



June Tips



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Plants seem to grow very fast, and as daytime temperatures increase it may be necessary to change irrigation schedules and watering times to accommodate the change in air and soil temperatures. It is very important to carefully manage your lawn irrigation in the summer. Grasses can get stressed easily and change color quickly. Conversely, many people over water their lawn areas, which wastes water. To fine tune your lawn irrigation, here is a link to the [Lawn Watering Guide for California](#). Continue to mulch flower beds, fruit trees and shrubs. Mulching will give the plants some needed nutrients and keep moisture in the soil between waterings. Acceptable mulch materials include wood chips, ground bark and bark chips, clippings from cool-season grasses (tall fescue, ryegrass, bluegrass), and any other disease- and weed-free plant debris that is shredded or ground.

Vegetables and Herbs

June is still a good month to plant heat loving plants. For vegetables and fruits, sow beans, beets, carrots, celeriac, celery, chard, corn, cucumbers, eggplants, and heat tolerant and bolt resistant lettuces, melons, peppers, potatoes, and sweet potatoes. Try different varieties of tomatoes for cooking, sauces, and fresh eating. Plant squash, pumpkins and watermelon for harvesting in September.

If your garden is off to a good start, you may need to harvest regularly as not to let things over grow and get too mature. Keep vegetables picked often even if you don't plan to use them right away. This practice can enhance further flowering and fruit production.

Plant annual flowers that thrive and bloom in the hot sunny days coming up such as petunias, salvia, begonias, and geraniums. Choose transplants that have a full root system but are not root bound. Gently loosen the rootball before transplanting the plants.

Using herbs in the landscape works well as they don't mind the heat and are usually drought tolerant. Herbs such as lavender, marjoram, rosemary and sage, savory, and thyme usually do fine in the heat with proper irrigation methods, as will dill, fennel, lavender, oregano, mint, sage, tarragon, and thyme.

Rosemary and thyme make good ground covers, while lavender can be used as a small shrub-like perennial. Pinch back herbs for more delicate flavor and bushier tops. Trellises, stakes, or other form of support for tomatoes and vining crops are needed for better fruit production with greater aeration and exposure of leaf area to sunlight and the heat. It also makes harvesting easier.

If you are growing shallots, garlic and onions the tops should be starting to dry out, stop the irrigation. This will allow the bulbs to form the dry layers for longer storage. Bend the tops over to touch the ground so they don't take energy from the bulbs.

Pruning Trees

Newly planted trees and those that are less than 5 years old should have mulch applied around the root area to keep moisture in the soil. Keep pruning off all unwanted "suckers" and "watersprouts" so they don't compete with the original plant for water and nutrients.

Fruit Trees

Continue thinning fruits from trees and vines as they may get too heavy and break branches or portions of vines. Apricots, peaches, and plums may need to have this done more than once, while citrus crops usually self thin by dropping excess immature fruits. Thinning completed within 6 weeks of fruit set provides the maximum benefit. It will give the fruit less competition and better aeration for healthy growth. Mulch trees to keep soil uniformly cool. Peach trees may develop brown rot when over-watered too close to harvest time, it is a good idea to water less frequently but more deeply.

Landscape Plants

Transplant ageratums, alyssums, globe amaranth, asters, baby's breath, bachelor buttons, balsam, begonias, bougainvilleas, , candytufts, celosia, cleome, coleus, columbines, coral bells, coreopsis, cosmos, foxglove, gazanias, marigolds, nasturtiums, portulaca, salvias, statice, sunflowers and zinnias. Flowering plants can brighten up a garden quickly and provide lush foliage for those hot summer days. In light shade you can plant ageratum, Canterbury bells, lobelia, nicotiana, and salvias. In shadier areas choose begonia, coleus, impatiens, lobelia and torenia.

For fragrance plant gardenias, jasmine and lilac.

Plant cactus, succulents, and palms for special effects.

Remove faded blooms and seedpods from spring blooming bulbs and plants. For bulb planting pick cannas, gladiolas, montbretias, and tigrdias.

The featured plant for this month is the shrub *Rhaphiolepis indica*, [Indian hawthorn](#).

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