

# 1% WATER CONSERVATION

BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOUR LOCAL WATER PROVIDERS

## THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE

Healthy Landscapes for a Healthy Environment

### Choosing the Right Plants

Plants grown in the right conditions thrive with little fuss. Plants in the wrong situation may struggle no matter how much fertilizer, water, pesticides or attention you give them. This can be hard on the environment, expensive and time-consuming, too. Follow these steps to create beautiful landscapes that thrive with little maintenance and leave more clean water for salmon and other wild things.

#### KNOW THY GARDEN

The first step to proper planting is to learn what you have to work with. See “Get to Know the Territory” on the next page to help you with this step.

**1. Choose The Right Plants for Each Garden Spot.** Once you know the conditions in each garden area, identify plants that will do well in each situation. Then you can narrow the choices to those that provide the colors, smells, shade, fruit and other benefits that you want. See the “Easy to Grow Plants for Every Garden” chart and Resource List inside for ideas on where to start. Consider the following when choosing plants:

- **Select pest- and disease-resistant varieties.** Whether you grow roses or rhododendrons, apples or tomatoes, varieties are available that resist common pests and diseases. Look for resistant varieties in nurseries, plant and seed catalogs. Call WSU / King County Cooperative Extension at (206) 296-3900 for lists of resistant plant varieties.
- **Choose plants that thrive without irrigation.** Many beautiful plants thrive in our climate with just the water provided by

#### Get To Know the Territory

A simple list or map of conditions in your garden can help you choose plants that will thrive in each spot. A simple way to start choosing the right plants is to outline the location of buildings, pavement, rockeries, large trees and shrubs on graph paper. Then use colored pencils to show conditions that affect plant growth, including:

- Sunny, shady and partly sunny areas
- “Hot Spots” on the south or west sides of walls or fences, or next to exposed pavement
- Windy, exposed areas
- Areas with poor drainage, rocky or compacted soil
- Places that get excessive runoff from pavement or downspouts.
- Slopes that may erode or are hard to maintain
- Places that are difficult to access for maintenance
- Dry spots under roof eaves or evergreens



#### BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOUR LOCAL WATER PROVIDERS:

Bryn-Mawr/Lakeridge/Skyway Water & Sewer  
Cedar River Water & Sewer  
City of Bellevue  
City of Bothell  
City of Duvall  
City of Edmonds  
City of Kirkland  
City of Mercer Island  
City of Redmond  
City of Tukwila  
Coal Creek Utility District  
Highline Water District  
King County Water District #20  
King County Water District #45  
King County Water District #49  
King County Water District #85  
King County Water District #90  
King County Water District #119  
King County Water District #125  
Lake Forest Park Water District  
Northshore Utility District  
Olympic View Water & Sewer  
Seattle Public Utilities  
Shoreline Water District  
Soos Creek Water & Sewer District  
Woodinville Water District

nature—once they are established in the garden. Check the Resources listed inside for books and gardens featuring drought-tolerant plants.

- **Diversify Your Plant Investments!** Gardens with many different types of plants resist the spread of pests, diseases and other problems better than those with just a few. Diverse plantings attract birds and insects that control pests—and are more attractive to people too!
- **Go Native?** Native plants are well adapted to local climate and pests and may suit your garden. Many Northwest natives are attractive and easy to grow. However, natives need to be grown in the right conditions to succeed, just like any other plants.

**2. Plant grass only where it will thrive.** Healthy lawns need properly amended and well-drained soil at least 6 inches deep, and several hours of direct sun a day. Level ground is essential for easy mowing and absorbing water without runoff. Lawns grown in less than ideal conditions have constant problems and may need frequent watering, fertilizing and weed control to look attractive. Keeping large areas of lawn green and healthy takes a lot of time and resources. Consider how much lawn you need—and want to maintain.

**3. Plant Right.** Give plants a healthy start by preparing the soil with compost and transplanting them properly. See illustration below for proper planting methods to get plants off to a good start.

## Plant Right to Give Plants A Good Start

### SOIL PREPARATION

- **Loosen the soil at least 10 to 12" deep and several times as wide as the root spread—or throughout large planting beds.** Cultivate at least a 3 to 4' wide circle for each shrub or tree, and 1 to 2' for each annual or perennial. Use a shovel or digging fork, or a rototiller for large areas. A pick or mattock helps break through compacted layers.
- **Mix compost or planting mix thoroughly with the loosened native soil.** See the “*Growing Healthy Soil*” fact sheet to choose the best amendment and amounts to use for each planting.

### PLANTING

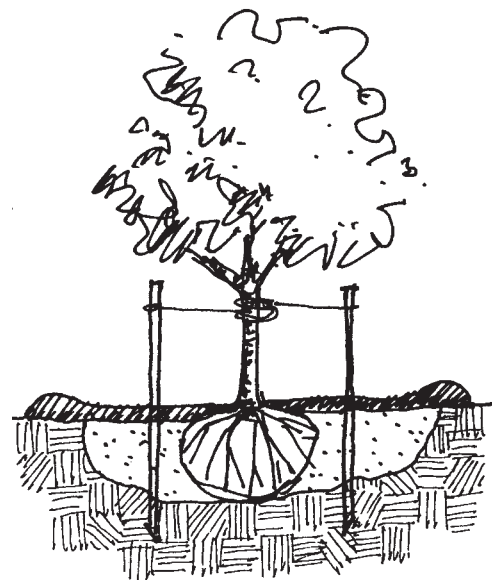
- **Make a hole in the amended planting bed large enough to spread roots.**
- **Form a firm mound at the bottom of the planting hole.** Make it high enough that the plant will sit at the same level it was at in the nursery—you can see the soil line on the stem.
- **Loosen and spread roots.** Untangle circling or matted roots and spread them around the hole.
- **Fill in with the amended soil removed to make the planting hole.** Gently firm with hands and water thoroughly.

**Note:** If planting a single plant in an individual planting hole, instead of amending a larger area, it is best to fill the hole only with the loosened native soil, and not to add amendments. Otherwise, the plant roots may stay within the planting hole and not spread beyond.

### What Do You Want from Your Plants ?

In addition to choosing plants that will do well in the conditions your garden provides, look for those that can meet your needs too! Consider these functions when choosing plants:

- Plants that thrive without supplemental water or major maintenance
- Food for your family
- Cut flowers and colorful foliage
- Habitat and food for birds, butterflies and other wildlife
- Privacy screens
- Lawn or other surface covering to play, relax or entertain on
- Screen off utility areas or compost bins
- Other needs



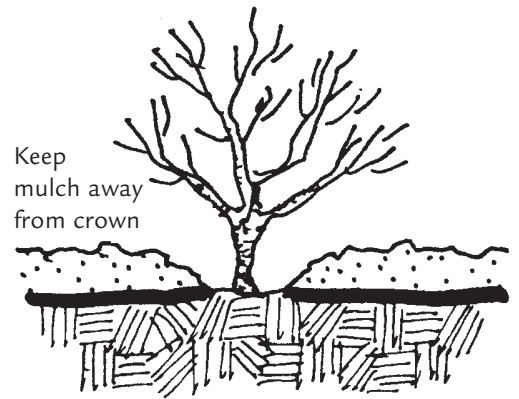
# EASY TO GROW PLANTS FOR EVERY GARDEN

	Sunny Mediterranean	Sun or Part Shade	Shady Woodland
<b>Trees and Large Shrubs</b> Over 10'	<i>Clerodendron trichotomum</i> Harlequin Glorybower	<i>Amelanchier X grandiflora</i> Amelanchier	<i>Acer circinatum</i> (N) Vine Maple
	<i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i> Goldenrain Tree	<i>Parrotia persica</i> Persian Ironwood	<i>Corylus colurna</i> Turkish Hazel
	<i>Cotinus coggygria</i> Smoke Tree	<i>Cornus mas</i> Cornelian Cherry	<i>Myrica californica</i> (N, E) Pacific Myrtle
	<i>Arbutus unedo</i> (E) Strawberry Tree	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i> American Cranberry	<i>Sambucus nigra</i> 'Marginata'
<b>Medium Shrubs</b> 3' to 10'	<i>Ceanothus</i> 'Julia Phelps' (E) Wild Lilac	<i>Lonicera pileata</i> Privet Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera nitida</i> 'Baggesen's Gold'
	<i>Rosa rugosa</i> Ramanas Rose	<i>Berberis thunbergii</i> 'Atropupurea'	<i>Vaccinium ovatum</i> (N) Evergreen Huckleberry
	<i>Buddleia davidii</i> 'Harlequin' Butterfly Bush	<i>Syringa vulgaris</i> varieties Lilac	<i>Daphne odora</i> 'Marginata' (E)
<b>Medium Shrubs</b> 3' to 10'	<i>Cistus hybrid</i> 'Sunset' (E) Rose Rockrose	<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i> (N, E) Oregon Grape	<i>Cornus alba</i> 'Elegantissima' Variegated Redtwig Dogwood
		<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i> (N) Snowberry	<i>Gaultheria shallon</i> (N, E) Salal
<b>Perennials and Subshrubs</b>	<i>Nepeta</i> 'Dropmore' Catmint	<i>Anemone x hybrida</i> Japanese Anemone	<i>Dicentra formosa</i> (N) Western Bleeding Heart
	<i>Artemisia</i> 'Powis Castle' (E) Southernwood	<i>Hemerocallis</i> varieties Daylilies	<i>Helleborus foetidus</i> (E)
	<i>Gaura lindheimeri</i> Whirling Butterflies	<i>Sedum</i> 'Autumn Joy'	<i>Epimedium X rubrum</i> Bishops Cap
	<i>Lavandula</i> varieties (E) Lavender	<i>Heuchera</i> 'Chocolate Ruffles' Alum Root	<i>Iris foetidissima</i> (E) Beefsteak Plant
	<i>Helictotrichon sempervirens</i> Blue Oat Grass (E)		
	<i>Coreopsis</i> 'Moonbeam' Tickseed	<i>Lavatera thuringiaca</i> 'Barnsley' Barnsley Tree Mallow	<i>Carex buchananii</i> Leatherleaf Sedge
<b>Ground Covers</b>	<i>Geranium X cantabrigiense</i> 'Biokovo'	<i>Ajuga reptans</i> varieties (E) Carpet Bugle	<i>Fragraria chiloensis</i> varieties (S, E) Beach Strawberry
	<i>Hebe glaucophylla</i> (E)	<i>Geranium macrorrhizum</i> (E)	<i>Galium odoratum</i> (N, E) Mayflower
	<i>Thymus praecox</i> (E) Creeping Thyme	<i>Laurentia fluviatilis</i> (E) Blue Star Creeper	<i>Vinca minor</i> (S, E) Periwinkle

**S = Rapid Spreading plant      N = NW Native      E = Evergreen**

## MULCHING AND STAKING

- **Mulch to keep roots moist and make the soil loose and absorbent.** See the “Growing Healthy Soil” fact sheet to choose the best mulch and amounts to use for each planting. Spread mulch in a circle extending a little farther than the roots. Keep mulch a few inches away from plant stems and crowns.
- **Stake trees planted in exposed sites** so that winds or people do not rock the plant and tear young roots. Use flexible tubing (like bicycle tire innertubes) to tie the trunk loosely about 1/3 of the way up the tree to two or more stakes. Plants with a healthy balance of roots to top growth will usually do better if left unstaked. Remove stakes and ties materials after one year.



## MAINTENANCE

Water until established. Even plants with low water needs must be watered through their first two or three summers.

## RESOURCES FOR CHOOSING PLANTS

- *The Pacific Northwest Gardener's Book of Lists*, by Jan McNeilan (Contributor), Ray A. McNeilan, Taylor Publishing, 1997.
- *Right Plant, Right Place*, by Nicola Ferguson, Summit Books, 1984.
- *Sunset Western Garden Book*, by Sunset, Sunset Publishing Corporation, 1995.
- *What Plant Where?*, by Roy Lancaster, Cavendish Books, 1995.

### Native plant information at:

- <http://gardening.wsu.edu/nwnative/> or
- <http://www.wnps.org/gardening.html>

### Demonstration Gardens:

- Waterwise Garden at Bellevue Botanical Garden, Wilburton Hill Park, Bellevue
- Master Gardener Ornamental Demonstration Border at Bradner Gardens, 1730 Bradner Place South, Seattle
- Soundscape Lawn and Garden Demonstration at the Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 NE 41st Street, Seattle