

# DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS

The Front Range along the Colorado Rockies, as well as the Intermountain Western United States, has a unique climate. Successful landscape design in our region demands specific horticultural best practices that are unique to our region.

**Sustainable landscaping means conserving water/saving money and ensuring planting success/lower attrition rates/lower replacement costs**

**Sustainable landscape design provides a “sense of place” by using the design principle “right plant, right place”. Sustainable design does not mean “zero-scape” or desert-like plantings. Waterwise plantings can be lush, colorful & full of texture.**

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## Watering Guide

## Irrigation Recommendations

### Water Designation

### Establishment Period

### Post Establishment

Moderate

2" per month

Natural precipitation + irrigation necessary to equal total of 1-2"/month

Dry

1" per month

Natural precipitation + irrigation necessary to equal total of 1"/month

Xeric

1" per month

Irrigation during drought

*Drip irrigation is not recommended during establishment periods but can be used post establishment.  
Trees will benefit from long term irrigation.*

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## Recommended plant sizes at Installation

Perennials	1 quart
Shrubs	1 gallon
Trees	Maximum of 1.5" caliper

### Horticulture Best Practices for the Western US: Reduce Installation size

It is important to reduce stress to plants as less stress leads to higher success rates in establishment. We cannot control environmental stress - aridity, temperature, UV, etc., but we can control plant installation size.

1. Small plants allow roots to establish quickly and therein can significantly improve plant survival. Plants that establish strong root systems will promptly establish new growth in the form of shoots, spread and coverage.
  2. Large plants will stress more, i.e. lose water due to our arid climate and the sun's UV intensity. The shoots and leaves wilt and suffer because the roots are not able to quickly establish to support existing photosynthesizing materials.
  3. When B&B plants are harvested, a portion of the roots are left behind. Smaller caliper trees lose less roots during harvesting which can result in better survival rates. Remove as much burlap as possible and cut away the wire basket.
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## Soil

Amend existing soil with squeegee at a minimum of 6" depth OR remove a minimum of 6" soil and replace with squeegee topsoil mix at 1:1 ratio. If planting bed is contained by a curb or concrete walk, remove additional 2-3" soil to allow for squeegee mulch at 2-3" depth.

### Horticulture Best Practices for the Western US: Provide well-drained soil

Many plants that thrive in our climate prefer lean soil and good drainage as opposed to rich organic soils. Organic matter and wood mulch are not ideal for xeric, native and other plants that thrive in the Front Range along the Colorado Rockies, as well as the Intermountain Western United States.