

GARDENHINTS

DECEMBER

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

- Pick the remaining leaves from rose bushes to reduce over-wintering black spot; clean up fallen leaves and mulch as well.
- Put up your outdoor Christmas lights and decorate your home with fresh boughs, garlands berries and wreaths.
- Cut back perennials that turn soft after frost.
- Plant winter containers with dwarf evergreen shrubs, vines or groundcovers alongside winter flowering plants like primroses, pansies and hellebores. For more container interest, include plants with berries and foliage of various textures and colours.
- Apply dolomite lime to lawns to prevent winter moss growth.
- Spray fruit trees & roses with a combination of lime sulphur & dormant oil to control pests.
- Clean, sharpen & sterilize all garden tools before storing them for the winter.
- Lift any tender bulbs that are still in the ground or planted in outdoor containers. Shake off soil, dry and store in a paper bag in a cool, dark place.
- There is still time to plant spring flowering bulbs. Visit your local **GARDENWORKS™** to take advantage of the special savings on remaining bulbs.
- Don't allow wet snow to weigh-down shrubs. Tie branches of columnar evergreens to prevent damage.
- If your Rhododendron leaves are drooping, it is a sign they need watering – frost dries the ground.
- Rake leaves off of lawns to prevent mould and/or dead spots.
- Tidy up beds and borders.
- Turn the compost pile.

INDOOR ACTIVITIES

- Inspect your stored bulbs and tubers throughout the winter. Discard any showing signs of rot or fungus to prevent spreading to remaining healthy ones.
- Force indoor bulbs early this month for holiday blooms. We have a superb selection of Amaryllis & Paperwhites.
- Poinsettia Care: Keep evenly watered, brightly lit and at a temperature of no less than 18°C.
- Shop early for "Gifts for Gardeners". We have a great selection of gardening tools, books, garden statuary, imported pottery, exotic orchids and so much more.
- Combine fir or cedar boughs with branches full of berries or brightly coloured stems to add a finishing touch to planters, floral arrangements or Christmas craft projects.
- It's time to set up your Christmas tree! Remember to water your tree and use "Keeps it Green" tree preservative available at **GARDENWORKS™** to dramatically reduce needle drop. Do not use sugar in the water as it is not an effective tree preservative.
- If you are setting up a living Christmas tree, do not keep it indoors for more than ten days. Keep it well watered & away from all heat sources.
- Monitor houseplants for adequate watering and humidity.
- Remember: flowering tropical plants like cyclamen, azaleas, and orchids make wonderful holiday gifts.

