



18 July 2023

Water conservation tips with British Garden Centres

With warm temperatures across the country, a lack of rain and more areas hit by water shortages, water companies have started to introduce hosepipe bans in certain areas. However, do not despair, you can still keep your garden looking beautiful without wasting water. The British Garden Centres team look at what you can do to save water over the summer months.

Water butts

A water butt can be filled or maintained to conserve rainwater. In dry conditions, it's an invaluable source of water. They are easy to install and collect rainwater from roof downpipes to water plants.

Using grey water from baths, showers, and washing machines (from rinse cycles) is another solution. It is easy to collect this waste in buckets, washing-up bowls, and watering cans. To prevent bacteria growth, you should use it within 24 hours and direct it as close to the plant roots as possible.

Whenever possible, don't waste water – use your cooled kettle water or leftover cooking water for your plants. According to the RHS, watering in the morning will help discourage pests and diseases in hot weather. Evening watering can often mean less water is lost to evaporation. A garden hose uses 5 times more water than a watering can so use a can where possible to save those extra drops.

Mulching

Growing plants in containers can use more water than you might expect, as they are more susceptible to drying out than those in the ground. Putting a layer of wood bark or mulch on your containers and borders will provide a damp layer of insulation that will lock in well-needed moisture for your plants. Gravel can be useful for all seasons as in winter it filters heavy rain into the soil, and in summer it acts as a moisture-conserving mulch and retains water under the surface, vital in hot conditions.

Choosing the right plants

Mediterranean plants such as lavender, sage, rosemary, thyme and oregano will thrive in warm conditions and with little water, as well box plants, ornamental grasses, eryngium, euphorbia, verbena, carex and palms. Verbena, sedum, hebe, osteospermum, achillea and lavender will also need minimal watering and will bring beneficial pollinators to your garden.



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Also, by using the right compost and slow-release fertiliser, available in your local British Garden Centres store), you can retain vital water and moisture whilst providing a valuable ecosystem for plants and wildlife.

We also advise putting saucers under plant pots, so water doesn't run away – which also helps reduce the time spent watering.

Self-watering containers

If you can, invest in a self-watering planter which will do the plant care for you. Your local British Garden Centres store stocks a range of self-watering planters which allows you to cater to your plants' needs without having to water them too often. The planters come with a feeder tube and reservoir which allows plants to draw up water from the roots meaning less work for you and no more worrying about your plant babies drying out on a hot sunny day.

Lawns

Leaving your lawn to grow longer, allows the grass to develop deeper roots making them more drought resilient and you will need to use the sprinkler less. If your lawn is patchy or needs reseeding, look for specifically drought-tolerant seed mixes with a higher proportion of fescue grasses in your local store as these will often be able to withstand warm climates with less water.

By following our tips, you can conserve your water supply and keep your garden looking its finest, without wasting water and your plants thrive during the warm conditions.

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About the business:

British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK's largest family-owned garden centre group with 62 centres around the country. The group is owned and led by The Stubbs family, who also own and operate Woodthorpe Leisure Park in Lincolnshire.

BGC was launched in 1987 with the opening of Woodthorpe Garden Centre funded by brothers Charles and Robert Stubbs. Since 2018 it has expanded rapidly with the acquisition of 50 garden centres allowing it to grow from its heartland to the business it is now with 62 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of 2,700 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, 2 growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres and Woodthorpe Leisure Park and Woody's Restaurant & Bar.

Social Media

Facebook: British Garden Centres

Twitter: @BGCentres



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