Fall Garlic Planting Calendar and Depth Reference Sheet

> **Companion Reference Sheet for:** Fall Garlic Planting: Clove Depth and Timing by Zone
> Save this PDF to your phone or print a copy for field reference. Planting dates vary by site and season. Check your local extension office for your area.

Key Takeaways

- Use zone windows as starting estimates, then refine them using local frost patterns and the expected ground freeze. A USDA hardiness zone describes typical winter minimum temperatures, not the date of the first frost.
- Plant as the soil cools, before the ground is expected to freeze. Cooling soil helps garlic settle in for winter.
- Plant cloves with the basal plate down and the pointed end up. Oregon State University recommends planting cloves about 2 inches deep.
- Space cloves 4 to 5 inches apart, with rows about 12 inches apart for access and airflow.
- Mulch after the ground freezes in cold winter areas. Keep the mulch layer separate from the soil covering the cloves.
- Choose hardneck garlic for colder regions and scapes, or softneck garlic for milder climates and flexible necks that can be braided.

Choose a planting window using zone and local conditions

USDA zone	Timing cue	What to check locally
Zones 3 to 4	In early fall, as soil cools and before the ground freezes	How soon the ground typically freezes at your site
Zones 5 to 6	As soil cools, before the ground freezes	Soil cooling, forecast trends, and local first frost patterns
Zones 7 to 8	In later fall, as soil cools and before the ground freezes	Whether the bed is sheltered, exposed, or at higher elevation
Zones 9 to 10	In the coolest part of autumn, once soil has cooled; do not wait for a ground freeze	Cooler autumn soil and local seasonal patterns

Select hardneck or softneck garlic and sound cloves

Planting measurement	Practical guidance	Extension reference
Cover cloves to a depth of about 2 to 3 inches	About 2 to 3 inches	University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension
Clove placement and spacing	Basal plate down, 4 to 5 inches apart in rows, and 2 inches deep in prepared beds	Ohio State University Extension
Row spacing	Leave room for access and airflow	Working layout recommendation

Spring garlic care and planting Checklist

As shoots emerge, pull back excess mulch and keep the bed evenly moist without leaving it waterlogged. Garlic has shallow roots and competes poorly with weeds, so regular weeding helps the plants use available water and nutrients.

Avoid heavy nitrogen feeding late in the season because it can favor leafy growth over bulb development. Reduce watering as bulbs approach maturity, and keep the soil moisture checks consistent rather than relying on the surface appearance alone; this vegetable garden watering guide explains how to assess moisture and adjust watering to conditions.

When autumn soil is dry, water after planting enough to settle soil around the cloves. Check moisture below the surface before watering again, and avoid frequent shallow watering or leaving the bed saturated.

- ☐ ☐ Choose a sunny, well drained bed and a garlic type suited to your climate.
- ☐ ☐ Separate firm, full sized cloves shortly before planting.
- ☐ ☐ Set each clove basal plate down, using the recommended soil cover and spacing.
- ☐ ☐ Water after planting if the soil is dry.
- ☐ ☐ Add winter mulch at the appropriate time for your climate.
- ☐ ☐ Check moisture, weeds, and shoot growth in spring.

Published by The Garden Den (thegardenden.com), a publication of Viking Trading Group LLC.

Source URL: https://thegardenden.com/fall-garlic-planting-clove-depth-and-timing-by-zone/