an attractive planter box or raised garden and allow you to use a range of cooking flavours fresh from the garden.

Herb	Easy to grow	Comment
Coriander	***	Adds spicy flavour to Asian foods, curries and vegetables.
Chamomile	**	Use leaves for tea or as a mild garden fungicide.
Curry herb ( <i>Helichrysum sanctinum</i> )	***	Provides real curry flavour when added to food at the end of cooking.
Mint (many flavours)	**	For roasts, sweets or a refreshing tea.
Parsley	***	Add chopped to meat dishes and soups.
Spring onions or chives	***	Ideal where onion flavour is needed.
Sage	**	Strong flavour for rich meats and seasoning.
Winter tarragon ( <i>Tagetes lucida</i> )	**	A form of marigold. This provides fresh tarragon flavour during winter.
Rosemary	***	Strong flavours for lamb, roasts and seasoning.

\* The more stars the better

Most of these winter herbs can be added to fresh homemade soup or a weekend stew and established plants are readily available in small pots from most garden centres.



### WINTER PRUNING

#### Fruit Trees

All fruit trees and vines should be pruned before the second week in August, but why leave the job any longer?

Vines and Chinese Gooseberries may bleed if pruned late.

#### Ornamentals

While pruning fruit trees, vines and roses, don't forget summer flowering shrubs such as hydrangeas and Crepe Myrtle. However, spring flowering shrubs such as flowering cherries, plums, peach, etc should not be pruned until after they have finished flowering.

#### Fuchsias

Plants that were not cut back in autumn should be pruned in June. However, if they are still in flower, you can wait until the end of July when the best of the blooms have faded.

Don't wait any longer as new growth will be starting.

## Fruit tree spraying for late winter-early spring

Fruit	Problem	Time to spray	Chemical
Apples/pears	Woolly aphids	Dormant. (Late July-Aug)	Winter white oil
	Black spot	Bud burst. Green tip. (Sept)	Copper based spray
	Codling moth	After petal fall. (Sept)	Spinosad (Success)
Peaches/nectarines	Aphids	Dormant. (Late July-Aug)	Winter white oil
	Curl leaf	Bud swell. (Late July-Aug)	Copper based spray
	Shot hole or Freckle	Bud swell. (Late July-Aug)	Copper based spray, Mancozeb
	Brown rot	Bud swell. (Late July-Aug)	Copper based spray, Mancozeb
Vines	Leaf blister mite	Late bud swell. (Late Aug-Sept)	Wettable sulphur

### Soursobs

Don't waste time trying to control soursobs by cultivation, new growth will just keep on reappearing. Wait until they are mature, just before flowering, and spray them with a systemic herbicide containing glyphosate.

### Winter flowers

Camellias, azaleas and a range of winter flowering Australian natives are being featured by most nurseries. Let the flowers be a guide to your choice, but check also on the plant's shape and growing habit.

## Splashes of blooming colour

Bloomers - Small plants already in flower and sold in ready to plant out six or 10 cell containers will splash colour in your garden through winter and well into spring.

Annual	Height	Sun	Semi shade	Main colours
Alyssum	8-10	✓		Pink, mauve, white
Cineraria dwarf tall	30-40 50-70	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	Pink, blue, white
Lineria	30	✓		Blue, pink, white
Lobelia	15	✓	✓	Blue, white, pink
Pansy	20	✓		Multi colours
Polyanthus	30-40	✓	✓	Multi colours
Poppy	40-50	✓		Orange, yellow, white
Primula	30	✓	✓	Pink, mauve, white
Snapdragon	20-40	✓		Red, yellow, white
Viola	20-30	✓	✓	Multi colours



## Pruning guide for deciduous trees and shrubs

Some but not all ornamental deciduous trees and shrubs need regular pruning during winter. However, those that flower in spring should not be pruned until after flowering.

Name	Prune in winter	Pruning after flowering	How much
Abelia	✓		H
Berberis	✓		L
Cotinus (Smoke bush)	✓		H
Chaenomeles (flowering quince)	✓	✓	L
Crepe myrtle	✓		M
Hibiscus (deciduous)	✓		H
Hydrangea	✓		M
Malus (flowering plums/ apples)		✓	L
Deciduous vines	✓		H
Prunus (flowering plums/ apricots/peaches)		✓	L
Roses	✓		H
Wisteria		✓	L

H = hard M = medium L = light

## Standout potted colour

Plant	Weeks of colour	Suitable for indoors
Alyssum	20 +	
Azaleas (new hybrid cultivars)	8-10	✓
Cyclamen	8-12	✓✓✓
Lobelia	20+	
Orchids, cymbidiums	4-6	✓✓✓
Pansy/viola	20+	
Polyanthus	8-10	✓
Primula	8	
Snapdragon	8	
Zygo cactus. Schlumbergeria	4-6	✓✓

✓ OK ✓✓ Excellent

## Which vegetables to plant?

Vegetable	Seed	Seedling	Container	June	July	August
Artichoke		✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Asian vegetables	✓	✓	***	✓	✓	✓
Asparagus		Crowns	-	✓	✓	Early
Beans broad	✓		*	✓	✓	Early
Beetroot	✓		**			Late
Broccoli	✓	✓	*			✓
Cabbage (small)	✓	✓	**			✓
Carrots	✓		**			Late
Lettuce hearting		✓	***	✓	✓	✓
Lettuce non hearting		✓	***	✓	✓	✓
Onions white	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓
Onions brown	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓
Parsnips	✓		*			Late
Peas	✓	✓	***	✓	✓	✓
Potatoes		Sets	*		✓	✓
Radish	✓		***	✓	✓	✓
Rhubarb		Crowns	**	✓	✓	✓
Silver beet	✓	✓	***			✓
Tomatoes	✓		***			✓

\* ok \*\* good \*\*\* excellent

## Germinating veggies for spring

The seed of spring vegetables such as tomatoes, cucumbers and capsicums should be germinated in late July or early in August if you want seedlings for planting out in spring. However, you will need to grow them in small containers in a warm, protected position. The containers should be covered by glass or plastic until the seeds have germinated.



## Try a cover crop

If you don't intend to grow winter vegetables, try improving the soil and keeping out the weeds by planting a green cover crop. Oats, barley, rye, lupins, even wheat will make prolific growth during winter and can then be dug into the soil in August.

## Moss in your lawn?

Moss growing in the lawn usually indicates poor drainage, lack of light or lack of air movement. If possible, remove or overcome the cause. Meanwhile, the moss can be controlled with a mixture of two parts sulphate of iron plus three parts sulphate of ammonia. Use 150 grams in two litres of water for each square metre.

## Now is the time for gypsum

Heavy clay soil can be improved through the addition of gypsum during

winter. This can be spread on the ground at the rate of 1 kg to 2 sq metres. The gypsum should be allowed to leach into the ground during winter. Gypsum can also be spread over established lawns if it is watered in well. If flat weeds are smothering lawn grass, try spraying with the herbicide MCPA.

## Mowing

Lawns should never be cut when they are wet, even if the grasses are becoming long. If the lawn becomes rank, never remove more than 25 percent of the foliage in one cut.