

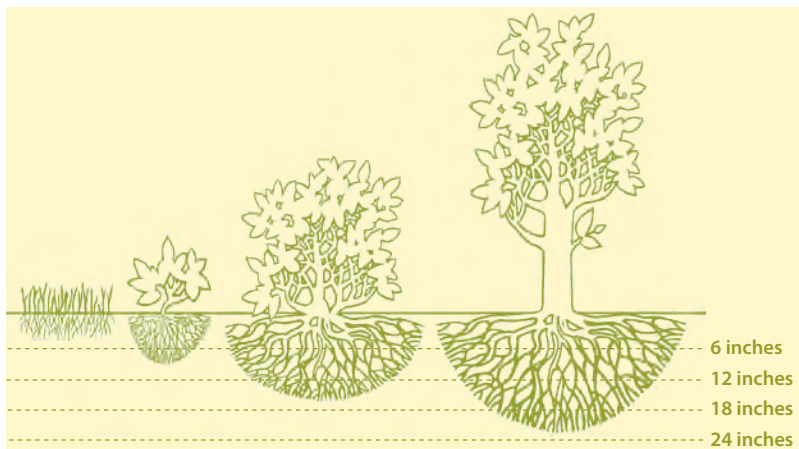
How to Water to Keep Your Lawn and Garden Healthy

Watering properly is essential for the health of your plants.

Many people with irrigation systems overwater their plants. People without irrigation systems rarely give their new plantings enough water, and sometimes underwater their established plants. Like Goldilocks, the amount of water should be “just right.”

Overwatering can kill plants. Too much water will fill soil pore spaces and prevent oxygen from reaching plant roots. The roots may suffocate and die. Above ground, you may see wilting, yellowing and leaf drop. This stress makes them more susceptible to diseases and insects.

Underwatering new plants will weaken them. All new plantings need regular water until roots are established, which takes at least two growing seasons.



The spread and depth of the root zone varies by plant type. Check to see if water is reaching the entire root zone.

Lawns	Roots are 4 to 6" deep and don't spread beyond lawn.
Annuals	Most roots are in the top 12" of soil, spreading just a short distance.
Perennials/ small shrubs	Roots are 12 to 18" deep, spreading at least as wide as the plant.
Trees and branches.	Most roots are within 2 feet of the surface, spreading well beyond leafy tops or

What you can do

- ❑ **Water slowly and deeply for healthy plants.** Slow and deep watering will help plants grow strong roots so they will have less drought stress in the future. Frequent, shallow watering doesn't promote vigorous root growth, making plants more susceptible to drought.
- ❑ **Water the entire root zone, then let it partially dry out.** Each time you water, the water should reach the ends of the roots (the entire root zone). The root zone for trees, shrubs and perennials extends as wide as the plant or beyond. The soil should partially dry out between waterings. Avoid watering trunks to prevent root rot.
- ❑ **One inch of water is all that's needed.** Plants, including lawns, need only one inch of water a week; this includes rain.
- ❑ **Use a timer.** A small kitchen timer will suffice. When you turn on the water, set the timer so you remember to turn it off. You'll save money and won't overwater your plants.
- ❑ **Water when it's cool.** Watering in the middle of the day, especially when it's sunny, will lose half the water to evaporation. Watering in the morning is best; evening watering can promote diseases. 