

Bee Ready, Be Beautiful

Falling temperatures are a sure sign that autumn is upon us. This is the perfect time to begin planning and planting your fall pollinator garden. Not only will this make your landscape as beautiful as the fiery canopy of the trees, it will help important pollinators persist throughout the cold winter months.

Follow these quick and easy tips for a bee-friendly landscape.

Use plants of different shapes, sizes, colors, and bloom times.

Bees and butterflies alike are attracted to brightly colored blooms. You can help them find your flowers by planting in 3x3 clumps instead of alternating plant to plant. Use native plants, which will have no trouble thriving in your soil and climate. Don't forget [night bloomers](#) for bats and moths.

Avoid hybrid breeds.

Although beautiful and eye-catching, many hybrid flower breeders often sacrifice pollen, fragrance, and nectar for visual appeal.

Ditch the pesticides in favor of natural nuisance control methods.

There are a number of ways to dissuade unwelcome visitors to your garden. [Deer](#) like to dine on tender and flavorful blooms of azalea bushes, roses, and chrysanthemum, according to Danielle Blundell of *This Old House*. Keep these and other mammal-munching plants within a fenced boundary. You can also place pungent perennials, such as garlic and chives, around your garden as a forager deterrent. If insects are a problem, make up a homemade insecticide using a mild soap and oil; you can find the recipe along with other green gardening tips [here](#).

Provide a salt lick.

Pollen spreading flyers will flock to a small homemade salt lick made of sea salt, mud, and wood ashes. Mix these ingredients together in bare soil and dampen regularly with a water hose or irrigation line.

Create shelter using dead limbs.

Native bees nest in dead limbs and brush piles. While pruning your trees for fall, keep a few limbs and place them around your garden or fence. If you want to get creative, build a teepee out of spare limbs and drill varying size holes throughout the structure. This will provide vital shelter and create a centerpiece for your garden. Here are some [basic instructions](#) on how to build a DIY teepee. You can modify the design based on what you have available and what looks best with your landscape.

Add late fall and winter-blooming plants.

Spring isn't the only time when blooms are beautiful. Many plants, including carnations, dahlias, and asters are excellent for fall gardens and often persist beyond first frost. Your landscape needn't be bare by the time old St. Nick makes his appearance either. Snowdrop flowers, Christmas rose, and witch hazel thrive outdoors regardless of region. If you live in a temperate area, such as Miami or the Florida Keys, a few front porch [poinsettias](#) will keep things festive while attracting pollinating insects.

Don't stop at flowers.

Trees, including the late-blooming pagoda Dogwood, will add visual interest for you and food and shelter for bees. Other [bee-attracting trees](#) include sourwood, cherry, redbud, and crabapple. Fall is also a great time to spruce up your hardscape to be more appealing and alluring to bees. Rock formations, stone retaining walls, fountains, and birdbaths are beautiful ways to enhance your home and your local bee population's quality-of-life. If you're looking for additional fall landscaping tips, check out HomeAdvisor's recent [blog post](#).

Fall gardening is one of the few ways you can have your proverbial cake and eat it too. Your home will look great and, thanks to the bees, your plants will thrive year-round. All it takes is a little preparation, a few pleasant afternoons outdoors, and a little creativity.



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