

WINTER CARE TIPS



PRUNING

For most shrubs, pruning should take place in late winter or early spring, February through March. It is during the winter months that the structure of the shrub is most visible, as are problems within the branching structure or on the trunk. The ideal time to prune is 4-6 weeks before the plant breaks dormancy. Avoid pruning anything that flowers in the spring as late winter pruning will definitely impact the blooms. Dried perennial stalks topped with seeds should be left standing as they are an important food source for birds in the winter months. For more information, check out our [pruning guide](#).

SNOW

It is usually best to leave fallen snow on your garden as it can help insulate the soil and keep the ground below from freezing. Shaking the snow off shrubs and trees if they are sagging under the weight of it can help prevent damage. If your plants do suffer damage from snow, it is best to prune away broken branches and stake up anything that has been partially uprooted.



Visit the Virtual Service Center:
www.allianceforthebay.org/maintenance

ICEMELT

Since anything you add to your sidewalk will either end up in your yard or in your local waterway, it is important to be careful when treating the ice on your walkways. Though the most environmentally friendly way to treat ice is to remove it with a shovel, this may not be an option in all situations. If you decide to use a chemical icemelt, be sure to follow the instructions on your product and use the minimum amount necessary. Avoid shoveling snow from treated surfaces onto your garden beds as many plants are sensitive to salt and may be harmed by the added chemicals.



GARDEN REPAIR AND INVASIVE CONTROL

As long as the ground is not frozen, this is a good chance to access parts of your garden that may normally be hidden by your perennials' foliage. Things like the berm on a rain garden, spillways, or garden edging often need repair and the winter months are a great time to put in that extra work. If you are dealing with invasives like English ivy that keep their leaves over the winter, it may be a good opportunity to identify and remove them. For more information on how to repair your garden or help with identifying invasives visit the [Virtual Service Center](#).



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