

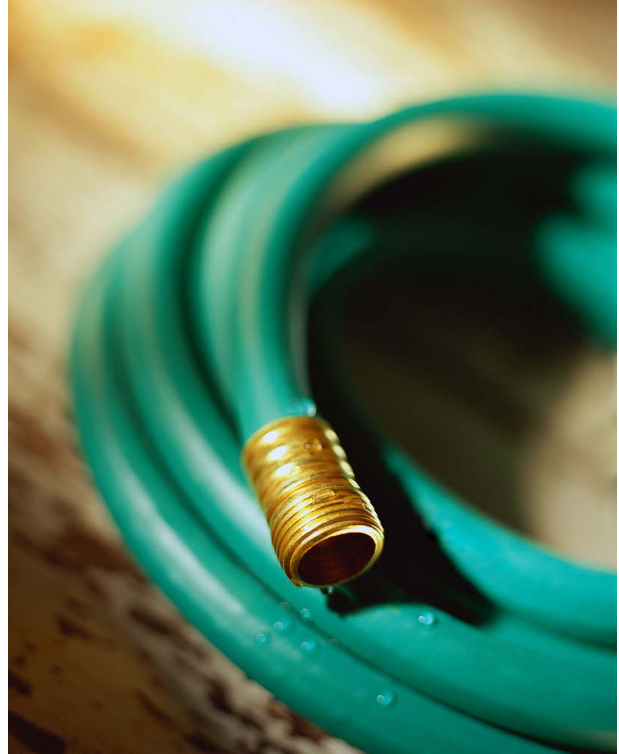
Watering Your Plants

Water is one of the most important things plants need to live, grow, and thrive. Water becomes a large part of plants' leaves, stems, roots, and flowers. Without enough water, plants will wilt, lose their color, and eventually die. Water is also helpful to dissolve the fertilizer and minerals in the soil so that plants can use them.

Watering Outdoor Plants

About one inch of rain is needed per week to water a garden with bare soil. Less water is needed if the garden is mulched. If it does not rain, your outdoor garden may need some extra water.

When you water your outdoor garden:



- When watering, the soil should be well saturated (approximately, four or five inches deep after watering). It may take several hours with a sprinkler or drip hose to water. If you use a sprinkler that gets the leaves wet, water early in the day so plants will dry off before night. This will help to prevent disease. A drip-hose that waters at the base of the plant ensures each plant receives the appropriate amount of water .
- Water each plant with an open hose (no nozzle, free-running water). When you have finished watering all the plants, start again with the first plant and water a second time. This allows the water to fully absorb into the plants roots.
- The heat in the summer speeds up the evaporation of water from plants into the air. You might have to water your plants as much as once a day.
- In the cool weather of spring and fall plants grow slowly, and the soil stays moist longer. You only need to water once or twice a week.