

Low Water Use Plants



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The following is a partial list of plants that will do well with average rainfall and minimal supplemental water in Oklahoma. During times of below average rainfall they can be kept alive with minimal supplemental water. While drought tolerant, they will still need some water to stay alive during an extended drought. The annuals and perennials listed will survive drought conditions, but during these dry periods they will not produce new flowers. Even drought tolerant plants need sufficient water to provide the best display of color from flowers and foliage.

During their first year in the landscape, trees and shrubs need regular watering in order to establish a good root system. Newly planted trees and shrubs need water from the hose or rainfall once a week during the summer.

To improve watering efficiency use a drip irrigation system and a plant based mulch. Drip systems are up to 95% efficient at water delivery, while sprinklers on a hot windy day may only be 50% efficient. Mulch greatly reduces soil surface evaporation and cools plant roots. The reduced evaporation maximizes the amount of moisture for plant use. Keeping the soil cooler helps improve root growth and overall plant health.

Another way to save on water is to group plants with similar water needs into beds. This arrangement makes it easier to water. You avoid over-watering plants with low water needs or under watering plants with a high water needs. Place beds with higher water use plants closer to a water source.

Most drought tolerant plants need good drainage. If over-watered or planted in tight soils with poor drainage, the roots soon rot and the plant will die. Soil drainage can be improved by tilling in organic matter and creating a raised bed.

<p>LARGE TREES (40+ feet tall):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caddo Sugar Maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i> Caddo) • Pecan (<i>Carya illinoensis</i>) • Ginkgo (<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>) • Kentucky Coffeetree (<i>Gymnocladus dioicus</i>) • Sawtooth Oak (<i>Quercus acutissima</i>) • Bur Oak (<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>) • Chinkapin Oak (<i>Quercus muhlenbergii</i>) • Shumard Oak (<i>Quercus shumardii</i>) • Live Oak (<i>Quercus virginiana</i>) • Bald Cypress (<i>Taxodium distichum</i>) • Lacebark Elm (<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i>) • Japanese Zelkova (<i>Zelkova serrata</i>) <p>MEDIUM-SIZED TREES (25-40 feet tall):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arizona Cypress (<i>Cyprinus arizonica</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Red Cedar (<i>Juniperus Virginians</i>) • Osage Orange (<i>Maclura pomifera</i>) var 'Whiteshield' • Chinese Pistache (<i>Pistacia chinensis</i>) • Ornamental Pear (<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>) - includes 'Chanticleer, Aristocrat, Redspire' • Western Soapberry (<i>Sapindus drummondii</i>) • Cedar Elm (<i>Ulmus crassifolia</i>) <p>SMALL TREES (15-25 feet tall):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shantung Maple (<i>Acer truncatum</i>) • Oklahoma Redbud (<i>Cercis canadensis</i> variety <i>texensis</i> 'Oklahoma') • Desert Willow (<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>) • Winterberry Euonymus (<i>Euonymus bungeanus</i>) • Pinyon Pine (<i>Pinus edulis</i>) 	<p>DWARF SHRUBS (1-3 feet tall):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dwarf Yaupon Holly (<i>Ilex vomitoria</i> 'Nana') • Miniature Crape Myrtle (<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i>) • Nandina cultivars (<i>Nandina domestica</i> 'Moonbay', 'Gulfstream', 'Harbour', 'Nana') <p>SMALL SHRUBS (3-5 feet tall):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glossy Abelia (<i>Abelia grandiflora</i>) • Burford Holly (<i>Ilex cornuta</i> 'Burford') • Deciduous Holly (<i>Ilex decidua</i>) • Winter Jasmine (<i>Jasminum nudiflorum</i>) • Junipers (<i>Juniperus</i> species) • Dwarf Crape Myrtle (<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i>) • Nandina (<i>Nandina domestica</i>) • Mugo Pine (<i>Pinus mugo</i> variety <i>mugo</i>) • Goldflame Spirea (<i>Spiraea x bumalda</i> 'Goldflame') • Double Reeves Spirea (<i>Spiraea cantoniensis</i>)
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MEDIUM-SIZED SHRUBS (6-9 feet tall):

- Althea or Rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*)
- Crape Myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*)
- Shrub roses (*Rosa* species)
- Sumac (*Rhus* species)
- Vanhoutte Spirea (*Spiraea* x *vanhouttei*)

LARGE SHRUBS (10-25 feet tall):

- Smoke Tree (*Cotinus* species)
- Crape Myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*)
- Silverberry Elaeagnus (*Elaeagnus pungens* 'Fruitlandii')
- Yaupon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*)
- Eastern Arborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*)
- Vitex or Chaste Tree (*Vitex angus-castus*)

CLIMBERS:

- Crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*)
- Trumpet Vine (*Campsis radicans*)
- English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)
- Boston Ivy (*Parthenocissus tricuspidata*)
- Climbing roses (*Rosa* species)

GOUNDCOVERS:

- Hardy Ice Plant (*Delosperma cooperi*)
- English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Junipers (*Juniperus* species)
- Liriope or Monkey grass (*Liriope muscari*)
- Creeping Phlox (*Phlox subulata*)
- Stonecrop (*Sedum* species)
- Santolina (*Santolina* species)

ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

(Perennial):

- Pampas Grass (*Cortaderia selloana*)
- Plume Grass (*Erianthus ravennae*)
- Maiden Grass (*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus')

- Japanese Silver Grass (*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Variegatus')
- Zebra Grass (*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Zebrinus')
- Muhly Grass (*Muehlenbergia lindheimeri*)
- Switch Grass (*Panicum virgatum*)
- Fountain grasses (*Pennisetum* species)

PERENNIALS:

- Yarrow (*Achillea* species)
- Wormwood (*Artemisia* species)
- Blue Mist Spirea (*Caryopteris* x *clandonensis* 'Blue Mist')
- Plumbago (*Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*)
- Shasta Daisy (*Chrysanthemum* x *superbum*)
- Coreopsis (*Coreopsis* species)
- Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)
- Gaillardia or Blanket Flower (*Gaillardia grandiflora*)
- Gaura (*Gaura lindheimeri*)
- Daylily (*Hemerocallis* species and hybrids)
- Bearded Iris (*Iris* species and hybrids)
- Ornamental Oregano (*Origanum laevigatum*)
- Russian Sage (*Peroovskia atriplicifolia*)
- Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)
- Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia fulgida*)
- Autumn Sage (*Salvia greggii*)
- Verbena (*Verbena Canadensis*, *bonariensis*)

ANNUALS:

- Joseph's Coat (*Alternanthera* species)
- Summer Snapdragon (*Angelonia angustifolia*)
- Ornamental Peppers (*Capsicum* species)
- Madagascar Periwinkle (*Catharanthus rosea*)
- Cockscomb (*Celeosia* species)
- Cosmos (*Cosmos* species)

- Mexican Heather (*Cuphea hyssopifolia*)
- Blue Daze (*Evolvulus glomeratus*)
- Gazania (*Gazania splendens*)
- Gomphrena or Globe Amaranth (*Gomphrena globosa*)
- Firebush (*Hamelia patens*)
- Sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*)
- Ornamental Sweet Potatoes (*Ipomea batatas*)
- Moonflower (*Ipomea alba*)
- Lantana (*Lantana camara*)
- Melampodium or Medallion Plant (*Melampodium paludosum*)
- Pentas or Starflower (*Pentas lanceolata*)
- Portulaca (*Portulaca grandiflora*)
- Purslane (*Portulaca* species)
- Mexican Bush Sage (*Salvia leucantha*)
- Dusty Miller (*Senecio cineraria*)
- Purple Heart (*Setcreasea pallida*)
- Marigolds (*Tagetes* species)
- Mexican Sunflower (*Tithonia rotundifolia*)
- Zinnia (*Zinnia elegans*)
- Mexican Zinnia (*Zinnia haageana* syn. *Z. angustifolia* and *Z. linearis*)

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