

Waterwise gardening tips

Top 10 Waterwise Tips for a Greener Lawn During the hot Summer months

1. Know the correct amount of water required to keep your lawn healthy (use of rain gage).
2. Have a computerized irrigation timer that has a rain sensor.
3. Have sprinklers properly adjusted to give a good even coverage to the target area.
4. Water during the evening or early morning (as allowed by city restrictions 6-8 am).
5. Raise cutting height of lawnmower to 3 - 4 inches to reduce stress on lawn.
6. Leave grass clippings on lawn (mulch).
7. A weed free healthy lawn will tolerate drought better and use less water.
8. Plant or over seed with drought-tolerant grass seed.
9. Avoid excessive traffic on lawn during hottest months.
10. Do not use weed killers or fertilizers on lawn during the hot summer months.

Top 10 Waterwise Tips for Borders in Your Garden

1. Know how much water your border needs.
2. Water only when needed (know the plants to watch for signs of wilting).
3. Water deeply and less frequently (encourage deeper rooting).
4. Use efficient irrigation (low volume drip or soaker hoses).
5. Water later in the evening or early morning to avoid loss of water from evaporation.
6. Group plants according to water needs ie. **Low** (drought tolerant), **Medium** (regular garden plants), **High** (water and bog garden plants).
7. Mulch borders to reduce evaporation and suppress water thirsty weeds.
8. Plant shade trees and shrubs (shaded areas use less water).
9. Plant wind breaks to stop wind from sucking away valuable water from plant leaves.
10. Amend soil with moisture retaining organic matter and cultivate deeply.

Top 10 Waterwise Container Tips

1. Have a large enough container to accommodate root mass of plants in it, so as to hold enough water.
2. Use a good quality potting compost that is well drained yet retains moisture.
3. Put a saucer under container to act as a water reservoir.
4. Add water retaining hydro-gel to potting compost to retain water and prolong periods between watering.
5. Use a container that has an in built watering reservoir.
6. Avoid having a dark-coloured container in direct sun as they heat up a lot and roots will either die or take a lot more water.
7. Have containers in a sheltered or shaded area, reduces amount of water needed.
8. Use low volume drip irrigation on a timer to water.
9. Plant drought tolerant plants in your containers.
10. Plants in containers generally require fertilizing so if the compost does not have a slow release fertilizer then liquid feed every couple of weeks to keep healthy.

Top 10 Waterwise Vegetable Garden Tips

1. Amend soil with rich water-retaining organic matter.
2. Deep cultivation.
3. Mulch between rows with organic compost mulch.
4. Use low volume drip irrigation or soaker hoses.
5. Use smart irrigation controller with rain sensor.
6. Have shut off valves at the beginning of each row so you can turn off unnecessary lines.
7. Water older more established crops deeply and less frequently.
8. Water newly seeded areas lightly and regularly until germinated and more established.
9. Compost inedible top growth from root crops and roots from leafy top crops to be used to amend soil later.
10. Plant a winter cover crop such as fall rye to take advantage of fall and winter moisture, prevent soil erosion and can be turned back into the soil in spring to add back nutrients and organic matter.