



# Organic

## Autumn & Winter Garden Guide



Talborne **URBAN** Organics  
Designed for Life

## Autumn & Winter Garden Guide **Index**



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*Organic Solutions for  
all your Growing Needs*

# Introduction to the Autumn & Winter Garden Guide



Autumn and winter is an extremely rewarding and productive time to be in the garden! While summer's vibrant blooms may be fading, autumn ushers in a new season of possibilities, with cooler temperatures, crisp air, and a canvas of fiery foliage. Winter, though often associated with dormancy, is still a time for growth and harvest, with the right planning and know-how.

## What is Organic Gardening?

The essence of organic gardening relies on the building up of a healthy compost rich and crumbly soil with a thriving ecosystem. Inputs which damage the environment, pollute, kill soil life, or cause toxicity in food, soil and water sources are strictly forbidden.

### Organic Gardening Practices

- **Mulch:** Retains moisture, regulates temperature, protects topsoil, and suppresses weeds.
- **Compost:** Enriches soil, stores water, and feeds soil life.
- **Natural Fertilizers:** Nourish plants and people with essential nutrients.
- **Natural Pest Control:** Disrupts pest life cycles, repels them, or creates discomfort, avoiding harmful chemicals.
- **Water Wisely:** Use good quality water according to plant needs, season, and climate.

Join us in Growing Health: Healthy Soil = Healthy Plants = Healthy People

## Why are Talborne Products Unique?

### Superfood for Your Garden

#### Unique & Incomparable

- Scientifically formulated, complete fertilizers with essential nutrients.
- Derived from natural sources, no chemicals, or fillers.
- Mimics nature, feeding soil life for sustained plant health.

#### Superfood for Soil, Plants & You

- 23+ nutrients, amino acids & carbon for optimal plant growth.
- Healthier soil leads to healthier plants and people.
- No leaching or burning, protects the environment.

#### Sustained Release, Great Value

- Consistent nutrient release over 4 months.
- Fewer applications compared to other fertilizers.
- Cost-effective and long-lasting.

**Tip: Sustained,  
Consistent release  
over a 4-month period  
= Value for money**



Talborne Vita products are released in a sustained and consistent manner over a 4-month period. So, when looking at prices on the shelf be sure to do the maths and check how many times other fertilizers need to be used in the same 4-month period and at what application rates.

Eg. If fertilizer 'A' is applied once every 6-8 weeks and our 'Vita range' is applied once every 16 weeks, then you should take the price of fertilizer 'A' and multiply it by 3 or 4 to get a fair comparison. You will note that Vita works out at a lower cost and better value for money when compared correctly.

### Multi-Purpose Power

- One product for various uses: flowers, vegetables, trees & more.
- Apply easily: sprinkle, broadcast, mix, or add to compost.

### Climate-Smart & Certified Organic

- Adds carbon to the soil, promoting healthy microbial life.
- Conserves water and reduces environmental impact.
- Certified organic for safe, toxin-free gardening and produce.

### Recyclable Packaging

- We're committed to a sustainable future.
- Recyclable bags and bottles for eco-friendly gardening.

Learn more: [www.talborne.co.za](http://www.talborne.co.za)

**Talborne Organics: Nourish your garden, organically.**

## Soil Preparation and Improvement for Autumn & Winter



### The Secret to Thriving Gardens

A handful of healthy soil teems with more life than all humans on Earth! Microscopic organisms like fungi, bacteria, and insects work together to sustain all life. Organic gardening fosters this vital ecosystem.

*Nourish Your Soil,  
Nourish Your Life*

### How to build healthy, Organic Soil

#### Autumn

- Apply good quality weed free compost (3L per m<sup>2</sup>), organic earthworm castings (250ml per m<sup>2</sup>/1cm layer on top of soil in pot plants) for soil conditioning and improved structure, Mulch (shredded mixed material, straw, leaves etc) for temperature regulation, weed control and moisture retention.
- Use Talborne Organics Vita Veg 6:3:4(16), Vita Green 5:1:5(16) or Vita Fruit & Flower 3:1:5(18) fertilizers to feed soil life and provide nutrition to plants for healthy gardens. (Apply Vita Fertilizers at 100g per m<sup>2</sup> or 1ml per litre size container)

#### Winter

- Use Talborne Vita Veg 6:3:4(16) or Vita Grow 2:3:2(16)) as they have Nitrogen and higher Phosphate and Potassium levels, for root development, stress tolerance, and overall plant health.
- Unlike older, chemical fertilizers, Talborne' Certified Organic Vita range releases nutrients through microbial breakdown, feeding the soil and providing a "nutrient buffet" for plants even in winter as all living eco-systems still feed in winter, albeit at a slightly slower pace.



**Tip: Building soil health and fertility is vital to organic gardening success**



#### Did you Know:

It takes 2 000 years to create 10cm of topsoil.

If you increase your Soil's organic matter by 1%, you increase the Soil's water holding capacity by 16L per m<sup>2</sup>.



### Using Talborne Vita Granular Fertilizers

- Apply 100g (1 handful) per square meter or 1ml fertilizer per L size container (4L container = 4ml Vita Fertilizer (1 x teaspoon).
- Safe for plants, doesn't leach or volatilize, and provides a sustained release of nutrients for a 4-month period after application.

### A Continuous Process

Organic soil nutrition is an ongoing journey. By focusing on building organic matter, providing essential nutrients and minerals, and adapting your approach to your soil and climate, you can create a thriving garden year-round.

Feed your soil, and it will reward you!

## Autumn & Winter Colour Seedlings

While spring and summer are often associated with vibrant blooms, autumn and winter don't have to be dull and devoid of floral beauty. Here are some stunning flowering plants that add colour and life to your garden during the colder months.



### Violas and pansies

**Tip:** They prefer full sun to light shade and well-drained soil.



### Poppies

**Tip:** Most poppies prefer full sun and well-drained soil.



### African Daisies

(*Osteospermum*)  
**Tip:** They are easy to grow and tolerant of poor soil conditions.



### Sweet peas

**Tip:** They require full sun and well-drained soil, and they will need a trellis or other support to grow on.



### Primroses

**Tip:** They prefer partial shade and moist soil.

### Tips for Growing Autumn & Winter Seedlings

To prevent damping off disease in Seedlings, apply certified organic Earthworm Castings to garden beds at 250ml per m<sup>2</sup> or mix into containers and hanging basket growing mediums or apply 1 cm layer onto container soil surface.

Cutworms are a sign of a Calcium deficiency, to correct, apply Bonemeal at 100g per m<sup>2</sup> or 1ml per L size container or agricultural lime at a rate of 200g per m<sup>2</sup>.



Important to note when planting annual seedlings in autumn:

- **Harden off your seedlings before planting them outdoors** (bought seedlings have already been hardened off and are ready to plant). This will help them to adjust to the cooler temperatures. To harden off seedlings, gradually expose them to outdoor conditions for a few hours each day over a period of about a week.
- **Plant your seedlings in a location that receives full sun to light shade.** Most cool-season flowers prefer at least 6 hours of sunlight per day.
- **Condition your soil with compost, organic earthworm castings (250ml per m<sup>2</sup>/1cm layer on top of soil in pot plants) and apply Talborne Organics Seedling Food 6:2:5(13) (200g per m<sup>2</sup> or 2ml per litre size container before planting).** This will help to improve drainage, soil structure and soil fertility.
- **Water your seedlings regularly, especially during dry periods.** (In areas without winter rainfall).



## Autumn & Winter Flowers and Planting Bulbs for Spring

### Autumn & Winter Perennial Flowers

**Proteas:** These striking, sculptural flowers are a South African icon. The large blooms are surrounded by colourful bracts and make excellent cut flowers. They prefer well-drained acidic soil.

**Foxgloves (*Digitalis purpurea*):** This variety of foxglove boasts clusters of rose-pink, lavender, or white flowers that bloom from late spring to early winter in mild climates. It prefers full sun to part shade and well-drained soil.

**Lobelia:** Imagine a sea of purple, indigo and magenta in your garden. This is a spreading perennial groundcover, which love semi-shaded to sunny spots and can tolerate cold and frost.

**Rhododendron & Azaleas:** These evergreens are known for their prolific blooms. Help them thrive by giving them semi-shaded areas and acidic soil. There are species that bloom from autumn to late summer – and those that flower from summer to autumn and bloom again in the spring.

**Strelitzia:** Enjoy orange and blue flowers from autumn to winter with this evergreen shrub. This tuft-forming shrub strikes as a feature plant with its upright sword-like leaves. It's a great pick because it's water-wise and attracts birds. It enjoys full sun to partially shaded areas.

Plant the above flowers with Talborne Organics Vita Grow 2:3:2(16) (100g per m<sup>2</sup> or 1ml per litre size container). Vita Grow has good levels of Nitrogen, Phosphate, Calcium, and other essential nutrients to establish strong roots and provide energy and vigour to grow healthy plants.

Use Vita Fruit & Flower 3:1:5(18) (100g per m<sup>2</sup> or 1ml per litre size container) or Talborne Nourish 4:1:6(11) Buds, Flowers & Fruit liquid organic fertilizer (5ml per L foliar feed or 10ml per L Soil drench) to feed flowering shrubs and plants as they contain high levels of potassium which stimulates flowering, strengthens plant cells and tissue, and provides stress relief and resilience to plants.

### Watering Tip for Autumn/Winter



In Gauteng's cold dry winter months, it is best to water in the mornings after the sun is up. This will help to wash away any frost in the garden. It's important to not water in the late afternoons as this may cause the plants to freeze when the temperature drops at night.

Watering in the Western Cape takes on a slightly different approach. The cold wet winters provide sufficient moisture so one should either stop watering completely or water sparingly in the afternoons when the sun is shining, and during dry spells.



## Planting Bulbs for Spring Flowering

Although they may not be blooming during the autumn and winter, planting bulbs in autumn is essential for enjoying a vibrant display of flowers come spring. Here are some popular spring-flowering bulbs to plant in autumn.



### Tulips

**Tip:** They prefer full sun and well-drained soil.

### Daffodils

**Tip:** They are easy to grow and naturalize well in most climates.

### Hyacinths

**Tip:** They prefer full sun to light shade and well-drained soil.

### Crocuses

**Tip:** They are perfect for naturalizing in lawns or meadows.

### Alliums

**Tip:** They are a great choice for adding height and texture to the garden.



## Small Space Gardening Tip



### Utilize Containers, Variety of pots and planters:

Take advantage of containers of various sizes and materials to create your winter garden. Choose pots with drainage holes to prevent waterlogging.

### Choose the Right Plants

**Cold-hardy selections:** Opt for plants that can tolerate cooler temperatures and shorter daylight hours. Some options include kale, spinach, lettuce, pansies, violas, and ornamental cabbage.

**Spring starters:** You can even use your containers to start seeds for spring planting. Choose vegetables or flowers that can be transplanted outdoors later in the season.

Plant Bulbs with Talborne Organics Vita Grow 2:3:2(16) (100g per m<sup>2</sup> or 1ml per litre size container). Vita Grow has good levels of Phosphate, Calcium, and other essential nutrients to establish strong roots and provide energy and vigour to grow beautiful, blooming bulbs.

By planting both autumn/winter flowering plants and spring flowering bulbs, you can enjoy a colourful garden throughout the year, even during the colder months.



## Succulents and Aloes

Succulents and Aloes are known for their vibrant, structural foliage and fiery flowers. Dull and cold winter months are brought to life by the beautiful and exuberant blooms, adding a touch of unexpected colour to the colder season. Here are some popular choices for winter-flowering succulents and Aloes.

### Aloes

**Popular:** Aloe striata (Coral Aloe), Aloe arborescens (Krantz Aloe), and Aloe marlothii (Mountain Aloe).

### Echeverias

**Popular:** Echeveria subulata (Firecracker Echeveria) and Echeveria glauca (Blue Echeveria), produce vibrant red or orange blooms during the cooler months.

### Crassulas

**Popular:** Some crassula varieties, like Crassula ovata (Jade Plant) and Crassula falcata (Propeller Plant), boast star-shaped white or pink flowers during the winter.

### Haworthias

**Popular:** These shade-loving succulents typically produce small, white flowers in winter, adding a delicate touch to their unique foliage.

### Schlumbergera (Christmas Cactus)

**Popular:** Winter bloomer, producing vibrant red, pink, or white flowers.



## Caring for Winter-Flowering Succulents

To encourage your winter-flowering succulents to bloom, it's important to provide them with the right care:

- **Light:** Most winter-flowering succulents prefer bright, indirect sunlight. However, some varieties, like Haworthias, may do well in lower light conditions.
- **Water:** Water your succulents thoroughly when the soil is completely dry, but avoid overwatering, as this can lead to root rot.
- **Temperature:** Winter-flowering succulents generally prefer cool temperatures, ideally between 10-18°C.
- **Fertilizer:** You can fertilize your winter-flowering succulents every 4 months during the growing season with a Talborne Vita Fruit and Flowers 3:1:5 (18) at 100g per m<sup>2</sup> or 1ml per litre size container and every 2 weeks with Nourish 4:1:6(11) liquid Organic Buds, Flowers, and Fruit.

With proper care, these winter-flowering succulents can bring a touch of cheer and vibrant colour to your home or garden during the colder months.

## Small Space Gardening Tip



### Light and Temperature

**Maximize natural light:** Position your plants in the sunniest spots available, north-facing windows.

**Protect from frost:** If you have tender plants, bring them indoors on particularly cold nights or use frost protection techniques like row covers.



## Autumn & Winter Edible Garden



*Grow Delicious,  
Organic Veggies at Home*

### Enjoy the benefits of homegrown goodness

- **Healthier food:** Organic vegetables are free from harmful chemicals and contain higher levels of beneficial nutrients.
- **Superior taste:** Experience the unmatched flavour of freshly picked produce.
- **Family-friendly:** Provide your family with safe, healthy food they'll love.

### Autumn planting

- **Cool-season delights:** Spinach, kale, lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Asian greens, peas, leeks, and more.
- **Root vegetables:** Carrots, beets, potatoes, turnips, onions, radishes, and garlic.
- **Harvesting:** Enjoy the last of your summer crops like tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, chillies, eggplants, squash, pumpkins, and butternut.

**Reminder:** The list above needs to be adjusted for your region's climatic conditions.

### Top tips for organic success

1. **Sun:** Choose a sunny spot for optimal growth.
2. **Seasonality:** Select varieties suited to your climate and season.
3. **Plan & Stagger:** Plant a few seeds of each variety every week for continuous harvests.
4. **Prepare Beds:** Prep your beds before seedlings are ready for planting.
5. **Fresh Seeds:** Use fresh seeds each season for successful germination.
6. **Plant Favourites:** Choose vegetables your family enjoys.
7. **Fertilize:** Use appropriate Talborne Organics VITA or NOURISH fertilizers for different veggie types.
8. **Water Regularly:** Water vegetables and herbs regularly, especially in dry weather.
9. **Mulch:** Apply mulch after seeds germinate to retain moisture and suppress weeds.
10. **Natural Pest Control:** Use organic solutions like Biogrow to protect your plants without harmful chemicals.

### Explore our Vita range

**Vita Grow  
2:3:2 (16)**  
Ideal for planting cool season root and bulb vegetables and seeds, pods and legumes.



**Vita Veg  
6:3:4 (16)**  
Ideal for cool season leafy green vegetables and herbs.



**Nourish  
Multi-Plant  
5:1:4 (10)**  
A great foliar feed or soil drench for all plants once planted with Vita fertilizers.



Start your journey to a delicious and healthy harvest today!

## Herbs

**Autumn & Winter Herbs in South Africa: Culinary Herbs, Medicinal Herbs, Pet-Safe Herbs, & Herbs for Companion Planting and repelling pests.**



### Culinary Herbs

- **Thyme:** Versatile, thrives in cooler weather, used in stews, soups, roasted veggies and stuffing.
- **Rosemary:** Strong, piney flavour, pairs well with lamb, chicken, potatoes, and roast veggies.
- **Sage:** Peppery flavour, complements sausages, pork, stuffing, can be used in salads. Also, medicinal, can be used as a tea.
- **Parsley:** Staple in many cuisines, fresh, slightly bitter flavour, chopped and used as garnish, soups, stews, salads.
- **Oregano:** Mediterranean, warm, slightly spicy, used in Italian dishes like pizza, pasta sauce. and natural antibiotic properties for protection against colds and flu.
- **Mint (varieties like spearmint and peppermint):** Refreshing, used in drinks, desserts, lamb dishes.
- **Chives:** Easy to grow in Autumn/Winter, mild onion-like flavour, used fresh/dried in soups, stews, omelettes.
- **Garlic chives:** Garlicky flavour, similar uses as chives, more cold-tolerant.

These are just a few of the many herbs that you can grow in South Africa during the autumn and winter months. With a little planning and care, you can enjoy fresh, flavourful herbs throughout the year.



### Medicinal Herbs (consult a healthcare professional before use):

**Wormwood (*Artemisia afra*):** Supports immune system, coughs, colds, flu. Prefers full sun and well-drained soil, can be propagated from seeds or cuttings.

**Cancer bush (*Sutherlandia frutescens*):** Boosts immune system, alleviates pain, reduces anxiety, thrives in full sun and well-drained soil, can be propagated from seeds or cuttings.

**Wild rosemary (*Eriocephalus africanus*):** Not to be confused with the culinary rosemary, treats respiratory problems, wounds, digestive issues, prefers full sun and well-drained soil. Can be propagated from seeds, cuttings, or division.

**The African Potato**, also known as ***Hypoxis hemerocallidea***, is **not technically classified as a herb**. It belongs to the **Hypoxidaceae family**, which is distinct from the typical culinary and medicinal herb families like Lamiaceae (mint family) or Lamiaceae (rosemary family).

While not a true herb, the underground corm (a swollen underground stem) of the African Potato is commonly used in traditional South African medicine for various purposes, including boosting the immune system and managing conditions like diabetes and urinary tract infections. However, it's crucial to remember that scientific research on its effectiveness is still ongoing and consultations with a qualified healthcare professional are essential before using it for any medicinal purposes.

**Important Note:** It is crucial to remember that this information is for educational purposes only and should not be interpreted as medical advice. Always consult with a qualified healthcare professional before using any herbal remedies, especially if you are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have any underlying health conditions.

**Pet-Safe Herbs (introduce gradually, consult VET warning before use):**

- **Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*):** Attracts cats, playful and euphoric response. Plant in a controlled area.
- **Chamomile (*Matricaria chamomilla*):** Beneficial for both cats and dogs, calming, soothes anxiety, digestion, skin irritation (usually consumed as a tea but small, supervised quantities of leaves can be given to pets).
- **Lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis*):** Calming, similar to chamomile (moderate, supervised quantities as large quantities can cause stomach upsets).

While several herbs are safe for pets, it's important to remember that ingesting large quantities of any plant material can be harmful to them. It's crucial to supervise your pet around any planted herbs and consult a veterinarian before allowing them to consume any.

**Note:** This is not an exhaustive list. Research specific needs of each herb or vegetable before planting. Remember, consult a healthcare professional before using any herbs for medicinal purposes, and consult a veterinarian before giving herbs to pets.

## Recipies



### Lavender Flavoured Lavender Sugar

1. Put a sprig of Lavender in your sugar bowl for flavoured sugar



### Mint Mint sauce recipe for Lamb

1. Once you have picked a large bunch of mint, strip leaves off the stalks and grind into a pulp using the Mortar and Pestle
2. Add 2 tsp of brown sugar
3. Add 2 tbsp of red wine vinegar
4. Pinch of salt
5. Mix all together. Serve



### Beetroot Bottled Beetroot Salad

1. Remove leaves from 8 medium sized beetroots and cook in a large pot with 1 tsp salt till soft.
2. Remove beetroot and allow to cool. Once cool enough, trim top and bottom and remove skins.
3. Grate
4. In a pot combine:  
1 cup white Vinegar  
1 cup white sugar  
2 cups water
5. Bring to the boil and add beetroot. Let simmer for 10 minutes.
6. Scoop beetroot and vinegar mix into sterilized bottles, put lids on and store for up to a month.

### How to dry your own homegrown herbs



Pick your herbs in bunches.

Secure a piece of string horizontally along a wall in a dry, dark and well ventilated place.

Tie a piece of string around the stems of your bunch of herbs and hang upside down from your horizontal string.

Once the leaves are dry, gently remove them and lay them down on a clean piece of paper and pull leaves off.

Collect dry leaves and store in a dry, glass container with a lid for several months.

Remember to clearly mark your containers so you know what dried herbs they contain.





## Companion Planting

### Pest Control

- **Mint:** Deters aphids, beetles, and crawling insects. Spreads aggressively so plant with caution.
- **Lavender:** Attracts pollinators, repels flies, mosquitoes, moths with its strong scent.
- **Garlic chives:** Deters aphids, rabbits, other small animals. More cold tolerant than regular chives.

### Beneficial Insects

- **Thyme:** Attracts bees, butterflies with its fragrant flowers. Complements cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower.
- **Rosemary:** Fragrant evergreen shrub attracts bees and butterflies with its blue flowers in late winter and early spring. Pairs well with beans, carrots, potatoes.
- **Sage:** Has a slight peppery flavour. Deters cabbage moths, whiteflies. Complements onions, tomatoes, squash.
- **Parsley:** Biannual herb, attracts hoverflies, butterflies and wasps with small yellow flowers. Good companion for tomatoes, asparagus, carrots.
- **Oregano:** Pairs well with tomatoes, peppers, eggplants. Attracts ladybirds and lacewings.

Remember, companion planting is not an exact science, and the best combinations may vary. However, these suggestions can provide a good starting point for creating a thriving and healthy autumn and winter garden.

## Tips for Companion Planting



### Vegetables

**Lettuce:** Benefits from chives (aphid repellent) and mint (cabbage moth repellent).

**Spinach:** Benefits from onions (aphid repellent) and radishes (loosen soil).

**Kale:** Enjoys dill (attracts hoverflies) and rosemary (cabbage moth repellent).

**Carrots:** These orange root vegetables benefit from being planted with onions (deter carrot flies), and chives (repel aphids).

**Beets:** Beets appreciate the company of onions (deter beet leaf miner), and lettuce (helps to shade the soil and retain moisture).



### Flowers

**Marigolds:** These vibrant yellow and orange flowers not only add beauty to your garden but also deter aphids, whiteflies, nematodes, and even some rabbits and deer. They are good companions for a variety of vegetables, including tomatoes, peppers, and beans.

**Nasturtiums:** These edible flowers attract beneficial insects like bees and hoverflies and also deter aphids, squash bugs, and whiteflies. They make good companions for tomatoes, cucumbers, and squash.



### Fruit Trees

- Citrus (Oranges, Lemons, Grapefruit, Limes, Blood Oranges, Nartjies, Tangerines, Clementines, Satsumas, Kumquats, Finger limes) .
- Deciduous Fruit - Stone Fruit: Peaches, Nectarines, Apricots, Plums, Cherries
- Deciduous Fruit - Pome Fruit: Apples, Pears, Quinces.
- Exotic Fruit: Pomegranates and Persimmons (All can be planted and harvested between March and May).
- Figs and Olives (Harvested in Autumn, and Avocado's (from Autumn through Winter).



Here are some of the most popular fruit trees that organic gardeners are growing. Autumn and late winter are good times for planting all fruit trees and vines.

**Citrus Trees (Oranges, Lemons, Grapefruits):** These evergreen trees are well-adapted to South Africa's climate and produce delicious fruits in winter. They require full sun, well-drained soil, and regular watering during their first few years.

**Apricots:** These deciduous trees offer a burst of flavour and sweetness and can be planted in autumn and winter, but are harvested in summer.

**Peaches and Nectarines:** These deciduous trees are like apricots but offer slightly different flavours and textures. They require the same growing conditions as apricots and can be planted in autumn and winter, but are harvested in summer.

**Pomegranates:** These beautiful trees are not only ornamental but also produce delicious fruits in late summer/autumn. They are drought-tolerant and prefer full sun and well-drained soil.

**Quinces:** These deciduous trees produce fragrant yellow fruits in autumn. They are relatively low-maintenance and prefer full sun and well-drained soil. Quinces are typically used for making jams, jellies, and preserves.

**Apples and Pears:** These are cool season autumn harvesting fruits in SA, harvesting of pears starts in February to April and Apples March through to May.



It's important to note that this list is not exhaustive, and there are many other fruit trees that can be grown in South Africa's autumn & winter season. The best choice for your garden will depend on your specific climate, soil conditions, and personal preferences. Remember to research the specific needs of each fruit tree before planting to ensure its success.

### Food for Thought

Healthy, organic food is essential for our well-being. Consider your food security and choose organic gardening methods that nourish the soil, the plants, and ultimately, ourselves.

## Tips for Common Pest Problems



Winter might slow down some garden pests, but it doesn't mean they entirely disappear. Here are some tips to keep your garden protected from unwanted visitors during the colder months.

### Promote Beneficial Insects

**Attract natural predators:** Plant flowers and herbs that attract ladybirds, lacewings, and other beneficial insects that help control pest populations naturally.

**Provide overwintering habitats:** Create sheltered areas and build insect hotels, or leave some plant stalks standing, offering refuge for beneficial insects to overwinter.

### Natural Methods

**Encourage natural fungicides:** Introduce plants like lavender, rosemary, and chamomile as companion plants throughout your garden. These herbs have natural fungal protection properties.

**Use Biogrow Neudosan®:** Apply Neudosan® as a preventative insecticide to fruit trees and ornamental shrubs while they are bare (no leaves or flowers) during winter. It controls soft bodied insects such as spider mites and aphids on fruits, vegetables and ornamental plants.

### With Biogrow Organic Pesticides

– Spray Today, Eat Tomorrow

By implementing these tips and remaining vigilant, you can create a less hospitable environment for winter pests, promoting a healthier and more resilient garden throughout the colder months.



*Biogrow: Spray Today, Eat Tomorrow*



While winter brings a slowdown in overall garden activity, certain pest and disease problems can persist or even become more prominent in South Africa's autumn and winter seasons. Here's a breakdown of the key concerns:

### Pests

**Slugs and Snails:** These moisture-loving creatures become highly active during autumn and winter due to increased humidity and cooler temperatures. They feed on a variety of plants, leaving slime trails, and causing damage by chewing holes in leaves. Use Biogrow Ferramol organic slug and snail bait to combat these infestations.

**Aphids:** Though less abundant compared to warmer months, aphids can still be found hiding under leaves and in sheltered areas. They suck sap from plants, weakening them and potentially transmitting diseases.

**Scale Insects:** These tiny, armoured insects attach themselves to branches and stems, feeding on sap and weakening the plant. They can be particularly problematic on fruit trees and ornamental plants.

**Cutworms:** The larvae of various moths, cutworms are active at night and can sever plant stems at ground level, causing wilting and death.

### Diseases

**Fungal Diseases:** Fungal diseases like powdery mildew and botrytis (grey mold) thrive in cool, moist conditions prevalent during extended periods of damp weather. They affect various plant parts, causing discoloration, wilting, and rotting. Use Biogrow Copper Soap & Phyta as a preventative and curative for fungal disease.

**Bacterial Diseases:** Bacterial diseases like fire blight, which affects apples and pears, can remain dormant in infected branches and become active again in spring. It's crucial to remove infected parts to prevent further spread.



## Autumn & Winter Lawns and Grasses



### Lawns

Even though your lawn's growth may slow down in winter, proper care during this time is crucial for its health and resilience come spring. Here are some key autumn & winter lawn care practices.



### Mowing

**Tip:** Continue mowing until the grass (Kikuyu) stops growing or other lawn varieties growth slows down, typically when temperatures consistently drop below 10°C. Adjust the mowing height to a slightly higher level (around 5 cm) compared to spring and summer, allowing for better insulation and possible frost protection.

### Leaf Removal

**Tip:** Regularly remove fallen leaves from your lawn to prevent them from smothering the grass and creating damp conditions that can promote disease. Use dried leaves to mulch your garden beds.

### Fertilization

**Tip:** Apply a specialized autumn fertilizer rich in Potassium, like the Talborne Vita Green 5:1:5 (16) at 100g per m<sup>2</sup>, making the grass more resistant to frost and other harsh winter conditions. For lawn that is not vigorous, feed with Vita Veg 6:3:4 (16) at 100g per m<sup>2</sup> for Nitrogen to encourage leaf growth and Phosphate and Calcium for root development and good lawn knit. These nutrients help strengthen the root system and improve winter hardiness, making the grass more resistant to frost and other harsh winter conditions.

### Aeration

**Tip:** Aerate your soil with a garden fork, spiked roller or hollow tine equipment for larger areas, especially if the lawn experiences heavy traffic or compacted soil. This process improves drainage and allows air, water, and nutrients to reach grass roots more effectively. Earthworm castings or lawn dressing can be spread to condition soils and improve structure. It will prevent roots from rotting which attracts Mole Crickets.

By following these autumn & winter lawn care tips, you can ensure your lawn stays healthy and recovers vigorously when spring arrives.





## Ornamental Grasses

South Africa boasts a diverse range of ornamental grasses that not only thrive in the warm summer months but also add captivating beauty and texture to your garden during the cooler autumn and winter seasons. Here are some South African native and readily available choices to consider.

### *Aristida junciformis*

**Tip:** Easy to care for, drought-tolerant, and requires minimal maintenance. Cut back the foliage in late winter or early spring before new growth emerges.

**Fact:** Considered one of the best grasses to make brooms.



### *Eragrostis superba* (Sawtooth Love Grass)

**Tip:** Cut back the foliage in late winter or early spring before new growth emerges. Attracts seed eating birds to the garden.

**Fact:** Water Wise.

### Snowflake Grass (*Andropogon eucomis*)

**Tip:** Very hardy, small, upright growing grass with bright green foliage. Glistening white seed heads are born at the tip of reddish stems from November to May. Useful as a soil stabilizer. Birds collect seed heads for nesting material. Size: 30-60cm.

### Daba Grass (*Miscanthus capensis*)

**Tip:** Very hardy, evergreen, clump-forming, large grass that has beautiful autumn colours. Plumes of pink seed heads in late summer, early autumn. Prefers full sun.

**Fact:** Indigenous.

### Weeping Love Grass (*Eragrostis curvula*)

**Tip:** Easy to grow and requires minimal maintenance. Prefers full sun and well-drained soil. Prune back overgrown foliage in late winter or early spring.

### Red Grass (*Themeda triandra*)

**Tip:** Easy to grow and drought tolerant. Prefers full sun and well-drained soil. Cut back the foliage and seed heads in late winter or early spring.

## Watering Tips for Autumn/Winter



### Reduce Watering Frequency

**Observe and adapt:** As the temperatures drop and evaporation slows, reduce the frequency of watering compared to summer.

**Thorough soaking:** When you do water, aim for deep and infrequent watering. This encourages the roots to grow deeper into the soil searching for moisture, making them more resilient during dry periods.

**Water in the early morning:** This allows the water to soak into the soil before the heat of the day increases evaporation.

These are just a few examples of the many beautiful ornamental grasses that can add interest and beauty to your garden throughout the year, even during the colder months. Consider incorporating these into your landscape design to create a year-round captivating garden.

## Autumn & Winter Trees and Shrubs

South Africa's diverse climate allows for a wide variety of trees and shrubs to thrive in autumn and winter, adding bursts of colour and visual interest to your garden during the cooler months. Here are some beautiful options to consider:



### Trees

#### Coral Tree (*Erythrina lysistemon*)

This stunning tree boasts vibrant red flowers in summer and autumn, followed by dark, leathery seed pods that persist throughout.

#### Cape Chestnut (*Calodendrum capense*)

Showcasing large, white to pink flower clusters in spring and summer, this evergreen tree offers glossy green foliage that adds year-round beauty.

#### Yellowwood (*Podocarpus latifolius*)

This slow-growing evergreen tree features glossy, dark green leaves that provide a calming backdrop throughout the year.



### Tip for Combating Climate Change



As trees grow, they help to combat Climate Change by removing Carbon Dioxide from the air, storing Carbon in the trees and soil, and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere.

The temperature difference between neighbourhoods with a heavy tree canopy and those with no trees can be as much as 4 to 5 degrees celcius cooler.

#### Did you Know:

Natural Forest areas are disappearing at a rate of 1 x soccer field every 2 seconds, globally.

#### Common Wild Pear (*Dombeya rotundifolia*)

This very hardy, deciduous, drought and fire resistant, upright tree has round leathery leaves and attractive rough, fissured bark that is utilized by woodpeckers.

#### White Milkwood (*Sideroxylon inerme*)

This evergreen tree displays glossy, dark green leaves and produces small, strongly scented flowers, attracts birds into the garden and has many traditional medicinal uses in summer, followed by edible black fruits that ripen in autumn and winter.





### Tips for Pest Control and Prevention



**Autumn Cleanup:** Rake fallen leaves onto garden beds to mulch, condition soils and maintain moisture during the dry winters throughout South Africa (excluding Western & Southern Cape) or rake up leaves on lawns and paved areas to make compost for adding to soil and containers for your spring garden.

**Winter Mulching:** Apply a layer of mulch around plant bases to retain moisture, regulate soil temperature, and suppress weeds that can harbour pests and diseases.

**Monitoring and Early Intervention:** Regularly inspect your plants for signs of pests and diseases. Take action early using organic methods like insecticidal soap, neem oil, or biological controls whenever possible.

#### Choosing Winter-Hardy Varieties:

Select plant varieties adapted to your local climate and cold tolerance to minimize winter damage and associated pest and disease issues.



### Shrubs

#### Pincushion (*Leucospermum cordifolium*)

A rounded shrub reaching a diameter of 2m and a height of up to 1.5m. Beautiful Red, Orange or Yellow pincushion-shaped flowers from winter to summer. Plant in full sun, it is tender to frost and has a moderate drought tolerance.

#### Wild Dagga (*Leonotis leonurus*)

A very hardy, drought and frost resistant, evergreen shrub. Masses of showy, compact clusters of orange or white flowers. Plant in sun or semi-shade, cut back severely after flowering for best results and mass flowering the next season.

#### Cape-honeysuckle (*Tecomaria capensis*)

A hardy, evergreen, fast growing, rambling shrub. Beautiful, large spikes of funnel-shaped flowers are borne from early spring, through summer and into winter. Flower colours range from Orange, Yellow, Red and Bronze too Salmon. Plant in full sun or semi-shade. Size up to 3m.

#### Ribbon Bush (*Hypoestes aristata*)

A small to medium sized, rounded shrub (30cm - 1m). Lilac, Purple to White flowers are borne from March to August. Prune back after flowering. Hypoestes is a hardy, evergreen shrub that prefers a sun to semi-shade position.

#### September Bush (*Polygala myrtifolia*)

This evergreen shrub showcases small, purple flowers in late summer and autumn, adding a charming touch to the garden.

Plant Trees & Shrubs with Vita Grow 2:3:2(16) with high Phosphate and Calcium nutrient levels to develop and establish roots and provide energy and vigour to grow.

- Feed Evergreen Trees and Shrubs with Vita Green 5:1:5(16) at 100g per m<sup>2</sup> or 1ml per litre size container.
- Apply Talborne Vita Fruit & Flower 3:1:5(18) (100g per m<sup>2</sup> or 1ml per litre size container) or Nourish liquid organic plant food 4:1:6 (11) Buds, Flowers & Fruit (5ml per L water foliar feed or 10ml per L water soil drench) to Flowering & Fruiting Trees and Shrubs.

By selecting plants suitable for your climate and specific garden conditions, you can create a vibrant and captivating landscape throughout the year.

## Autumn & Winter Indoor Plants

Indoor plants offer a multitude of benefits that enhance the value of your home, enriching your living or working space in several ways:

- Improved Air Quality.
- Reduced Stress and Improved well-being.
- Increased Focus and Productivity.
- Enhanced Aesthetics and Ambiance.
- Increased Home Value.

Here are some key tips for keeping your indoor plants thriving:

### Light

- Understand your plant's needs and light level requirements.
- Rotate your plants.

### Watering

- Avoid overwatering.
- Water deeply, but infrequently.
- Empty the drainage tray.

### Temperature and Humidity

- Maintain consistent temperatures between 18-29°C.
- Avoid placing your plants near drafts.
- Certain plants prefer higher humidity levels.
- Try grouping plants together, or using a humidifier.

### Nourish your Plants and Soil with Organic Fertilizer

- Fertilize your plants with the Talborne Nourish Liquid Organic range (Foliar feed with 5ml per L water or soil drench with 10ml per L water).
- Plants quickly use up the nutrition available in their pot and it is important to replenish nutrients regularly.
- Add Organic Earthworm Castings to add structure and fertility to growing mediums and assist in water retention (Apply 1cm layer of earthworm castings to soil surface in container).

### Clean leaves

- Wipe dust off leaves with a damp cloth to improve their ability to absorb light and prevent pests and disease.



### Repot when necessary

- As your plant grows, it may require a larger pot to accommodate its root system.
- Look for signs like roots pushing out of the drainage holes, stunted growth or the plant getting too big for its container.

### Prune regularly

- Pruning encourages bushier growth and removes dead or damaged leaves.

Remember, every plant is unique, so research the specific needs of your individual plants to ensure they thrive in your indoor environment.



## Living Sculptures in the Garden

Let's delve into the fascinating world of living sculptures in the garden, including the prehistoric cycads and the intricate art of bonsai.

**Cycads** are fascinating and relatively low-maintenance plants that can add a touch of prehistoric charm to your garden. They are one of the oldest living plant groups on Earth, predating even dinosaurs and are threatened with extinction.

Some cycads have a symbiotic relationship with cyanobacteria, which live in their roots. These bacteria fix atmospheric nitrogen, converting it into a form usable by the cycad, providing it with essential nutrients.

It is because of this that Cycads are not heavy feeders. Fertilize them twice a year with a Talborne Vita Green 5:1:5(16) granular slow-release fertilizer.



Here's what you need to know:

### Location

- Full sun but can tolerate some afternoon shade and be protected from winds. Needs space to grow.

### Soil

- Well-draining soil is crucial for cycads, as they are susceptible to root rot.

### pH

- Cycads prefer a slightly acidic to neutral soil pH (between 5.5 and 7.0). Talborne's Soil conditioner, Fertilis and SoilCare organic earthworm castings is pH neutral and ideal for Cycad growth.

### Watering

- Water deeply: Water thoroughly when the top few cm's of soil dries out. Avoid frequent shallow watering, as this encourages root rot.

### Fertilizing

- Cycads are not heavy feeders. You can plant them with Vita Grow 2:3:2(16) and feed them twice a year with a Talborne Vita Green 5:1:5(16) granular slow-release fertilizer.

### Pests and diseases

- Cycads can be susceptible to scale insects and fungal diseases in very dry or nutritionally stressed conditions. Monitor your plant and address any issues promptly with Biogrow Pyrol for Scale and Biogrow Copper Soap and Biogrow Phyta for fungal disease.

### Winter protection

- In colder climates, you may need to protect your cycad from frost damage. Mulch around the base of the plant and cover it with burlap or frost cloth if temperatures dip below freezing.

By following these tips, you can ensure your cycad thrives and adds a touch of prehistoric elegance to your garden for years to come.

**Bonsai**, unlike traditional sculptures carved from stone or wood, are sculpted through careful cultivation. Pruning, wiring, and pot selection are used to manipulate the growth of the tree, shaping its branches, trunk, and overall form into a desired aesthetic.

Bonsai's roots trace back to ancient China as early as the 3rd century BC.



#### Symbolism and Significance:

Harmony with nature, patience, and perseverance due to the dedication and meticulous care required for their longevity. Owning a bonsai can symbolize longevity, good luck, and prosperity.

**Not Genetically Modified:** Contrary to a common misconception, bonsai trees aren't genetically dwarfed. They are regular trees cultivated through techniques like root restriction, regular pruning, and pot selection. This controlled growth allows them to maintain their miniature size for generations.

**Remarkable Longevity:** With proper care, bonsai trees can live for hundreds of years, even exceeding a millennium in some documented cases. This longevity further reinforces the symbolism of patience and perseverance associated with the art form.

While bonsai require regular feeding for optimal growth due to their limited access to nutrients in a pot, it's crucial to choose the right fertilizer. Talborne Nourish liquid organic fertilizers can provide essential nutrients to assist this process.

Using Talborne Vita Grow 2:3:2(16) during repotting to a larger pot can minimize stress on the plant and aid its smooth establishment in its new home, promoting the continuation of this ancient art form.

#### Light

- Most bonsai thrive in full sun, ideally 6-8 hours daily. However, some species might prefer partial shade.

#### Temperature

- Protect your bonsai from extreme temperatures, both hot and cold. During harsh winters, some species might require protection from frost.

#### Airflow

- Ensure good air circulation to prevent disease and promote healthy growth. Avoid placing your bonsai near drafts, heaters, or air conditioners.

#### Watering

- **Method:** Water thoroughly until water runs out the drainage holes. Avoid frequent shallow watering, which can lead to root rot.

#### Frequency

- Allow the top inch of soil to dry out completely before watering again. Watering frequency depends on factors like pot size, climate, and plant type. Observe your bonsai for signs of thirst, such as wilting leaves, dry soil, and lighter pot weight.





### Soil and Nutrition

- **Soil Mix:** Bonsai require a well-draining soil mix. Popular options include mixes with akadama (baked clay), pumice, and lava rock.

### Repotting

- Repot your bonsai every 2-3 years, or when the roots become pot-bound, using fresh soil mix.



### Fertilizing

- Fertilize sparingly with an appropriate Talborne Nourish 100% plant-based liquid organic fertilizer for your bonsai, strictly following the specific type and package instructions.

### Pruning

- Regularly prune your bonsai to maintain its desired shape and size. Pruning also encourages new growth and air circulation.



### Wiring (optional)

- Use wires carefully to bend and shape branches. This is an advanced technique and requires proper knowledge to avoid damaging the plant.



### General Care

- **Monitor pests and diseases:** Regularly inspect your bonsai and address any issues promptly with Biogrow certified organic solutions or non-toxic methods wherever possible.
- **Rotate your pot:** Regularly rotate your pot to ensure even growth on all sides, especially if the light source comes from one direction.
- **Patience and Observation:** Bonsai care requires patience and continuous observation. Learn to recognize the subtle signs your bonsai displays to understand its needs and adjust your care accordingly.



Remember, caring for your bonsai living sculpture is a journey of learning, adapting, and appreciating the unique beauty of this art form. With dedication and the right knowledge, you can help your miniature tree thrive for years to come.



## Landscape Design Studio

Crafting Nature-Inspired Spaces for Life.

**Focus:** Creating healthy, environmentally friendly landscapes that enhance urban living and promote biodiversity.

**Services:** Landscape Design and Project Facilitation.

**Design Philosophy:** Combining aesthetic appeal with ecological sustainability for a harmonious urban environment.

### Landscape Design Tip



Increases curb appeal and welcoming first impression

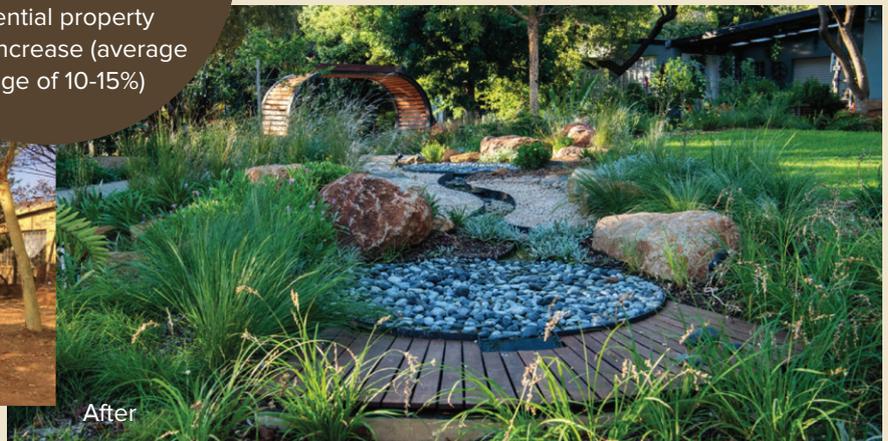
Potential property value increase (average range of 10-15%)

### Benefits of a well-designed Landscape

A well-designed landscape acts as a refuge, offering a space to unwind, uplift one's mood, and potentially boosting cognitive abilities. This is especially crucial in today's fast-paced world where stress, health (both physical and mental health) concerns are on the rise.



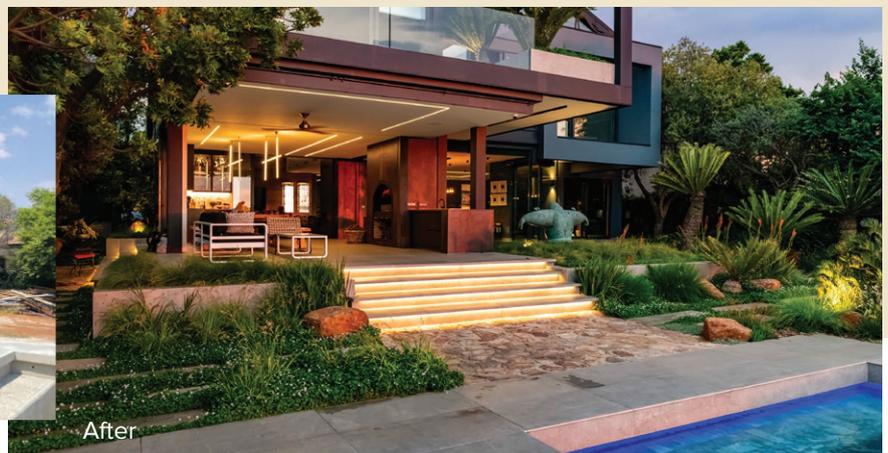
Before



After



Before



After

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