

# General Watering Techniques

**How much water a plant will need varies greatly as to:**

- Type of plant
- Whether or not it is established or newly planted
- Time of year
- Weather conditions
- Wind
- Soil type
- Amount of sun

**The basic water needs for new plantings are:**

- Keep damp but not soggy.
- Water as needed, when plants show wilting and ground is dry 2" down.
- Less frequent, deep watering is better than lots of shallow watering.
- Watering in the early morning is best.
- Water at base of plant, not on foliage.
- Water beyond the depth and width of the entire root ball.
- Sprinkler systems are often not adequate for trees and shrubs.
- Check new plantings twice a day.

**The basic water needs for established plantings are:**

- Landscape plants: 1" every 1-2 weeks, but check more often during hotter, dryer weather.
- Lawns of bermuda, zoysia and bluegrass: 1 ½" – 2 ½" per week.
- Lawns of fescue and rye: more than 2" - 3" per week

**Outward signs of too much or too little water are:**

- In some plants, browning will occur, from the outside in (too little)
- Wilting of leaves, especially those exposed to direct sun (too little)
- Brown, curled, leaf edges (too little)
- Soft, mushy stems at soil level (too much)
- Yellow leaves that do not drop (too much)
- Some collapsing of stems or branches occurring (too much)

**Other things to consider:**

- For most plants, thorough, deep watering followed by time to dry out is ideal.
- Sloped soils drain more quickly than flat beds.
- Sandy soils dry out quickly.
- Clay soils can retain water longer.
- Mulching keeps roots cooler and helps retain moisture and water run off.
- Plant items purchased in the summer immediately, or keep them in the shade until they are planted

**Note:** The amount of water falling on a given area can be measured by setting out shallow, straight-sided containers. Determining how much water you are giving will help you control the amount of water your plants receive and adjust your watering habits for changes in weather conditions.

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