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Four chores to tackle before winter sets in

Connie from [Urban Overalls](#) talks about fall chores and (somewhat suitably) takes a pair of [Rosies Overalls](#) for a spin. This is a sponsored post.



Whether you call yourself a gardener, farmer, rancher, or homesteader, fall is a busy time of year.

Tackling general yard clean up before winter sets in, turning the compost one last time, and making sure that the chicken coop and beehives are ready for cold weather, and [winterizing the garden](#) is an important step.

Fall clean up tasks often mean scratches, stings, or stains. What you wear matters.

Work clothes should be able to provide protection, wear like iron, wash up well, and be ready for any task at hand. I tried out a pair of [Rosies Workwear overalls](#) to see how they'd hold up to four of the fall clean up chores on my to-do list.

Fall Hive Inspection

Beekeeping involves a fall hive inspection. This is typically the last time the hives are opened until the following spring.

This involves pulling out frames from the supers (upper shallow boxes) and checking them individually for capped honey. If the supers contain capped honey, the beekeeper removes supers so honey can be harvested.

Frames from the deeps are removed one by one, checking for the presence of the queen.

We also look for signs of pest infestation, disease, and check for brood as well as honey. This honey in the deeps is stored for the colony to sustain them through the late fall and winter months.

This autumn inspection can be a little more intense as bees tend to be very protective of their honey stores.

For the beekeeper, this means using a smoker to calm the bees, ensuring that every inch of the beekeeper's body is protected by clothing, and maintaining a calm demeanor.

There should be no swatting or swinging of the arms as that can further agitate the hive.

Guard bees are posted at the entrance to the hive as well as bees sent out to deter humans.

This can be as simple as the bees bumping the veil (an early sign they are annoyed with the beekeeper's presence) to landing on the beekeeper and looking for a place to sting.

Often, bees attempt to slip into shirt collars, a gap between shirt and pants, or crawling up pant legs. A good pair of overalls that fits well reduces gaps or openings for bees compared to a standard pair of pants and shirt.

I managed to complete my fall clean up inspection without a single sting from the bees — score one for [Rosies overalls](#).



In the Autumn garden

Fall gardens keep gardeners busy.

The determined gardener is busy sowing a final round of cool season crops such as: spinach, radish, kale, kohlrabi, assorted greens, and peas.

Besides planting, there is the task of harvesting the end of the summer crops.

Crops such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, cucumbers, squash, and melons should be abundant. Daily harvests help ensure that the gardener, rather than animals such as squirrels, raccoons, or birds enjoy the bounty.

Weeding is also necessary. Weeds can choke out newly emerging crop seeds as well as tangle themselves around established plants such as tomatoes.

The padded knees built into the overalls from Rosies made it more comfortable to kneel in the garden.



Composting and yard clean up

Regular turning of the compost helps with the break-down of material into the final product... brown, earthy, organic material.

Turning also allows the gardener to inspect the compost. Are there still large pieces of material that are easily identifiable, such as carrot tops? A wedge of old lettuce? Or perhaps half an eggshell?

If the answer is no and the compost looks like soil, it is ready to use.

Use finished compost as a top-dressing on fall garden beds or dig it into the top six inches of soil.

If you're doing some yard clean up and trimming plants back, toss the green waste into the compost pile. It will decompose over the winter and be ready for your springtime garden.

My spiffy blue overalls readily shrugged off compost while turning the pile.



Backyard chickens

Fall is generally the time of year when **chickens enter their molt** (losing feathers).

While regular coop cleaning, watering, and feeding is not new to the fall schedule, **supplying extra protein to chickens is**. This extra protein helps chickens regrow their feathers — which are primarily protein.

Chicken friendly protein sources include items such as sunflower seeds, meal worms, and even meat scraps.

Fall is also a good time to check the coop for fitness. Is the roof in good shape?

Will the structure provide enough dry space for rainy weather? If you live in a really cold region, will the birds be warm enough?

The chickens loved my new duds.

Fall clean up + Rosies

I wore my [Rosies Workwear overalls](#) while completing these fall chores and handling some yard clean up. I found them to be comfortable (they're specially designed to fit a woman's body) and easy to wear. While I managed to stay dry during this session of chores, the water-resistant fabric is going to be really useful during rainy wintertime chores.

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About Connie Meyer

Growing up on a farm in rural Iowa taught Connie many lessons: raising chickens, growing produce, canning, mending clothes, and the importance of being someone who gives back to the community.

Now living in an urban setting, I brought my country ways with me. Join us as Mr. Overalls and I share our adventures, recipes, and how-tos in our daily lives on our 1/3 acre slice of heaven near the center of town at [Urban Overalls](#).