

Bringing Plants Inside for Winter: A Complete Guide

It's that time of year again—the days are shorter, pumpkin spice is back, and the fuzzy hats and scarves have emerged from storage. When you notice a nip in the air, you can be sure your plants have too!

If you've been wondering how to bring plants inside for winter and when, this post is for you.

We've put together all the answers you need about when to bring plants inside for winter and what supplies to have on hand. Whether you're a seasoned indoor gardener or you're just getting started, read on for our complete guide to bringing plants inside for winter.

Which Plants Should I Move Indoors?

Hardy plants that grow in cold climates will be fine with overwintering outdoors—they'll simply go dormant or partially dormant.

Plants that aren't resistant to freezing include:

- **Tender bulbs** – These include canna and calla lilies, dahlias, elephant ears, some types of begonias, caladiums, and others.¹ Dig up bulbs and store in a cool, dark part of your house for winter.
- **Houseplants** – Most houseplants are native to tropical climates and have no adaptations for cold. Bring them in well before frost hits.
- **Annuals** – Plants that are sold as annuals in garden centers can also be brought indoors if you want them to survive the winter.²

When to Move Your Plants Indoors

When is the best time to move your plants indoors? Here are a few pointers:

- Tropical plants can be damaged before temperatures hit freezing (40°F), so start moving plants inside a few weeks before the first frost is expected in your area
- Watch the forecast for temperatures nearing 50°F and bring your plants indoors before temps drop any lower than this
- Bringing plants indoors while temperatures are still well above freezing prevents them from being shocked by the sudden change in temperature

¹ Wisconsin University Horticulture Division. *Storing tender bulbs for winter*.
<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/storing-tender-bulbs-for-winter/>