**In September:**

* Divide herbaceous perennials
* Pick Autumn raspberries
* Collect and sow seed from perennials and hardy annuals
* Net ponds before leaf fall begins
* Continue watering new plants using rain or grey water if possible
* Start to reduce the frequency of house plant watering
* Clean out cold frames and greenhouses so they are ready for use in Autumn
* Start planting Spring bulbs
* Prune any late Summer flowering plants such as the rock rose (helianthemum)
* Prune climbing and rambling roses once they have finished flowering (unless they are repeat flowering varieties in which case leave them until later in the year)
* Keep camellias and rhododendrons well watered to ensure that next year’s buds develop well

**And for the vegetable garden:**

* Pull or cut off the foliage of maincrop potatoes at ground level three weeks before lifting them. This will prevent blight spores infecting the tubers as you lift them and help to firm the skins of the potatoes.
* Dig up remaining potatoes before slug damage spoils them
* Cover leafy vegetable crops with bird proof netting
* Pinch out the tips of outdoor cordon tomato plants to concentrate the plant’s energy into the fruit
* Keep harvesting your crops. If you have a glut try freezing, drying, pickling and storing so that you can benefit from them later on.
* Keep feeding and watering French and runner beans to make the most of them. Continue harvesting little and often to prevent them setting seed.
* Start the Autumn clean up. Remove any old crops that have finished and clear away weeds to leave your ground clean and tidy for the winter. Why not put a layer of good compost or manure over it for the worms to do their work!
* Pot up some mint and parsley for the kitchen window sill so you have fresh herbs through the Winter.

**For October:**

* If you haven’t already done so clean and disinfect your greenhouse to let in more light and prevent pests and diseases over-wintering in there.
* Protect half-hardy plants with fleece or bring them into a frost-free greenhouse
* Sweep up any fallen leaves which harbour fungal spores and provide ideal hiding places for slugs and snails. Use them to make leaf mould for the garden.
* Lift and divide any overcrowded herbaceous perennials whilst the soil is still warm.
* Once they have been frosted (turned black) lift dahlia tubers to store dry over the Winter months removing any dead foliage beforehand.
* Lift Begonia tubers and dry store.
* Take hardwood cuttings from deciduous shrubs
* After tidying borders mulch with bark chips, well rotted manure, leaf mould or spent mushroom compost to insulate plant roots for the Winter and keep weed growth in check.
* October is an ideal time to plant hedges and move trees and shrubs.

**And for the vegetable garden:**

* Finish harvesting beans and peas. When they have finished cropping cut the plant away at ground level leaving the roots in the soil. These crops fix nitrogen which is slowly released into the soil as the roots break down.
* If you plan to grow beans next year start preparing the site by digging trenches and filling with manure or kitchen waste.
* Hang upside down indoors any tomato or pepper plants with green fruits to ripen.
* Cut back yellowing asparagus foliage to within 5cm of the ground
* Reuse old grow bags by cutting away the top and sowing late salad crops. Cropping can be extended into Winter if grown under glass, cloches or polytunnels.
* Cut back the fruited canes of your Summer fruiting raspberries leaving the new green canes for next year’s crop. Tie in next year’s raspberry canes to support wires or fencing.