



Spring is traditionally the month that most of us get back out in the garden and start to implement new plans, so if you have downloaded a plan but have yet to prepare and plant it out, here are a few pointers for things to do now to prepare for your new border.

- Firstly mark out the area to be planted with either spray paint , sand or string and pegs
- If the area is grassed lift the turf using a spade in sections 3/5cm thick.
- If the area is a border that you are re-vamping, remove all the plants that you are discarding, turn over with a spade and then a fork to remove any old root systems.
- Dig over the area to be planted removing perennial weeds and adding in lots of well rotted organic matter, this will improve the soil make up and help with drainage or water retention depending on what type of soil you have, it will also add nutrients to your planting medium.
- If your soil is particularly heavy consider adding horticultural sand or as a cheaper alternative sharp sand, this along with the organic matter will help to break down the soil and help with drainage
- Spring frosts will help to break the soil down, keep forking over at regular intervals to break down heavier clay soils, as you keep working at the soil it will break down to a fine consistency.
- As the soil warms as spring progresses keep weeding making sure that you remove any roots as left in the ground they will just keep coming back!

For you existing borders here are some suggestions for preparing it for the coming year

- Cut back any perennials that have been left over winter.
- Top dress with well rotted compost before the first tender shoots emerge, make sure that if using farm yard manure this is well rotted or it could burn fresh young shoots.
- Remove perennial weeds, seedlings by hoeing, anything that is more established by digging out with a trowel or spade
- Top up mulch, try using bark or woodchip to help suppress weeds and retain moisture.
- If border is well established consider dividing perennials now, split with two forks, discarding tired woody centres and replanting fresher growth. An ideal free way to increase your plant stocks!

You downloaded our ***Low maintenance border*** plan so here are my tips of what you should be doing on the plants in that plan:

Tips for your low maintenance border in spring

- Cut back hard Cornus in March, this will promote fresh growth which will supply plenty of fresh colours in autumn and winter.
- Remove seed heads from miscanthus and give old growth a light prune.
- Remove seed heads from both Verbena bonariensis and Echinops, cut old dead growth back to the ground.
- Remove any perennial weeds, making sure that all roots are lifted to prevent re-growth.
- Mulch well with bark or wood chip to help keep weeds at bay and aid water retention.

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