



Conserving Water

To make the most of water it pays to use it economically.

Link watering the school garden to wider environmental issues.

Top tips for saving water in your school garden

1. Only water in the evening or early morning. Evaporation rates are reduced at these times of day.
2. Water at the base of plants; wetting foliage loses water to evaporation.
3. Purchase and install a water butt (available from most garden centres or online). They are also a good way to teach children about sustainability.
4. 'Grey' or soapy water which has already been used for bathing or washing can be recycled in the garden.
5. Add a mulch around the base of plants to reduce evaporation as well as suppressing weeds, for example wood chippings, spent mushroom compost, manure, leaf mould and cocoa shells
6. Remove weeds as soon as they show as they suck valuable moisture out of the soil.
7. To avoid the loss of water to the air, try to avoid digging the soil in summer.
8. Established plants do not generally need watering in Britain but their growth is usually improved by watering when they are under drought stress. Newly sown or planted areas are vulnerable and their watering needs should be a high priority.

Consider your plant choice

- Pelargoniums and Petunias grow better in dry conditions than Begonias and Fuchsias.
- Try to buy plants not yet in flower. Once flowering begins root growth is sacrificed to flower production and without watering plants will wither.
- Go easy on hanging baskets and small pots in summer. Large containers require less frequent watering.
- Use drought tolerant plants from areas with low rainfall such as South Africa. We've listed other plants you could consider in our resource Creating a dry garden.





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