



Virginia Cooperative Extension - Loudoun County Master Gardeners



Helpline Hints for December – the Beginning of Winter

Tips for selecting your Christmas tree

Retail lots offer a variety of tree species and are convenient for those with limited time to shop. You may want to look for a lot sponsored by local civic clubs or youth groups, as they are moneymakers for these non-profit organizations. **Check the tress for freshness!** Needles should be green and flexible. Lift the tree off the ground a few inches, and drop it in the cut-end – you should not see needles fall to the ground. Make sure to ask for a “fresh cut” before leaving the lot.

Cut-Your-Own farms provide trees – as well as the experience of walking around in the crisp, cool weather of the season. Freshness is guaranteed!

You may want to consider a living Christmas tree (one that is balled-and-burlapped). After the holiday, the tree can be planted as a permanent part of your landscape, and bring memories of your holiday for years to come. It is advisable to dig the hole to plant the tree in early – before the ground freezes.

Caring for your tree

Your tree may absorb a gallon of water the first day. Treat the tree like a bouquet of cut flowers and keep it watered.

Put the tree in a location where it is not likely to be knocked over – and away from hit air ducts, wood stoves, fireplaces, etc. Make sure light cords are in good condition.

After the holiday, dispose of the tree where it will be used for organic matter versus sending it to the landfill with other household garbage. Most locations offer tree-pickup.

Garden Gadgets are perfect gifts for your favorite gardener!

If you are interested in becoming a Master Gardener, contact our Helpline with your questions – 703 771-5150 or ex107@vt.edu.