

Quick facts

- Newly planted trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals need consistent watering until root systems establish.
- The root systems to trees and shrubs are severely reduced or restricted at the time of planting.
- Root systems will eventually grow to be wider than the above ground portion of the plant.

METHOD. FREQUENCY.

How to Water:

1. Do NOT use a sprinkler.
2. Water at the BASE of the plant, never at the top.
3. Don't put the hose TOO CLOSE to the trunk or stem of the plant — place the hose out at the root zone (under the widest branches or leaves). Otherwise, you can rot the plant.
4. Allow the hose to run at a steady stream:
 - For Shrubs, sing 'Happy Birthday' SLOWLY (it's probably best to sing to yourself)
 - For perennials, count to ten SLOWLY (one thousand and one, one thousand and two . . . etc.)
 - For trees, move the hose to different positions around the tree. Allow a couple of minutes per location.
5. Go down a row of plants then repeat watering until properly saturated based on soil and plant size

When to Water:

New plants require more frequent watering than established vegetation. They should be watering at planting and these intervals:

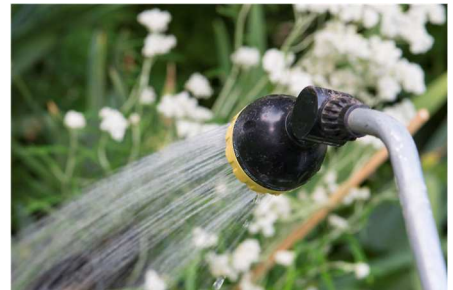
- Weeks 1-2 after planting: water daily.
- Weeks 3-5: Water every 2 to 3 days.
- Weeks 6-12: water every 3 to 5 days.
- After 12 weeks, water weekly until roots are established.

SOD & ANNUALS- water daily after installation for 30 days, twice a day in hot weather. Water every 2 to 3 days until frost.

Gauge your performance

Regularly check to see how well you are watering. Remove the mulch from around the plant and, using your finger or a pencil, see how deep the water is penetrating, and how wet the soil is. Your soil should be wet, but not gloppy. (Be sure to check SEVERAL locations)

Use your own judgment... If the soil is soggy, do not water today and check the plants again tomorrow.



How much water?

¼ to 1/3 the pot size

#1 pot: ¼ gallon

#3 pot: ½ gallon

#5-10 pot: 1-2 gallon

#15 gal or larger pot: 3-4 gallons

1" Cal = 3 gallons water



Treegator bags hold 14-15 gallons of water and release a slow trickle of water over 5-9 hours.



HOW MUCH WATER?

Watering times based on plant sizes using a 'pencil' sized water stream

Container plants
(most perennial and shrubs)

#1 pot: 5 minutes or ¼ gallon

#3 pot: 10 minutes or ½ gallon

#5-10 pot: 20 minutes or 1-2 gallon

#15 gal or larger pot: 60 minutes or 3-4 gallons

Balled and Burlaped plants (B&B)
(some large shrubs and most trees)

1 hour per 1" Caliper

Aim for 3 gallons of water per caliper inch of tree and 3 gallons of water per hour.

Healthy plants need water, but not too much.

This may sound odd but plant can drown. Though, it is more common that a new plant will decline or die from lack of proper water supply. Plants need enough water to live, but not so much as to rot their roots or suffocate them.

Getting to the ROOT of the problem:

- Providing deep watering helps to develop a deep and sturdy root system.
- Light watering produces shallow roots.
- Always water around the root ball and not the foliage.
- Allow roots and soil to SLIGHTLY dry between watering

Reason for deep watering

Frequent, shallow watering (rain, sprinklers etc.) leads to shallow root systems. Plants with shallow root systems are not very drought-tolerant.

Conditions Requiring More Frequent Watering

- Windy locations - wind dries plants out more quickly
- Slopes - plants planted on a slope will dry out more quickly, since the water runs downhill away from the roots. Be sure to keep the hose pressure at a very slow trickle, place it above the plant on the slope and water more frequently.
- Overhangs - plants placed under a roof overhang will need more water, since the soil in that area tends to be drier as it does not receive any rain.

Weather and soil conditions determine how much water your plants require, common sense should prevail. If you are unsure, first check soil moisture 6" deep with a small trowl or pencil. Soil should be moist, not mud or bone dry.

TIPS

HOW. WHAT. WHEN.



Figure 1: Sedum rot from irrigation head

- **Apply water slowly** to allow it to soak into the soil.
- **Wet the soil to a depth of 12 inches.** This encourages a uniform root system which is better able to withstand future stress.
- **Quick summer showers** may not supply enough moisture to wet the entire area around the root ball.
- **A soil that can be formed into a ball in your hand has sufficient moisture;** loose, dry soil that crumbles in your hand indicates the need for additional watering.
- **Do not over water,** since over watering can leach nutrients from the soil or deplete oxygen availability to the roots.
- **Give special attention** to plants set close to a wall where an overhanging roof may block rainfall.
- **Do not plant high moisture sensitive plants next to gutter downspouts** or other areas where excessively wet soils may develop.
- **If any wilt is evident** or if the foliage feels warm to the touch, WATER! Foliage that is evaporating moisture feels cool to the touch.
- **At least an hour after you water,** probe the soil to see how deeply the water penetrated. If it didn't reach the rootzone, you may need to increase your watering.
- **Shallow rooted plants** such as rhododendrons, azaleas, and bedding plants may need more frequent watering.
- **Mulch will help conserve the moisture** that is present in the soil and keep down weeds from competing for the water.

- **Water in the morning** so less water is lost to evaporation.
- **Birch, willow and astilbe** will need longer deeper watering- possibly every day.
- **Yellow lower leaves** indicate the plan has recently severely wilted- WATER.
- **Mulch plants whenever possible** to reduce supplemental irrigation. Even if a plant is supposed to be "drought tolerant", it still needs to be mulched and irrigated at least throughout the first growing season after it has been transplanted.
- **If the temperatures get into the mid 80's or above,** or if drought is evident, watering frequently is imperative



Figure 2: Chamacypress dried out from lack of water

- **Special note on Hydrangeas:** Hydrangeas can experience 'heat droop' during the day. This is normal and a response to extreme heat and/or sunlight. If your Hydrangea is droopy during the day, but perks up at night or in the morning, it is receiving adequate moisture. If it stills looks droopy in the morning, go ahead and water.
- **Water both the root ball and surrounding soil.** Roots grow only where there is moisture, and unless both media are moist the roots may never grow out of the original nursery soil. Plants in such a situation may ultimately girdle themselves and die

GUIDELINES

Proper watering is critical to your plant's health. Regular watering will also help to insure maximum flowering and proper growth. These instructions are guidelines. No watering schedule is a substitute for observing the condition of your newly planted plants every day. The concept behind this watering schedule is to insure deep root watering for typical soil types and conditions.