

# Be prepared and protect your plants and pocket this Winter

With winter around the corner, it is essential to switch into prevention mode and protect your plants and your plumbing. Any plumbing problems at home caused from the cold weather, can quickly lead to a worrying amount of wasted water and this can be very negative on your utility bills.

Moreover, winter time is not a sign to store away the spade or pack up the pruning shears, there are still things to do and a fair amount of care should be taken to prepare your garden for the upcoming frosty days. This is a good time to properly plan for the next season and good garden care only leads to a well-kept, lasting garden, which will save you piles of cash later on.

Moreover, in doing so, it is also sensible to still be water-wise throughout the winter season, as you can help prevent a water shortage during the next one, and water conservation is still as vital as ever! Although summer has come and gone, our water-saving efforts should continue all year round.

Here are a few ways which you can save water in the garden as well as tips on how to take good care of it during the winter months. Start today and have a perfectly prepared backyard when spring appears!

1. Start planning for spring. It's time to plant new season fruit and roses. Winter is the best time for this.
2. Encourage new foliage and start pruning dead flower heads and shrubs that are finished blooming for the season.
3. Plant water-wise trees and vegetables. Choose plants that are drought-tolerant and that don't mind the minimum winter temperatures in your area. Keep in mind during the winter, your plants do not need as much water as they do during summer time.
4. Fertilise garden beds. By adding your organic compost, the ground is prepared for a new season's sowing.
5. Try make provisions to harvest and use rain water! Harvest rain water, by installing a rain barrel or water tank to collect rain water and use this water to irrigate your plants! It's water wise and good for your pocket!
6. Gather up your winter leaves and create a compost heap. Start your compost bin for those leaves and keep it in a convenient place and use it all winter long. It's the best way to ensure you have the most nutritious soil when spring rolls round!
7. Protect your plants by adding a 5cm high layer of mulch to protect them from the weather. This conserves moisture and also add valuable nitrogen back into the soil.
8. Keep your pool covered. You will most likely not be using your pool in the winter months. Evaporation happens all year round, no matter what the season is. So by keeping the cover on your pool, this will help conserve water and can save you hundreds of litres of water each month and thousands of litres throughout the year.
9. Improve aeration and natural irrigation on your lawn. Create better drainage by using a garden fork every 10cm across the whole garden. This will help maintain your lawn better.
10. Make sure you know where to go to cut off the main water supply to your house. By knowing exactly where to go when you discover a burst or leaking pipe, you can save a ton of

time and the faster you stop the water valve, the less water will go to waste, while you wait for a plumber to arrive.

11. Lastly, call the plumber. Get a plumber to come out and check on any leaking pipes, or old pipes that are at risk of bursting, or that need to be replaced or repaired, and they'll make suggestions on how to winterize your plumbing