

40 Outdoor Watering Tips



1. Group plants with the same watering needs together to avoid overwatering others.
2. Reduce the amount of lawn in your front yard by planting shrubs and ground covers appropriate to your site and region.
3. Plant species native to your region.
4. Plant in the spring and fall, when the watering requirements are lower.
5. Leave lower branches on trees and shrubs to allow leaf litter to accumulate on the soil. This keeps the soil cooler and reduces evaporation.
6. Use a layer of organic mulch on the surface of your planting beds to minimize weed growth that competes for water.
7. Spreading a layer of organic mulch around plants helps the better retain moisture, saving water, time, and money.
8. Use 2 to 4 inches of organic mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and save hundreds of gallons of water a year.
9. Next time you add or replace a flower or shrub, choose a low-water plant.
10. Hire a qualified pro to install your irrigations system and keep it working properly and efficiently.
11. Leave lawn clippings on your grass, this cools the ground and holds in moisture.
12. If installing a lawn, select a lawn mix or blend that matches your climate and site conditions.
13. Aerate your lawn periodically. Holes every six inches allow water to reach the roots, rather than run off the surface.
14. If walking across your lawn leaves footprints (blades don't spring back up), then it is time to water.
15. Let your lawn go dormant (turn brown) in the winter. Dormant grass only needs to be watered every three to four weeks, even less than that if it rains.
16. Remember to weed your lawn and garden regularly. Weeds compete for other plant's nutrients, light, and water.
17. While fertilizers promote growth, they also increase water consumption. Apply the minimum amount of fertilizer needed.
18. Catch water in an empty tuna can to measure sprinkler output. $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1" of water is enough to apply each time you irrigate.

19. Use a trowel, shovel, or soil probe to examine soil moisture depth. If the top two or three inches are dry, it's time to water.
20. Set a kitchen timer when using a hose as a reminder to turn it off. A running hose can discharge up to 10 gallons a minute.
21. Check your sprinkler system frequently and adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered, not the house, sidewalk, or street.
22. Minimize evaporation by watering during the early morning hours when temperatures are cooler and winds are lighter.
23. Timing is everything when it comes to irrigation. Learn to set your controller properly.
24. Learn how to shut off your automatic watering system in case of malfunctions or rain.
25. Apply water only as fast as the soil can absorb it.
26. Water only when necessary. More plants die from over-watering than under-watering.
27. Signs of overwatering: Leaves turn lighter shades of green or yellow, young shoots wilt, and sometimes algae or fungi grow.
28. Adjust your watering schedule each month to match seasonal weather conditions and landscape requirements.
29. Water dry spots by hand instead of running the whole irrigation system longer.
30. Don't water your lawn on windy days when most of the water blows away or evaporates.
31. Use drip irrigation for trees and shrubs to apply water directly to the roots, where it's needed.
32. Water your plants deeply, but less frequently to encourage deep root growth and drought resistance.
33. Use sprinklers that deliver big drops of water close to the ground. Smaller drops and mist often evaporate before hitting the ground.
34. Remember to periodically check your sprinkler system valves for leaks, and to keep sprinkler heads in good shape.
35. Spring is a great time to give your irrigations system a check up to ensure it's working efficiently.
36. Pruning properly can help your plants use water more efficiently.
37. When you give your pet fresh water, don't throw the old water down the drain. Use it to water your trees and shrubs.
38. Use a broom instead of a hose to clean patios, sidewalks, and driveways, and save water every time.
39. Set water softeners for a minimum number of refills to save on water, chemicals, and energy.
40. Know where your master shut off valve is located. Were a pipe to burst, this could save many gallons lost and prevent damage.

