



What to Do When You Can't Garden
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The weekend arrives and your gardening to-do list is a mile long. However, it's raining, miserably cold outside and maybe even snowing, so what do you do? For gardeners, there are always projects you can work on inside that will make your outside gardening chores a little easier when the weather warms. Here are some projects to keep you busy.

- Clean your tools. Use a stiff brush to remove excess dirt, then scrub off rust with steel wool. Spray or wipe on lubricating oil before storing in a dry area.
- Clean your pots. Your garage or patio may be littered with empty plant pots of varying sizes. Gather them up and dump any excess soil, then soak the pots in a 1:9 solution of unscented household bleach and water (one part bleach to nine parts water), which will kill any lingering bad organisms that may have been present. Soaking should be done for ten minutes, then let the pots air dry. They can then be arranged and stacked according to size.
- Clean out old chemicals. Most gardeners have containers of pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, fertilizers, etc. that are old or no longer needed. Please, whatever you do, do not throw these in the garbage, dump them on the ground, or pour them down the sink or toilet or down a sewer or street drain! El Dorado Disposal's Material Recovery Facility, (4100 Throwita Way, Placerville CA 95667) accepts household hazardous waste for free (usually) Friday through Sunday from 9 am to 4 pm.
- Go through your seeds. If you are like most gardeners, you probably have all kinds of seed packets that you have never used, so now is the time to go through them and toss those that are really old. If you are unsure whether to discard them or not, test their viability by folding a few seeds in a wet paper towel and laying the towel someplace warm for a few days, keeping it damp. If the seeds germinate, they are obviously still usable.

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- Start a garden journal. Keeping records of what works and what doesn't is invaluable when it comes to gardens. Taking pictures of your landscape throughout the seasons is also helpful in determining how to tweak things here and there.
- Learn something new. The UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County offer all kinds of home gardening advice and there is a treasure trove of information on our website. <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu>.

These are just a few things that will keep you in the gardening mood until you can get out there and get dirty! You will also feel good about yourself to have these chores behind you when the weather warms enough to get outside.

Due to the pandemic, Master Gardener events will for the foreseeable future continue to be limited. We realize our public classes are valued by county residents and we are doing our best to provide virtual learning opportunities. You can find our new online class schedule at http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Public_Education_Classes/?calendar=yes&g=56698, and recorded classes on many gardening topics here. [https://ucanr.edu/sites/EDC_Master_Gardeners/Public_Education_Classes/Handouts - Presentations/](https://ucanr.edu/sites/EDC_Master_Gardeners/Public_Education_Classes/Handouts_-_Presentations/).

Due to the California stay-at-home order, the Sherwood Demonstration Garden will be closed until further notice. Check http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Demonstration_Garden for updates.

Have a gardening question? Master Gardeners are working hard remotely and can still answer your questions. Leave a message on our office telephone. 530-621-5512, or use the "Ask a Master Gardener" option on our website. mgeldorado.ucanr.edu. We'll get back to you! Master Gardeners are also on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest.

For more information on the UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County, see our website at <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu>. To sign up for notices and newsletters, see http://ucanr.edu/master_gardener_e-news.

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