



Tips for Landscaping in the Desert

1. Check your sprinkler system frequently and adjust sprinklers so only your landscape is watered and not the house, sidewalk, or street.
2. Avoid planting in areas that are hard to water such as steep inclines and isolated strips along sidewalks and driveways.
3. Plant during the spring or fall when the watering requirements are lower.
4. Check your water meter and bill to track your water usage.
5. Always water during the early morning hours, when temperatures are cooler, to minimize evaporation.
6. Use a layer of mulch around plants to reduce evaporation, promote plant growth, and reduce weeds.
7. We're more likely to notice leaky faucets indoors, but don't forget to check outdoor faucets, pipes, and hoses for leaks.
8. Only water your lawn when needed. You can tell this by simply walking across your lawn. If you leave footprints, it's time to water.
9. Adjust your lawn mower to a higher setting. Longer grass will reduce the loss of water to evaporation.
10. When you clean your fish tank, use the water you've drained on your plants. The water is rich in nitrogen and phosphorus, providing you with a free and effective fertilizer.
11. Water small areas of grass by hand to avoid waste.
12. Use porous materials for walkways and patios to keep water in your yard and prevent wasteful runoff.
13. Collect and use rain water for watering your garden.
14. Install a rain shut-off device on your automatic sprinklers to eliminate unnecessary watering.

15. Choose a water-efficient drip irrigation for your trees, shrubs, and flowers.
16. Cut back on the amount of grass in your yard by planting shrubs and ground cover or landscaping with rock.
17. Remember to check your sprinkler system valves periodically for leaks and keep the heads in good shape.
18. Don't water on windy days.
19. Water deeply but less frequently to create healthier and stronger landscapes.
20. Make sure you know where your master water shut-off valve is located. This could save gallons of water and damage to your home if a pipe were to burst.
21. When watering on steep slopes, use a soaker hose to prevent wasteful runoff.
22. To get the most from your watering time, group your plants according to their water needs.
23. Remember to weed your lawn and garden regularly. Weeds compete with other plants for nutrients, light, and water.
24. While fertilizers promote plant growth, they also increase water consumption. Apply the minimum amount of fertilizer needed.
25. Avoid installing ornamental water features unless the water is being recycled.
26. Buy a rain gauge to track how much rain or irrigation your yard receives.
27. Teach your family how to shut off your automatic watering systems so anyone who is home can turn sprinklers off when a storm is approaching.
28. Next time you add or replace a flower or shrub, choose a low water use plant and save up to 550 gallons each year.
29. Spot spray or remove weeds as they appear.
30. Use a screwdriver as a soil probe to test soil moisture.

31. Install a drip irrigation system around your trees and shrubs to water more efficiently.
32. Mow your lawn as infrequently as possible. Mowing puts your lawn under additional stress, causing it to require more water.
33. Don't use the sprinklers just to cool off or for play. Running through water from a hose or sprinkler wastes gallons of water.
34. Make sure your swimming pools, fountains, and ponds are equipped with re-circulating pumps.
35. Bathe your young children together.
36. Direct downspouts or gutters toward shrubs or trees.
37. Winterize outdoor spigots to avoid pipes from bursting or freezing.
38. Wash your car on the grass. This will water the lawn at the same time.
39. If you have an evaporative air conditioner, direct the water drain to a flower bed, tree, or other landscaped areas.
40. Support projects that use reclaimed wastewater for irrigation and other uses.
41. Prune back heavy foliage. Reducing leaf area reduces water needs.
42. Report all significant water losses (broken pipes, open hydrants, errant sprinklers, abandoned free-flowing wells, etc.) to the property owner, local authorities, or your water management district.
43. If your grass is brown, it's not dead, it's just dormant. Dormant grass only needs to be watered every three weeks. When the rain begins, your grass will turn green again.
44. Start a compost pile. Using compost when you plant adds water-holding organic matter to the soil.
45. Use sprinklers that throw big drops of water close to the ground. Smaller drops of water and mist often evaporate before they hit the ground.

46. More plants die from over-watering than from under-watering. Be sure only to water plants when necessary.
47. Water only as rapidly as the soil can absorb the water.
48. Aerate your lawn. Punch holes in your lawn about six inches apart so water will reach the roots rather than run off the surface.