



# The All-Season Landscape Maintenance Checklist for Virginia

A successful landscape is built through consistent, thoughtful maintenance. In central Virginia, where seasons can change dramatically, your landscape care should adapt accordingly. This guide covers the essential tasks for each season so your property looks its best and is well-prepared for the next phase of growth.

## Spring Landscape Cleanup

### 1. Clear Leaves and Debris

Winter often leaves yards with accumulated leaves, fallen branches, and other debris. Clearing these out early helps your lawn and garden beds get the sunlight and air circulation they need for healthy growth.

### 2. Prune Trees and Shrubs

Spring pruning encourages new growth. Focus on removing any dead or damaged branches; this can help prevent disease and improve the overall appearance of your plants. Avoid over-pruning, as you want to give plants space to bloom and grow naturally.

### 3. Fertilize Beds

Applying fertilizer to your garden beds in early spring gives plants the nutrients they need to grow. Choose a balanced, slow-release fertilizer to support roots, flowers, and foliage throughout the season.

## 4. Apply Mulch

[Mulching](#) in spring helps retain soil moisture, prevents weed growth, and gives beds a polished look. Aim for a layer about two to three inches thick around flower beds and tree bases, and be careful not to pile mulch against plant stems or tree trunks.

## 5. Plant Annuals

Early spring is the perfect time to introduce vibrant annuals to your landscape. Flowers like pansies, petunias, and marigolds bring color and beauty to beds and planters, enhance curb appeal, and set the tone for the season.

# Summer Landscape Maintenance

## 1. Mow and Edge Lawn Areas

Frequent [mowing](#) keeps grass looking neat and encourages strong root systems. Edge around garden beds and pathways for a clean, defined look. Aim to mow weekly, but avoid cutting more than one-third of the grass height to prevent stress.

## 2. Remove and Spray Weeds

Weeds can quickly take over garden beds and lawns during summer. Regularly pull or spray weeds to prevent them from competing with your plants for nutrients and water. A post-emergent herbicide can also be useful in controlling aggressive weeds.

## 3. Maintain Irrigation

During hot and dry spells, make sure your irrigation systems are functioning correctly. Set sprinklers to water deeply and less frequently to promote strong root growth. Consider early morning watering to reduce evaporation and avoid fungal issues.

## 4. Deadhead Flowering Perennials

Remove spent blooms from perennials to encourage further flowering and maintain a tidy appearance. Deadheading redirects energy from seed production back into the plant and prolongs the blooming period.

## 5. Prune Select Plants

Not all plants benefit from summer pruning. Avoid trimming spring-flowering shrubs like azaleas, as this can prevent next year's blooms. Instead, focus on lightly shaping fast-growing shrubs and hedges.

## 6. Apply Pest Deterrents

Summer often brings pests like aphids, beetles, and caterpillars. Use eco-friendly insecticides or natural deterrents, like neem oil or insecticidal soaps, to keep harmful bugs under control. Always apply in the evening to protect pollinators.

## 7. Clean Up Debris

After a summer storm, check for fallen branches and damaged plants. Clearing debris quickly will keep your landscape safe and looking well-kept. Regular cleanup also prevents moisture build-up that can lead to fungal growth.

# Landscaping Fall Cleanup

## 1. Remove or Mulch Leaves and Debris

Leaving a thick layer of leaves on your lawn can suffocate grass. Either rake and remove leaves or mulch them into the lawn. A mulching mower can grind leaves into fine pieces so they can break down and nourish the soil.

## 2. Deadhead and Trim Perennials

Cut back spent perennials to tidy up beds and reduce the risk of pests or diseases overwintering. For some perennials, you may want to leave seed heads as winter food for birds.

## 3. Aerate and Fertilize Lawn

Fall is an ideal time for a second round of aeration and fertilization. Aerating before the first frost helps roots receive nutrients, and fall fertilization prepares grass for winter dormancy.

## 4. Final Lawn Mowing and Edging

Perform a last mow of the season and leave the grass slightly longer for winter. Edge beds and pathways for a clean look and to define areas and prevent overgrowth during winter.

