

Your Desert Garden - Monthly Do List for August

Grass

- You can still plant Bermuda grass.
- Fertilize Bermuda grass lawns with nitrogen according to the directions on the package.
- Apply Iron one per month according to the directions on the package.
- Apply one inch of water per week to Bermuda lawns.
- Raise the mowing height to 2.5 to 3 inches.
- If your grass needs to be dethatched, you can still do it in August.

Trees/Shrubs

- Apply nitrogen fertilizer to fall ripening fruit trees like oranges and tangerines late in the month
- Apply nitrogen and zinc to pecan trees.
- Pecans also need more water than most other shade trees.
- Increase water to trees and shrubs as it gets hotter. Apply mulch to the ground around the base of heat sensitive plants keep the roots cooler and prevent evaporation. Keep the mulch several inches away from the trunk.
- Apply chelated iron to bottle brush, pyracantha, silk oak, and other plants with iron deficiency symptoms.
- Cut off spent blooms to stimulate rebloom
- Native and imported heat tolerant plants can be planted. They will need to be watered on a regular basis until fall.
- Transplant palms. Protect newly transplanted trees from heavy winds and dust storms by staking.
- Late August or early September fertilization will benefit most plants.
- August is a good time to plant bougainvillea, yellow bells, oleanders, acacias, cassias, eucalyptus, mesquites, and palo verdes. During their first few weeks, they will need daily watering.

Flowers

- Cut back on fertilizing established roses
- Water roses deeply
- Hose off rose plants in the early morning to increase humidity and control spider mites
- If roses show yellowing from iron deficiency add an iron supplement
- You can still plant summer flowers to plant, however you will have to pull them up and plant the winter flowers during late October, so there's not much time left.

Vegetables

- Plant seed for fall vegetables: Snap Beans, Bok Choy, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Chinese Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Collard Greens, Corn, Cucumbers, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce (Head & Leaf) Leeks, Mustard, Green Onions, Summer Squash
- Transplant tomato plants
- Prepare flower beds for fall plantings. Irrigate and then cover with clear plastic for six weeks.
- August is a good time to plant melons.

Your Desert Garden - Monthly Don't List for August

1. Don't prune citrus or other sun sensitive plants during the summer
2. Don't over water. Yes, it's very hot in the desert in August, so it might seem like watering more is the answer. Not necessarily true. Water slowly (prevents run off), deeply (use a soil probe or a long handled screwdriver to check that the water is penetrating 2-3 ft. deep for trees and shrubs, and 1- 1 1/2 ft. deep for turf & flowers), and infrequently (let the soil dry between watering).
3. Watering at night can lead to fungal disease.
4. Don't add fertilizer to dry soil. If you apply dry fertilizer on dry soil and water it in, the fertilizer is carried toward the roots as a concentrated solution and will burn them. Always water first, then apply fertilizers to moist soils, and then continue with the rest of the water.

Information contained herein was obtained from the [The University of Arizona, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences](#), and [John Chapman's Southwest Gardening](#) with their permission. Keep in mind that soil and conditions vary from location to location. Check with a local yard or landscape expert for specific issues with your garden.