

Final clean up chores in the garden

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If you haven't already cleaned up your garden and tools by now, try to get them done before the end of the year. Doing this now will save you a lot of time and headache in the spring!

In terms of the garden, if there are any annuals, including vegetables, that have gone past their prime and are looking pretty bad, remove them from the garden and compost if possible.

In the perennial garden, I tend to only remove those plants that just look bad and leave anything that still looks good.

I truly believe that too many people clean out their perennial gardens too early and miss some of the best of fall color.

For instance, Hostas look incredible when they turn a golden yellow. Siberian iris also have a wonderful yellow-gold color later in the fall. I had a perennial begonia that had the coolest seed heads!

These are the little things that make the garden even more powerful in terms of enjoyment.

Cutting everything back all in one swoop is a lot easier and gets the job done. I understand this from a commercial perspective.

Landscape contractors can't afford to go back to a site over and over to get it ready for winter. It's efficient and makes sense to get it done in one visit.

Homeowners on the other hand can spread their work out. In fact, I am at the point in life now where I try to do a little bit at a time rather than all at once!

Roses should be trimmed just a little in the fall to prevent any breakage and wind damage. You can cut them back to their spring height if you wish, but you will likely have to cut again if there is winter damage.

The thought is just do it one time in the early spring before new growth begins.

Covering roses with rose cones or mulching them to protect them from winter damage isn't done as much as it used to be done.

I find many gardeners just leave the roses alone until next spring, particularly if they have the shrub roses which tend to make it easily through the winter.

Although if we have a winter with temperatures that drop to -35F than we lose roses that aren't protected. This happened a few years ago.

Other chores include gathering hoses and draining them and storing them where they won't be exposed to freezing temperatures.

Clean, sharpen and oil all of your tools, including lawnmower, pruners, and shovels.



Hostas have beautiful fall color



Drain, wrap and store hoses for the winter