



Don't let the soil dry out completely. Most potting mixes will become tough and won't absorb water like they should at this point. The soil may even pull away from the edges of the container, allowing for the water to simply flow over the top, down the sides and right out the bottom, doing little, if any good for the plant and leaving it still thirsty!

There are a couple ways to remedy this problem; If the container is small enough, it can be completely submerged (to the top of the soil line) into a larger container of water until it has stopped bubbling. If the container is too large, poke holes into the soil with something like a pencil and water thoroughly so the water will be absorbed.

Don't assume once is enough! Heat, wind, and dry air can quickly dry out the soil, leave in plants parched, particularly in containers.

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WATERING TIPS



WATERING

Proper and Regular watering of plants is critical for their success

Water fuels foliage development, blossom production and fruit growth. Without water, plants will wilt, shrivel and eventually die. Although different plants will have varying water needs, here are some general guidelines to follow:

Newly planted plants should be watered slowly, deeply, and thoroughly right away. A simple way to do this is to leave a hose trickling at the base of the plant for at least 20 minutes; longer for larger trees. Watering too fast or heavily will simply run off and be ineffective

Focus on the root zone of the plant. It's the roots that need access to the water you are giving and not the leaves. Wetting the foliage is not only a waste of water, but can promote the spread of disease.



The optimum time for watering is early in the morning. This provides hydration needed to handle the drying effects of sun and afternoon heat (particularly in summer). Later afternoon and early evening watering is acceptable, but beware of leaving moisture on leaves as can encourage fungal growth!

Mulching reduces surface runoff and slows evaporation from the soil. It also blocks weeds and prevents certain soil diseases from coming into contact with a plant's lower leaves. Be careful not to mound the mulch around the crown (base) of the plant!

There is a difference between moist and soggy soil. In waterlogged soils, the plants roots are deprived of oxygen and may lose the ability to take up water, slowly killing the plant.

It takes several years for plants to become established. Even after the first season, additional watering during dry spells is needed.

Keep this in mind, plants growing close to or under large trees will dry out more quickly due to root competition for water.

Most importantly, know your plant and it's specific needs, as some plants prefer to be kept drier and others more wet. Trees and shrubs in particular are a long-term investment so it makes sense to know as much about each as possible for their best chance at a long and healthy life.



Container Plantings

Water deeply, slowly and thoroughly. It is best to give plants in containers a good, long drink of water, moistening the entire root zone of the plant. Water should drain out through the holes at the bottom of the container rather than running off the top of dried or hard soil.

Always check the moisture level before you water. The easiest way to do this is to use your finger, inserting it to the second knuckle. If the soil feels dry at your fingertip, it is time to water again.

Water only when needed. Too much water can be just as damaging to plants as too little. Your containers will typically need more frequent watering in the summer, particularly on hot, sunny days above 85° F. Most likely, it will be necessary to water daily, and sometimes even several times per day in these conditions.

Don't rely on the rain! Often times a plants' foliage and flowers will act as an umbrella, preventing water from reaching the soil as it should.