



January Garden Tips

- Use calcium chloride instead of sodium chloride on your walks. It does less damage to plants. Or, better yet, use sand, which doesn't hurt your plants.
- Houseplant growth this month is slow, so don't fertilize and keep watering to a minimum.
- Check on pots of any bulbs you forced late last fall. Most forced bulbs need 12-15 weeks of chilling. Move them into warmth and sunlight indoors when the tips are 1-2 inches high and/or roots are growing out of the drainage holes.
- Start seeds indoors for the very slowest-growing plants, such as parsley, thyme, tarragon, bedding geraniums, and sage. You can also start seeds for the plants you can put outdoors early, well before your region's last frost, including chives, onions, and leeks.
- Check on any stored plant roots or corms, such as dahlias, tuberous begonias, cannas, or glads for shriveling or decay. Throw out any that are damaged.
- If you haven't already, start a garden journal or file. Tuck into it names of plants you like, magazine pictures, plant labels and seeds, and anything else that suits your fancy.
- Be sure to brush off snow from the branches of your evergreens and shrubs. The light fluffy snow poses no real threat, but if it should become wet and frozen, the weight dramatically increases. Branches are more brittle when the plants are dormant, and the weight of the snow may snap them off. Be careful shaking limbs as they can break easier when frozen.
- Forsythia, jasmine and quince sprays can be cut and brought into the house now for forcing. + Fireplace ashes should be saved to use a fertilizer for your iris and other alkaline soil plants. + If the ground is workable at all (not frozen and not too wet), now is an excellent time to turn the soil. Not only will this expose insect eggs to the effects of winter and hungry birds, the freezing will help to break apart heavy, clods of dirt