



January Tips



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Plant growth in the garden in January is largely dormant. The days are typically cool and short and sometimes wet. Cool season crops and plants may be dormant waiting for the change to warmer weather.

Working on hardscapes and features such as concrete, walls, fences, borders, containers and sprinkler systems is something to keep busy in February. Bare root stock can be selected for planting (roses, fruit trees, grapes, berries, strawberries, and some perennial vegetables). [Evergreen Azaleas](#) can be selected and planted while in bloom at this time.

If you still haven't finished your fall gardening tasks, don't worry, you can treat January as part of fall and plant just about anything although this is not the ideal planting window. Most plants would have been happier planted earlier when the weather was warmer and the days were longer. It is still a good time to plant most trees and shrubs, except for palms. Cool-season flowering annuals can also be transplanted into landscape borders or containers for color through the spring. Even in California's urban dead of winter landscape it is nice to have greenery and some flowers to take the mind off of the drab winter months.

With the season's change to winter, day length has gotten shorter and there is less time to get the needed things done in the landscape. In the urban areas of California we can still have warm spells in which some weed seeds can germinate. Sowing seeds for winter landscapes is also still possible. Just remember that seeds will germinate and plants will grow more slowly in the cooler conditions.

Protect citrus and avocados from severe cold by wrapping the tree trunks. Watering before a frost is advisable, but be careful not to waterlog the trees. The watered trees are able to take a bit more of the cold temperature than if they are exposed to dry and cold weather.

Deciduous fruit trees are dormant now and might benefit from a dormant spray application. The second scheduled spray would be applied in January. The dormant spray should generally be applied when there are several days above 40 degrees (usually not a problem in urban areas of California). For more information on using dormant sprays, click this [University of California IPM](#) link.

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