

Drought Gardening

How do I garden in droughts?

This guide will help you with the climate crisis, watering, and drought tolerant plants for your yard.

Weather in the Pacific Northwest is changing. Expect warmer temperatures, unpredictable rainfall, and increasing droughts. Especially problematic for gardens are predicted weather extremes like extreme cold and wet winters along with very hot and droughty summers. A few questions will help you prepare for the new climate.

Are you able to irrigate?

- New plantings need water for at least the first 1 year. An additional year of watering may be necessary in very hot, dry areas.
- Longer, deeper watering less frequently is better than frequent shallow watering.
- Consider drip irrigation or rainwater systems to save water.

Is your soil ready for drought?

- Creating soils that retain water and minimize water loss helps your plants need less water.
- Adding organic matter such as compost can help increase water-holding capacity.
- Applying 2 to 4 inches of mulch such as wood straw can reduce water loss to evaporation.
- Reducing soil compaction and improve root growth and water moving into soils.

Are you choosing drought tolerant plants?

- Choose drought tolerant plants that can withstand wetter, colder winters
- Plants with deep roots and small or succulent leaves are often drought tolerant
- Plants from dry ecosystems like dunes and rocky sunny areas are often drought tolerant

Go Natives! Website

<https://gonativesnursery.com/>

[Rain Garden Handbook for Western Washington, WA Dept of Ecology and WSU](#)

[Choosing the Right Plants for Your Rain Garden, City of Bothell](#)

[Native Plants for Rain Gardens, Snohomish Conservation District](#)

Drought Tolerant Plants



kinnikinnick
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi
Groundcover, red fall fruits



red flowering currant
Ribes sanguineum
Shrub, early spring flowering



sword fern
Polystichum munitum
Perennial, iconic fern



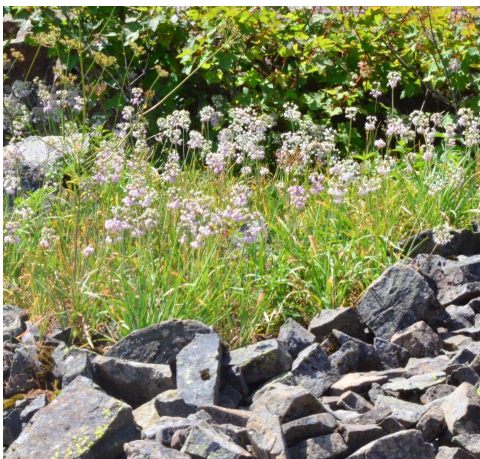
beach strawberry
Fragaria chiloensis
Groundcover, edible fruits



Oregon-grape
Mahonia nervosa
Shrub, evergreen



ocean-spray
Holodiscus discolor
Shrub, white flowers



nodding onion
Allium cernuum
Perennial, pollinators



Oregon sunshine
Eriophyllum lanatum
Perennial, yellow fall flowers



yarrow
Achillea millefolium
Perennial, gray foliage