

Watering Wisely: Tips to Maintain Your Garden

As you're prepping for your garden and gathering much needed supplies and tools, keep in mind that 40 percent of water used during the spring and summer is actually used outdoors.

In fact, the increase in water use comes at a time of year when there is actually less water available naturally due to increased temperatures and plant demand. For this reason, it's important to ensure that all gardeners – expert or novice – have an understanding of garden watering best practices.

Whether you're gardening plants that are rooted in the ground, in a garden bed, or scattered throughout your back porch or patio in decorative planters, it's essential to tend to your plants with just the right amount of water without going under or over their needs. Watering just the right amount will help your garden flourish, while conserving as much water as possible.

As you care for your plants this gardening season, here are some tips to consider:

Tip #1: Follow plant instructions. Read and follow the care instructions and needs of each plant you purchase closely.

Tip #2: Weather is a factor. Check the weather in your area on a regular basis and take note when it's going to rain or if the temperature rises dramatically, and remember to water your plants accordingly.

Tip #3: Be consistent. Incorporate watering into your daily routine so that you're watering the garden on a regular basis. If you miss a day, don't overwater the next to compensate, as this will simply flood the roots.

Tip #4: Steer clear of midday watering. The best time to water is in the early morning or evening – not the middle of the day when the sun is at its highest.

Tip #5: Water deep. Make sure you're watering enough so that the excess runs down into the roots and does not just sit on the surface. Dig deeper into the soil and feel with your hand to check if the water is reaching the roots.

Tip #6: Water gently. To protect the integrity of more delicate plants, be sure to water with a gentler stream as opposed to a targeted force.

Once you're equipped with the right tools and watering know-how, you'll be able to create and maintain a beautiful garden, lawn or patio from spring through summer, and well into the fall while conserving water.