

# Ask an Expert – April Gardening Checklist

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April showers (and work in the garden) bring May flowers (and plants). Consider these tips to help you prepare! Included are links from the Utah State University Extension Gardeners Almanac.

- Consider planting [peas in the garden](#) every 2-3 weeks (until early May) to extend the harvest.
- [Click here](#) for information about how to plant and harvest rhubarb.
- Check out the [fact sheets](#) produced by USU Extension. We have over 55 on herbs and vegetables!
- Mechanically control young garden weeds by hoeing or hand pulling.
- Protect fruit blossoms and tender garden plants from late freezing temperatures. [Click here](#) for critical temperatures in fruit.
- If storing bulbs, check their condition to ensure they are firm, and remove any that are soft or rotten.
- If locally available, [plant bare root trees](#) and shrubs, keeping the exposed roots moist until planted.
- Wait to prune roses until after buds begin to swell to avoid late frost damage to new growth.
- Prune spring flowering shrubs (those that bloom before June) after they have bloomed to encourage new flower buds for next season.
- Divide crowded, fall-blooming perennials.
- Divide cool-season ornamental grasses when new growth begins to emerge.
- Apply chelated iron (FeEDDHA) to plants with prior problems with [iron chlorosis](#).
- Use organic [mulches](#) (wood chips or bark) to retain soil moisture around shrubs and trees.
- Plant a tree to Celebrate National Arbor Day. The [USU Tree Browser](#) offers an interactive list of tree species adapted to the Intermountain West.
- Apply pre-emergent herbicides in late March to mid-April to control annual weeds in your lawn, such as crabgrass and spurge.
- [Click here](#) for information on planting a lawn.
- In compacted sites, aerate with a hollow core aerator when turfgrass is actively growing in April to June.
- [Check sprinkler systems](#) for leaks. Also, clean filters and fix and align heads.

## Pests and Problems:

- Download the [Utah Home Orchard Pest Management Guide](#).
- Learn about common problems in [peaches and nectarines](#), [pears](#), [plums](#) or [apricots](#).
- Reduce chemical use to promote [beneficial insects](#) in your landscape.
- Treat for [Coryneum blight](#) in stone fruits (cherries, peaches, nectarines, apricots and plums) at shuck split, approximately 10 days after flower petals drop.
- Treat for [powdery mildew](#) on apples beginning when leaves are emerging at ½-inch green until June.
- Monitor wet weather during bloom in apples, pears and hawthorns to determine whether to treat for [fire blight](#).
- Treat fruit trees for [cat facing insects](#), such as stink bugs, to prevent dimples and pucker marks in the trees.
- Use preventative control for [peach twig borer](#) in peaches, nectarines and apricots to help reduce twig and fruit damage later in the season. For specific timing see <http://utahpests.usu.edu/ipm/>.
- Control spring flying [bark beetles](#) in pine trees and other conifers.
- Protect birch trees previously infested by the bronze birch borer by applying a systemic pesticide.
- [Click here to subscribe](#) to the Utah Pests IPM Advisories for timely tips on controlling pests in your yard and garden.
- Consider taking an [online gardening course](#). Courses cover everything from container vegetable gardening and creating the perfect soil, to planting trees and controlling pests. Courses are geared to both beginning and professional gardeners. Use the code “**Grow5**” at checkout to get \$5 off.
- Explore more gardening tips on Extension’s newly designed [yard and garden website](#).