

# Care of Your New Garden

Congratulations on your new garden! These landscapes are designed to be low maintenance, but they need a bit of extra care during the first few months to ensure they establish successfully.

Here's what to keep an eye on during the **first 3 months** after installation.

**\*F2P**  
**Landscaping**  
C-27 #772065

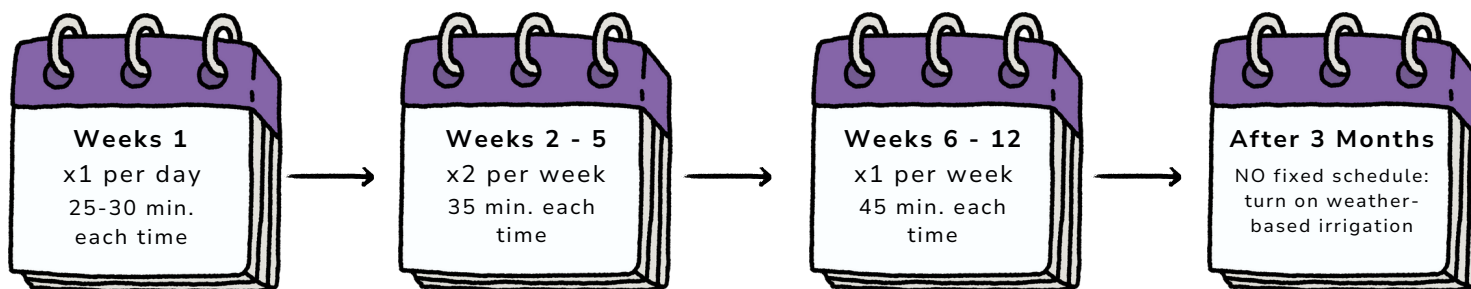
## Watering

Supplemental watering is critical, particularly if you weren't able to plant during the rainy season. Follow these general guidelines for gardens planted in late spring through early winter in Los Angeles. While these are general guidelines, each garden is different, so it's important to watch your plants and adjust as needed.

- Avoid overwatering: Some hand-watering in addition to irrigation is okay, but monitor closely, as it is easy to overwater.

**Watering Tip!** Check plant health in the morning—many plants wilt to stay cool in the afternoon.

## First 3 Months Proposed Watering Schedule



## Watch for Healthy vs. Stressed Plants

Signs of a Healthy, Stabilizing Plant:

- New growth is emerging
- Plant color is vibrant
- Leaves look full and firm

Signs of Stress:

- Wilted leaves (check in the morning, not midday)
- Leaf curl
- Yellowing or browning leaves
- Stunted growth
- Excessive leaf drop

If You Notice Stress:

- Check for overwatering or underwatering and adjust accordingly.
- Check that emitters are close enough to the root ball but not touching the plant stem.
- On slopes, confirm emitters are uphill from the plant.
- Ensure emitters are facing toward the plant and functioning properly.
- If multiple plants look stressed, inspect your drip lines for kinks in the tubing.
- Do not remove any leaves until the plant has stabilized.

## Grass Regrowth and Unwanted Plants

You may notice some old grass or unwanted plants growing through the mulch. Here's how to manage them:

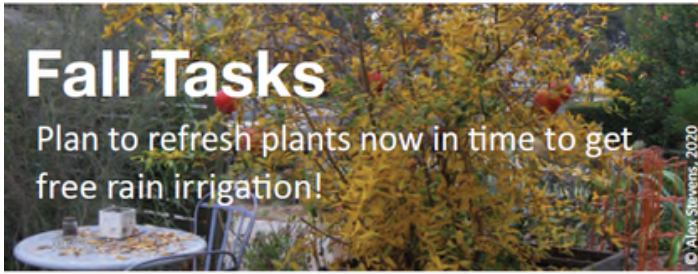
- Warm-season grasses: Pull back mulch, remove the plant as much as possible, then cover with compost and mulch.
- Unwanted Plants: Cut down to the ground, then cover with 3-4" of mulch to discourage regrowth.  
\*NO compost should be used\*

It's important to stay on top of regrowth, especially in the first few months and following the first rainfall after planting.

## Mulch & Pruning

- Maintain 3-4" of mulch over the root zone to retain moisture and block weeds.
- Keep mulch away from the plant stem to prevent rot.
- No pruning is needed during this stage unless a branch is broken—plants need all their energy for root development.

# Use this Seasonal Maintenance Checklist



## General Landscape Management

- Review plant health and investigate reasons for observed decline
- Remove unwanted plants and deadhead flowers as needed
- Stake trees: add new or make adjustments

## Maintain Rainwater Capture Systems

- Make sure gutters and downspouts are not clogged
- Clean rain barrels/cisterns and clean out catch basins
- Drill holes in bottoms of catch basins, if standing water
- Make sure mosquito screens are not ripped or loose
- Flush pipes
- Remove debris from swales, especially at inlets/outlets
- Refurbish berms and basins as needed

## Add Compost or Worm Castings

- De-compact or aerate areas around trees/large shrubs and add worm castings/compost

## Replenish Mulch

- Maintain 3" if established garden, 4" - 6" if still getting established

## Late Fall Pruning (Chop and Drop)

- Cut back ornamental grasses (once a year for deciduous, less often for evergreen)
- Cut back young salvias (sages) by 1/3
- Cut back perennials and pinch back non-woody shrubs and perennials

## Irrigation Checkup

- Turn on each valve to check for problems and make repairs
- Open manual flush valves and flush
- Clean irrigation filters
- Adjust controller - reduce time

## Pruning (Chop and Drop)

- Prune dead, diseased, damaged, and deranged branches of trees and large shrubs
- Cut back perennials and pinch back non-woody shrubs and perennials

## Still Time to Plant (but not in wet soil!) Irrigation Checkup

- Turn on each valve to check for problems and make repairs
- Manually run irrigation if the weather has been very dry



## General Landscape Management

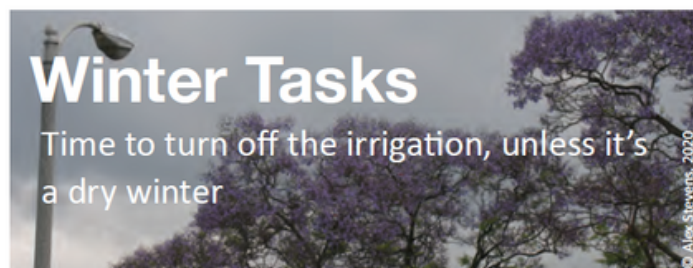
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## Irrigation Checkup

- Turn on each valve to check for problems and make repairs
- Open flush valves and flush
- Clean irrigation filters
- Seasonally adjust automatic irrigation schedule
- Move drip irrigation and add emitters as the tree grows in order to maintain the wetting zone at the outside edge of the tree's canopy (dripline)



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## Irrigation Checkup

- Turn on each valve to check for problems and make repairs
- Return irrigation controller to summer program or check the weather-based program.