



When early spring rolls around, many people can't wait to get outdoors and into their gardens and landscapes to start the planting process. However, the fall months present some very distinct advantages for beginning your landscape work, and this month is a great time to start the planning process.

Fall planting follows the heat of summer, before a cool winter season, and trees and shrubs planted in the fall use this to good advantage. According to Texas AgriLife horticulture experts, plant roots grow anytime the soil temperature is 40 degrees or higher, which can occur all winter in South Texas. So you can use the fall and winter months to establish a good root system for new plants so when spring arrives, those hearty roots can support a new surge of spring growth.

So now that you're ready to start your fall planting this year, here's where the planning comes in. All plants have growing requirements. What soil types do you have? Will it grow in sun or shade? Does it need a wet or dry location? Can the plants you identify take on some cold weather? The bottom line is, proper planning will help your plants establish themselves and grow the best when we get to spring. Plus, adding to your landscape is an investment in dollars and time, so you don't want to waste resources, which includes our water resources, by placing those beautiful new native plants you found at the nursery in the wrong spot in your yard.

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So, take your time this month to identify which part of your landscape you want to start working on. Browse the great resources on the internet for the types of native plants that will fit perfectly in the location you've chosen. Every plant in the landscape should serve a purpose. Ask yourself if you want a plant for screening, for privacy, or for shade. How large will it be five years from now? Keep in mind those small one-gallon plants will look very different after a few years of enjoying your landscape.

Once you have narrowed down your choices of native plants for each area of your yard, break out the pencil and paper and sketch out your ideas. It is always easier to move plants around on paper than it is after planting them. So have a solid plan in mind before you head out to buy those native plants. It will save you time and money and you will be doing your part in conserving our water resources. 💧

## What? Water My Yard Once a Month? It is Possible

The Trinity Glen Rose District and Gardening Volunteers of South Texas work together each month to help homeowners learn how to create great looking landscapes that use very little water through its **Go Gardening Show**.

Because September is a great time to start planning for fall landscape upgrades, **Go Gardening** is

bringing you three videos with that emphasizes the horticulturist's maxim of "plan before you plant."

The first segment takes you on a tour of one homeowner's backyard which will be converted into an outdoor living area. You will get some great ideas of all the basics which go into planning for such a project. Then, because this type of project can net a very nice rebate for San Antonio Water System (SAWS) customers, **Go Gardening** spoke to SAWS representatives to get the details of how to go about applying for and receiving that rebate, which can range from \$300-\$1,000 depending on the amount of grass area you replace. And finally, the **Go Gardening** team talked to another homeowner who completed the whole process of converting a yard from Bermuda grass to a colorful wildscape which attracts butterflies and hummingbirds when the native plants bloom. Even during this most recent hot and dry spell, this homeowner only watered his landscape once a month.

Landscape watering is still one of the heaviest drains on a community's water resources, especially during the extended summer months experienced in South Texas. For that reason, the Trinity Glen Rose District will continue its quest to help home and business owners understand the benefits of converting turf grass yards to native landscapes. We hope you join us in that pursuit of preserving our natural resources. 💧

