

WATER WISE LANDSCAPING

LANDSCAPING PRINCIPLES

For many homeowners, water-wise landscaping brings to mind nightmarish visions of cacti, rock and cattle skulls.

Water-wise landscaping is simply a set of landscaping principles that encourage responsible plant selection, landscape design and maintenance.



The following list outlines these principles:

- **Analyze Your Soil.** Using a soil probe or shovel, analyze the type of soil you have in your landscape. Determining your soil type will help you make informed decisions as to appropriate plants for your yard.
- **Plan It Before You Plant It.** Be sure you are familiar with your landscape's many attributes. For instance, note which areas get more or less shade, which areas have reflected heat from the patio or house, and any other features you may encounter.
- **Use Appropriate Plants.** Different plants have different requirements for optimum health. To use water most efficiently, choose plants that do not require much water, and are adapted to our arid climate.
- **Use Grass Wisely.** Take into consideration the different activities that will go on in your yard. Use grass only in those areas that are used for recreation. A good rule of thumb is "If the only time you walk on it is to mow it, you probably don't need it".
- **Water Wisely.** Group plants according to their water needs. This will help you avoid over-watering some plants and under-watering others. Putting shrubs and perennials on separate zones from your lawn will help avoid severe damage to your plants due to excess water.
- **Just Mulch It.** Using mulches to reduce evaporation from the soil also helps prevent weeds from growing in areas where water is needed for ornamental plants. Additionally, mulch covers the soil thereby reducing erosion and unsightly barren areas.
- **Keep It Up.** While using these principles helps reduce maintenance time, it does not completely eliminate it. Use of good preventive maintenance will reduce the need for costly and time-consuming maintenance later on.

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