



Your Full Service Nursery & Landscape Center  
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## Winter Plant Care

Winter is here and it's time to think about helping our plants through these cold, dry months.

Your best defense against winter plant loss is to select varieties hardy to our zone (generally: USDA Zone 7 and Sunset Zone 2). Knowing your



plants can tolerate freezing temperatures let's you rest easier until spring. But even hardy plants appreciate a fresh layer of mulch applied in fall or after the ground freezes, which helps to conserve moisture and moderate soil temperature.

Every landscape has microclimates formed by natural topography or your home, fences, or other man-made structures -take these microclimates into consideration when planning your winter plant care. For instance, if you have perennial plants in containers, move them to a south-facing wall with an overhang. This is the warmest spot in your yard and will help these plants successfully winter over. Plantings in low areas that trap cold air are most susceptible to frost. If you're concerned any of your varieties in a low-lying spot aren't reliably hardy, protecting them can be relatively easy. For example, build a framework around the plant using stakes taller and wider than the plant. Next, drape this framework in burlap or frost cloth. A quick, temporary option is to cover plants with a cardboard box cut to make a lid which can be opened and closed as needed. Covering susceptible plants is especially important for tender roses that are not grown on their own root.

Broadleaf evergreens, such as Photinia and Privet, suffer when their leaves desiccate (lose moisture) on warm, windy days. To minimize plant damage, water thoroughly before the ground freezes and then mulch. If plants are in an exposed location, consider spraying their leaves with "Cloud Cover" – an anti-transpirant which forms a thin film on leaves, sealing in moisture.

Remember, in our dry climate plants need water even in winter. Although

deciduous plants are dormant and evergreens have slowed their growth, roots are still seeking water. Water well before the ground freezes. At least twice a month, deeply water your plants on a warm day when the ground has thawed in afternoon. You'll greatly increase winter survival of your plants by taking time to do this

Wait until spring to prune trees and shrubs, even if you suspect they've been frost damaged. It's easy to mistake dormant stems for dead ones. In spring you can easily look for buds, allowing you to confidently prune only dead branches.

By taking a few simple measures, especially mulching and winter watering, you'll be rewarded by watching your plants bud and put on new growth in spring!