

hot tips for SURVIVING

# HOT SUMMER



- 1. Check your irrigation...**  
make sure sprinklers are not being blocked by growth, sand or lawn clippings. Make sure they are not pointing on roads, paths etc.  
Replace 'mist'ers' with subsurface or trickle irrigation  
Replace normal spray 'pop ups' with MP Rotators.

Potential water savings: 10-60%

- 2. Only water when your plants need it...**  
Do the old 'finger test' and check for soil moisture levels before automatically putting on the irrigation. As a hint if you have lush growth, need to mow once a week or have clover or sedge in your lawn in summer you ARE watering too much. Remember lush growth is weak growth.

Potential water savings: 10-20%

- 3. Use wetting agents and use them effectively...**  
make sure they are good quality (they and make sure they 'froth' when wetted) and make sure the next watering goes straight in, if not you should reapply.

Potential Water Savings: 10-30%

- 4. Mulch, mulch, mulch!**  
Put this on 5-10cm thick and use only the best – street tree prunings and or recycled rubble/gravel for most of the garden, pea straw or lucerne hay for veggies, potted colour, and fruit trees.

Potential water savings: 20-60%

- 5. Shade, move, or screen...**  
Any thirsty plants, give them shading or move them to the south or southeast side of the house in summer and autumn.

Potential water savings: 10-20%

- 6. Shade, screen and or plant paved areas and walls as they will heat up on hot days...**  
Shade sails, verandahs, awnings and of course plantings can all help keep you, your house and your garden cooler and happier in the drought and reduce your powerbills.

Potential water savings: 10-20%

- 7. Use your greywater...**  
Even a bucket in the shower will give you at least 4-8000 liters of water a year for a 2-4 person family. Consider a diverter hose (very cheap) or a specially designed system – see [www.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.health.wa.gov.au).

Potential water savings: 10-40%

planning for a

# WATERWISE FUTURE!



**1. Choose appropriate WaterWise plants...**  
Link your choices back to your soil AND climate. This will make a HUGE difference. [www.watercorporation.com.au](http://www.watercorporation.com.au) and follow the links to Waterwise Plants for WA.

Potential water savings: 20-60%

**2. Prepare the soil...**  
Add organic matter (compost/ potting mix/manure or soil conditioner), plus wetting agents, soil amendments (eg zeolites, spongelites or bentonite clay for sand), gypsum (for clay) as well as some slow release fertiliser. This will give your plants a great boost to get them started and will stop water and nutrients from leaking into our waterways.

Potential water savings: 10-30%

**3. Plant into a depression...**  
This is especially valuable in sands to 'harvest' water from rain and or sprinklers and direct it towards your plants roots.

Potential water savings: 10-15%

**4. Plant in 'Hydrozones' and dense plantings...**

Group your plants according to their watering needs. One Drop Plants: the toughest plants should dominate the garden. Two Drop Plants: need 1-2 waterings a week over summer, should be placed on the south or east side of the house. Three Drop Plants: certified 'water guzzlers' minimize these and place only on the south and east side of the house and or in pots.

Potential water savings: 10-30%

**5. Mulch, mulch, mulch!!!**  
Mulch should be one of the key features of your garden...NEVER leave your soil bare and exposed! Free mulch available through [www.mulchnet.com](http://www.mulchnet.com)

Potential water savings: 30-60%

**6. Don't overfertilise...**  
Remember lush growth is tender growth and so easily burnt in the hot dry months. Only fertilise with slow/controlled release fertiliser and only when your plants need it - typically late uautmn and spring.

Potential water savings: 10-20%

**7. Plant in Autumn for sand - gravels...**  
Follow nature's cue and give your plants the best chance of getting off to a great start by planting early in the growing season.

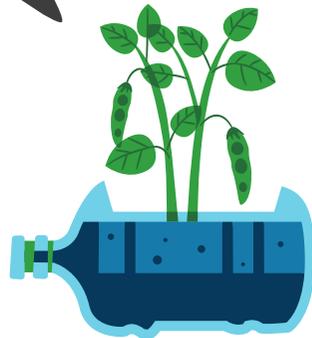
Potential water savings: 10-20%

**8. Screen your property...**  
Aim to plant across your eastern boundary to help stave off the worst effects of the wretched summer easterlies.

Potential water savings: 10-15%

planning for a

# WATERWISE FUTURE!



- 9. Choose only the best quality stock...**  
Don't compromise when it comes to getting your plants – only the best will do. Your best guarantee is to only buy 'Waterwise' plants and to get them from accredited nurseries.

Potential water savings: 10–20%

- 10. Put your 'water guzzlers' in moveable pots...**  
Seal your pots, use saucers and move them to the south and south east of your house in the summer and autumn. Add water crystals to all potting mixes.

Potential water savings: 10–20%

- 11. Consider putting in drip line irrigation and greywater systems...**  
The single most important thing you can do to save and re-use water. Get the designs right and you will have an excellent system perfectly designed for our tough climate. Remember 'fat drops of water close to the ground'

Potential water savings: 10–40%

- 12. Reduce your lawn...**  
Consider alternatives such as ground covers, compacted crushed gravel, stone and chipped mulches. If new lawn is being installed consider a warm season grass such as a 'soft leaf buffalo' and make sure you prepare the soil well. Avoid artificial turf which can get very hot in summer

Potential water savings: 20–50%

- 13. Renovate the lawn you keep...**  
Aerate, 'core' or Verti mow lawns every 1–2 years, cover with a thin layer of compost or sand, apply wetting agents 2–3 times a year. Don't mow lower than 5–7cm.

Potential water savings: 10–20%

- 14. Don't prune, over fertilise, or over water-stressed plants...**  
Tempting as it is most stressed plants will not magically respond to this treatment and often such actions will kill them off completely. Instead, provide irregular deep waterings over summer and delay fertiliser use to late autumn and winter.

Potential water savings: 5–10%

**Remember Waterwise plants as part of a well-designed and healthy garden are your best defence against the impacts of climate change and the rigours of drought!**

designing your

# DROUGHT- PROOF GARDEN



## Get yourself an aerial perspective...

You can use graph paper and accurately sketch out your block and include the house and all other existing features. Your title documents will have a scaled outline of your block which can be a great starting point. Or you may be able to access an aerial photo program to get a good photo of your property. Either way the aerial perspective is the key first step.

## Get your bearings...

Mark on the sketch north, then east (where the hot dry winds come from), west and south. Identify shaded areas, views to keep, areas to screen, direction of howling winds etc.

## Know your soils, know your climate...

This will be vital to ensure that your design is realistic and that you will choose plants and features that will thrive in your particular area, ie avoid the lush 'Bali look' or a show case of Azaleas when you are 20m back from the beach!!

## Mark in the key existing features...

This will include existing plants to be kept, paths, ponds, 'shade prints', taps, irrigation. Note whether they are to stay or go.

## Identify and rate your microclimates...

Every property will have 4 -6 microclimates ranging from the mild and protected through to the harsh and exposed. Working out which is where and assigning each an appropriate 'rating' is the foundation of a beautiful drought-proof garden and should guide you in deciding what components go where in your garden.



designing your

# DROUGHT-PROOF GARDEN



Typical 'microclimates' and their ratings include:

Microclimate type	Rating 1 - mild 5 - harsh/exposed	Suitable Hydrozone type	Examples of suitable plants
Shaded Garden Section	1	3 Drop Plants	Ferns, Azaleas, Gardenias
North Portion	4-5	1 Drop Plant	Dianellas, Eremophilas, Ficinia
Southern Portion	1-2	2-3 Drop Plants	Roses, Petunias
East Portion	2-3	1-2 Drop Plants	Boronias, Scaevolias, vegies
North Paved Area	5	1 Drop Plant	Acacias, Melaleuca, Banksia
Front Verge	3-5	1-2 Drop Plants	GC Grevilleas, Hemiandra, Eremophila
Exposed Area	4-5	1 Drop Plant	Hakea, Grevillea,
Paved area	4-5	1-2 Drop Plants	Leucophyta, Olearia, Dianella



designing your

# DROUGHT- PROOF GARDEN

## 'Macro' design

Getting it right on the grand scale...

Mark in proposed 'hard' landscape additions. This will include ponds, compacted crushed gravel, stone, gravel or wood mulch areas, seating, gazebos, pergolas, shadesails, kids sand pit etc. Many of these can help to not only reduce water use but make your home naturally cooler in summer and warmer in winter!!

Mark in your proposed 'soft' landscape additions according to your microclimates...

This will include any lawn areas (shouldn't exceed 30% of the garden area), groundcovers, shrubs, trees (deciduous or evergreen) pots and annuals. Taking care to match your plants (One Drop; Two Drop or Three Drop to the most appropriate Microclimate)

## 'Micro' design

Fine tune the design. Give your hard landscaping its features...

Think about the shape of these features (eg swirls, straight) and the types of products you will use in these features (eg crushed recycled brick, street tree mulch) as well as patterns (grid, sweeping) and features contained within eg sculptures, logs, pots.

## Let your creativity loose on your garden designs...

For each garden bed think about the species you will use and how they will 'fit' together and the patterns of layout eg 'the grandstand effect' (smallest to the tallest), clumping numbers, contrasts of colours, the spread of flowering times, size and height and spread. Do they need to tolerate shade? Does the area reflect heat from paving?

## Think about your irrigation...

Now your landscape design is in place think about how to irrigate it – drip line and drippers for garden beds, veggies and fruit trees, MP rotators for lawn areas.

## Who can help me implement my wonderful plan?

There is a wealth of people, services, and products out there that can turn a daunting plan into an easily implemented dreamscape. What nurseries should you go to, what irrigation company should you use, what soil supplier should you trust, and maybe should you consider a garden designer to check off the plan? The Water Corporation has a wealth of info on waterwise specialists to get you started [www.watercorporation.com.au](http://www.watercorporation.com.au)

## Your plan of attack...

What to do when. So much of successful landscaping is about putting the right feature, in the right place at the right time.

For practical demonstration see Great Gardens TV

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VIHU5Uwf0E&t=2s>





# ORGANIC VEGIES

1.

Mix a blend of 50% Coco Peat (Coir) and 50% potting mix into a 30L Grow Bag

2.

Coir is best purchased in 60 litre blocks, look for the potting grade variety. Soak it in a wheelbarrow and mix with a Premium Potting Mix, or use your own compost.

3.

Fill each 30 litre bag with the above soil blend and add:

- One handful (approx. 50 grams) of blood and bone fertilizer (choose a brand that contains sulphate of potash and trace elements)
- Two handfuls (approx. 100 grams) of pelletised chicken manure

4.

And mix well. Plant 3 to 4 seedlings per bag. Water in well and place in a sunny position.

5.

Liquid feed weekly with fish and seaweed solution or your own 'worm juice'!

“ Growing your own beautiful, nutritious and organic food at home is easier than you think with this easy to follow recipe. ”  
-Steve Wood



Now you can enjoy delicious organic homegrown veggies! Healthy food, healthy body, healthy environment!

# TURNING SAND INTO SOIL



“Like building a strong home, you need strong foundations for your plants. Your garden will thrive if you take the time to build up the soil. Remember healthy soil gives you healthy plants”  
- Chris Ferreira

Watch video here:

<http://theforeverproject.com.au/videos/garden-gurus-sand-soil>

- 1.** Approx 20L/m<sup>2</sup> of compost or soil builder mix, or your own compost.
- 2.** 2-7kg/m<sup>2</sup> of soil amendments such as Bentonite clay, zeolite and spongelite.
- 3.** 1 small handful of organically based slow release fertilizer and 1 cupped handful of wetting agent per m<sup>2</sup>
- 4.** Rotary hoe or fork this mixture into the top 10-30cm of the soil or lightly incorporate around existing plants then thoroughly soak.
- 5.** For established gardens, dissolve clay (from all good gardening stores) in a watering can and apply to soil 12-15 times over the course of a year.

**TIP:** For establishing new plants, dig a hole 4-5 times the size of

- the plant pot and backfill with this mixture.



Your sand will have been transformed into a wonderful, dark and productive soil bed ready to launch your new garden to prosperity!