

# Homeowner's Guide

## Watering

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Water is our most precious resource and much of the water we use to irrigate our lawns and shrubs is wasted. The following keys to effectively watering your landscape will help ensure the health and beauty of your landscape and prevent our precious resource from being wasted.

**Water Deeply and Infrequently.** In most cases, watering more than twice a week is unnecessary and can lead to weed or disease problems.

**Wait Until Your Soil Becomes Dry.** The biggest mistake most homeowners make is watering too often. You should wait to water your lawn until the soil dries out to a depth of 4 to 6 inches. This will promote a deeper root system and help to eliminate undesirable weeds or diseases.

**Don't Set It and Forget It.** Set your watering frequency for the season. Irrigation timers will need to be adjusted for temperature changes or rainfall patterns. Keep in mind, many water management districts have watering restrictions and guidelines that need to be followed.

**Don't Waste Water.** Turn off automatic irrigation systems during rainy periods or use a rain sensor to prevent unneeded watering.

## Mowing

Proper mowing dramatically impacts the health of your lawn. The following tips will help ensure your lawn looks its best.

**Mow Frequently.** Don't remove more than 1/3rd of the leaf blade height in any single mowing. Mow at least once per week during the growing season and once every 10 to 14 days during the dormant season.

**Use a Sharp Blade.** Sharpen your mower blades frequently to prevent disease and maintain good color.

**Mow at the Proper Height.** The following recommended mowing heights should be used to ensure the best possible appearance.

St. Augustinegrass	
Floritam: 3.5 to 4 inches	Best for full sun areas
Seville: 2.5 to 3 inches	Best for moderately shaded areas
Bitterblue: 3 to 3.5 inches	Best for slightly shaded areas
Bahiagrass: 3.5 to 4 inches	Best for full sun areas
Bermudagrass: 1 to 1.25 inches	Best for full sun areas
Centipedegrass: 1 to 2 inches	Best for full sun to partially shaded areas
Zoysiagrass: 1 to 2 inches	Best for full sun to moderately shaded areas
Tall Fescue: 1.5 to 3 inches	Best for full sun to moderately shaded areas

## Pruning

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Proper pruning is essential to creating aesthetically beautiful landscapes. Keep the following principles in mind when deciding to prune your landscape plants.

**Prune to Direct or Alter Growth.** Every time you make a pruning cut, you stop growth in one direction and encourage it in another.

**Prune to Encourage Flower or Fruit Production.** Pruning after flower and fruit production is finished will generally improve the flower or fruit production for the next season.

**Prune to Promote Plant Health.** As shrubs age, older limbs and branches become weak. Prune older branches back to encourage younger more vigorous shoots that improve the overall appearance.

**Prune to Repair Damages.** Strong winds, lightning or even repeated pruning can damage plants. Thin out older, weak, brittle or diseased limbs and branches to improve the vigor of your shrubs and trees.

**Prune to Alter, Restore or Rejuvenate.** Pruning can help make an established or neglected plant more attractive.