

A Guide to Water Wise Gardening

Gardeners looking for ways to cut down on the amount of water they use will benefit from these Water Wise guidelines, says the American Nursery & Landscape Association (ANLA).



- Place your plants in groups according to the amount of water they need. This way, you won't end up over-or-under-watering any parts of your lawn or garden.
- Establish watering priorities. Take care of new and young plantings, then more mature trees and shrubs.
- Map out a set watering schedule - you'll minimize your water consumption this way. Strive to water in the early morning to take advantage of the cooler temperatures and reduce evaporation.
- Water slowly, deeply and infrequently to avoid water runoff and spot-water areas which dry out more quickly. Make sure your hose or sprinkler does not leak, and avoid placing watering devices where they waste water on your driveway, deck or porch.
- Don't forget your usual maintenance activities, such as mulching, pruning, composting and fertilizing. Strong plants require less care than weaker ones, and they also give your landscape or garden a more attractive look.
- Control weeds. They compete with useful plants for water.
- Shelter container plants by moving them to shady areas. This will reduce water loss due to evaporation.
- Use a drip watering system. This can save up to 60% of the water used by sprinkler systems.
- Consider letting your lawn go dormant; most lawn grasses will rebound when rains return.
- If you have a slope, place lower-water-demand plants at higher elevations, and those that need more water at lower elevations. The water from the higher areas will trickle down to your plants which demand more moisture.

Finally, selecting plants with water efficiency in mind doesn't mean changing your tastes or the appearance of your landscape or garden! **Remember: All new plants need water to become established.**