

## Did you know?

**Pot plants use a lot more water than plants in the ground.** They are more exposed to sun and wind, and only have a small amount of water stored in them, meaning they get hotter and dry out faster. Be ruthless and only keep the pot plants you truly love and group them together in a cool, shady part of the garden, out of the wind.

## 8 Landscape

Determine where you will position your gardens, patios and paved areas etc, dependent on the position of the house, local climatic conditions, topography and garden watering needs. Concentrate areas requiring more water (e.g. lawns, fruit trees, roses etc) to one zone, to ease the landscaping of low/no water use plants.

## 9 Use a pool cover

Swimming pools can lose their entire volume of water through evaporation every year. The use of pool covers can reduce evaporation by up to 97 per cent, can keep your pool warmer and cleaner and save hundreds of dollars that would otherwise be required for refilling.

## 10 Maintain

Ensure everything in your garden is in top condition (i.e. checking taps for leaks etc) and keep up to date on the latest products and techniques to apply to your garden. For example, if you use trickle pipes to supply small amounts of water to plants, check regularly to ensure there are no blockages in the spray nozzles. These methods will ensure your water use remains low.

Department of Water  
The Atrium  
168 St Georges Terrace  
Perth WA 6000  
Ph (08) 6364 7600  
Fax (08) 6364 7601  
[www.water.wa.gov.au](http://www.water.wa.gov.au)



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Water



TOP 10 TIPS

Saving  
water in the  
garden

*Looking after all our water needs*

### Did you know?

Many of our plants are over-watered or watered to death! By watering plants less it encourages them to develop deeper roots to find water, making them less reliant on surface water and more able to tolerate hotter, drier conditions in the long run.



## 1 Reduce your lawn cover

About half of the water used in our homes goes on watering the lawn and garden. Determine where and how much lawn you need, choose lawn that requires low water use, and is heat and drought tolerant. Warm season grasses such as Couch, Buffalo, Saltene or Kikuyu respond well to the hot summers in Western Australia. If you are going to use lawn, it should be established during spring and autumn when natural rainfall is available and conditions are not too cold. Landscape the remaining area with low/no water use native species.

## 2 Plant local natives

As native species are adapted to the local climate and conditions, once established they require minimal watering and fertilisers; more often than not they can simply rely on rainfall for their water needs.

## 3 Mulch

Organic mulches are very beneficial for your plants as they:

- improve the soil organic matter content as they break down
- reduce evaporation loss from the surface
- encourage earthworms and soil microbial activity
- restrict weed growth; any weeds which do germinate are easy to remove
- prevent wind and water erosion
- protect the roots from daily temperature fluctuations
- improve the appearance of the garden area.

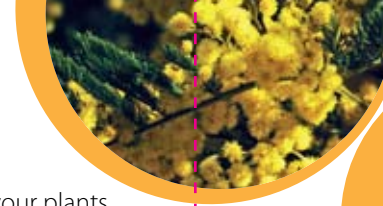
Raw materials like woodchips, chipped tree waste, leaves, bailed pea or similar dried materials are ideal mulching agents. However, be careful that the mulch you use has been properly treated to kill or remove weed seeds and pathogens.

## 4 Collect rainwater

Collecting rainwater is a chance to reduce your scheme water use with minimal effort. Try to redirect rainwater to areas where storage is possible. It can be used for watering gardens, flushing toilets and generally replacing the use of mains water supplies. Rainwater can fall in summer, which can prove a huge benefit for subsequent dry, hot periods.

## 5 Water deeply

It is better to water slower, for longer, but less frequently to encourage deep root growth. Watering rapidly means the soil cannot absorb the water quickly enough and it will simply run off into stormwater drains and be wasted, or flow straight through beyond the depth of plant roots.



## 6 Use greywater

Bucketing of greywater is an effective way to re-use water from the laundry and bathroom on your garden.

To go one step further, a subsurface greywater reuse system can be installed.

For further information, contact your local council or visit [www.water.wa.gov.au](http://www.water.wa.gov.au)

## 7 Install a drip irrigation system

It is more efficient to water the roots of plants rather than the leaves. Drip (or subsurface) irrigation systems deliver water directly to the root system, don't cause overspray and prevent excess surface evaporation. Watering early in the morning or at dusk is the best time of the day, as temperatures are lower and evaporation is less.

