

Water conservation features

The soil in our raised garden beds dries out faster than in gardens planted in-ground. So we're saving water with:

Mulch

The simplest way to keep soil from drying out is to cover it up, or “mulch” it.

We've used a thick layer of dried leaves as mulch. Other materials that can be used as mulch include grass clippings, straw, hay, wood chips, or synthetic products sold at garden supply stores.

Buried soaker hose

When water hits the surface of the soil, much of it ends up evaporating before it can reach the plant roots.

We buried a “soaker” or “ooze” hose a few inches below the surface of the soil, underneath the thirstiest plants.

The hose has tiny holes all along the length of it. When water flows through, it seeps out, bringing water to the plant roots.

Drip watering containers

Like the buried hose, these containers bring water down to the root level of the plants.

We made them from juice boxes, with holes punched along the bottom and halfway up the sides.

We fill them up using a watering can, and they release water slowly as needed by the plants.

Similar devices can be made with plastic pop bottles, or bought from garden supply stores (ask for “watering spikes”).

Drought-tolerant plants

In the middle of the plot, we've planted drought-tolerant native plants like foxglove beard-tongue, fireweed, and wild bergamot.



**Water the roots,
not the soil
surface!**

A key strategy for saving water is to bring water directly to the roots of the plants, rather than watering the surface of the soil—where much of the water can be lost to evaporation.