



Watering your plants

Gardens can be watered in many different ways but the trick is to find the most effective way to water.

Much of the watering carried out in our gardens is the result of a misunderstanding about how and when water needs to be applied. It may sound obvious to you but effective watering is an acquired skill.

What's good?

WATER BUTTS

Simple to install these will keep you supplied with water providing you keep the top covered and out of direct sunlight. Attach a pump to make extracting the water easier.

IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

These are effective as they allow water to sink slowly into the soil but they should only be left on long enough to wet the top 30cm of soil. They can be used during a hose pipe ban to deliver grey water or rainwater to gardens.

WATERING CANS

They require a rose attached to ensure sprinkling rather than gushing of water to the soil and to prevent damage and run-off of water.

PUDDLING

Increases the effectiveness of watering cans - dig a hole around the base of the plant and pour the water into it to create a puddle which then seeps slowly into the soil. Especially good for vegetables - create a trench that can be filled with water either side of rows of vegetables.

What's bad?

SPRINKLERS

These have a limited range of uses and are mainly applied to lawns and for raising the moisture level of flower beds before and after planting. These are prohibited during hose pipe bans.

HOSEPIPES

These usually produce large jets of water that damage the surface of the soil or plants, so always fix a spray head if you must use one. They should be used sparingly as they waste a huge amount of water and are banned during water shortages.

BUCKETS

Watering with a bucket is clumsy as the sudden rush of water can damage the soil and plants, and much of the water will run off the soil before it can soak in.