

What to do in October

General Tasks

Remove the support canes & pots for storage during winter times. Wash the pots & canes in a mixture of garden disinfectant & water to prevent disease being spread.

Choose a hardy autumn variety of broad bean seeds to sow now. If the winter is harsh, cover the young plants with fleece or cold frame for protection from pests.

While tidying up the garden, you may find some twigs, branches or logs. Use them to make a log pile as a home for the beneficial insects – ladybirds, hoverflies, lacewing, etc. Place the pile behind the shed, under the hedge or under a tree.

When you start to remove any crops and dig the soil to prepare for the new season, make sure that you remove any small or big potatoes. They are a nuisance when they start to grow through any spring sown seedlings. And they may be a potential source for blight disease.

Use cloches, fleece or cold frames to protect any salad leaves and lettuces. It helps to keep the soil insulated, protect new plants – onions from birds.

Remove any yellow leaves from the brassicas bed. Stake any tall plants, Brussels Sprouts if need be.

Protect any curds of cauliflowers by folding the leaves back.

Reuse any old compost. For example, for seed sowing, for mulching the beds, etc. For seed sowing – since the seeds don't need many nutrients, you can use the old compost by sieving it and mixed them with perlite to improve drainage and retain moisture.

When harvesting cabbages, leave some stems and cut a cross in the top. You may get a bonus of leaves to harvest.

Greenhouse

If you have purple sprouting broccoli growing in the greenhouse, you need to use a strong stick to provide support for the plants. Although there is no wind to rock the plants, the roots are not as resilient.

Continue to look out for any diseased leaves and plants to prevent from spreading.

Improve the ventilation in the greenhouse will help to reduce any grey moulds.

Look out for slugs in the young plants. They love to hide under the pots.

Remove any dry leaves or debris from under any plants to keep the soil clean.

Cucumbers and courgettes will be finishing in this month. You can start to clear the plants away to tidy up the beds.

Start to line greenhouses with bubble polythene to keep it insulated.

Make sure that the heaters are working efficiently.

Fruits

Tidy up the strawberry beds by removing any weeds and unwanted runners among the strawberries. Cut away any old leaves which may help to reduce the potential for any disease. Clear the straw mulches too.

It is a good time to take hardwood cuttings of fruit bushes. For example, gooseberries, blackcurrants, grapevines and blueberries.

If you have any apple trees, collect the apples and press them into juice.

This is a good time to order fruit trees and fruit bushes for planting in late autumn.

Sow Now	Plant Now	Harvest Now
Salad leaves	Garlic	Carrots
Rocket	Onion sets	Potatoes
Winter lettuce	Spring cabbages	Beetroots
Early peas	Winter lettuce	Parsnips
Broad beans	Rhubarb	Celeriac
		Celery
		Swiss chard
		Lettuce
		Salsify
		Scorzonera
		Spinach
		Swedes
		Apples
		Pears
		Cauliflowers
		Oriental cabbages
		Savoy
		Brussels sprouts
		Broccoli
		Turnips
		Tomatoes
		Cucumbers
		Squashes
		Sweetcorns