



**Water in the early morning.** Occasional, deep watering establishes a better root system than frequent, quick watering.



**Water according to your soil type.** Sandy soil drains quickly, so you'll need to water more often. Heavy clay retains moisture, so water less often.



**Water according to season.** Because California natives are adapted to our climate, with most of the natural rainfall occurring in late fall, winter and spring, and a dry season in summer and early fall, your watering schedule should mimic this natural cycle. For the first 1-2 years, however, you will need to give your native supplemental water during the dry season to help establish a healthy root system. Be careful not to over water during the summer, as wet and warm conditions create great environments for water molds and fungi. Let the soil dry between waterings.



**Water according to plant community.**

**Chaparral:** little or no summer water, good drainage

**Coastal Sage Scrub:** look best with occasional deep watering in summer

**Redwood and Coastal Forest:** some summer water

**Riparian plants:** need constant moisture

**Oak & Foothill Woodland plants:** little or no summer water

\*Water requirements are listed on all Yerba Buena plant labels.

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## MONITOR YOUR PLANTS WATERING NEEDS



Even if your plant is on an irrigation system, **pay attention to the soil moisture around your natives, and adjust your watering accordingly.** To do this, loosen soil and use your finger, or a moisture meter to test the soil moisture 3" down. Do this at various times during your watering schedule.

For example, if your drip system comes on two times a week at 15-minute intervals, check the soil immediately after the first watering and right before the second. This gives you an idea of how much water your plants are using and how quickly the water drains. Let's say you checked your soil immediately after your first watering, and the surface was wet, but 3" below it was still dry. You may need to water longer at 25-minute intervals or at a slower rate to let the water penetrate deeper into the soil. If the soil was still wet right before the second watering, you'll want to water less frequently, to avoid saturating the soil.



**Finding the right watering balance for your native plants takes some time, and is crucial for long term success.** Once your natives are established they can take care of themselves amazingly well.

**Sit back and enjoy your natives.**

**They will reward your efforts for many years to come!**



# Yerba Buena

## Nursery

◀ *Informational Series* ▶

*How To Transplant Your Natives Successfully*

Here at Yerba Buena Nursery, we want our plants to be successful and vigorous in their new homes, and we're sure you do too. This is why our staff has put together some basic guidelines for you to follow when transplanting your natives.

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# 1 ANALYZE YOUR SITE AND CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLANT

**It's important to find plants that are suited to your particular situation.** To do this, you must ask yourself some questions about your site. For example, does your garden get full sun, or deep shade? Is it on a steep slope, valley floor, by the coast, or inland? Is water available year round, or only in winter? Do you have a clay, loamy, or sandy soil? What type of irrigation system do you have, if any? The answers to these questions will help you choose appropriate plants for your garden. Just remember, a drought tolerant Sage (*Salvia*) won't survive in a moist woodland garden no matter how hard you try, so analyze your site carefully before you plant.



# 2 PLANT ACCORDING TO SEASON

**Fall:** The cool weather and natural rainfall make this a great time to plant. Mother Nature will do most of the watering for you. Ideally, you want to plant before the heavy rains come, to avoid working in saturated soil, which causes soil compaction.

**Spring & Summer:** As the temperature rises, you want to avoid planting and watering during the hottest part of the day. It's best to plant before 10 am or after 4 pm. Spring rains will do some watering for you, but make sure you give your natives supplemental water once the rain stops. Shade cloth works well to protect new transplants from the hot afternoon sun, and mulch helps retain soil moisture and keep roots cool. Be careful not to over water plants in the summer, as many California natives are adapted to a dry summer/early fall.

**Winter:** This can be a wet time of year, so make sure that excess water has drained from the soil before you plant. Freezes can be hard on young plants, so consider waiting until spring to transplant your smaller 1 gallon, and focus on your 5 and 15 gallon. If you purchase a **'recent transplant'** (a plant that has recently been moved into a larger container) or wish to leave your plant in the pot for a while, we recommend a sheltered location. Avoid all day sun exposure. Black pots can reach very high temperatures, which can damage roots, and kill plants.



# 3 PREPARE THE SOIL

**You want to create a garden environment similar to the plant's natural habitat.** Use our description cards and labels to determine the sun exposure, water requirements, and soil preferences of your native, then follow these steps:

**Decide where you are going to plant.** Consider the plant's ultimate height, spread and integration into your garden design.



**Check drainage** by digging a small hole in the planting area, filling it with water, and observing how fast it drains. If drainage is poor, consider working organic matter into the soil, which improves soil structure over time. Resist adding sand to improve drainage, as this can turn clay soils into cement. Building a raised bed or mound can also improve drainage. Sandy soils benefit from the nutrient and water holding capacity of organic matter as well.



**Dig a hole slightly deeper than original container and twice as wide.** Use a spading or digging fork to loosen the soil in bottom of hole.



**Fill bottom of hole with 1-2" of your garden soil, mixed with a small amount of potting soil or organic matter.** This creates a transition zone between your garden soil and the container mix, allowing water to flow more easily through the soil.

# 4 TRANSPLANTING TECHNIQUE



**Make sure the potted plant is thoroughly watered.** Turn pot upside down, keeping a hand over the top of the pot. Tap rim on hard surface, and root ball should slide out. **Loosen root ball** with your fingers or a fork to untangle roots. Place in hole slightly above existing grade and slowly back fill the hole with your garden soil (already mixed with potting soil or organic matter). Because the plant will settle, you may have to add more soil to the bottom of the hole to get the right height. **You don't want to bury the plant deeper than its original depth in the container,** as this can kill the plant. Gently tamp down the back fill, adding more soil if needed.



**Water your plant thoroughly after transplanting, making sure the root ball is completely moistened. ALL NATIVES, DROUGHT TOLERANT OR NOT, NEED TO BE WATERED THOROUGHLY WHEN PLANTED.** Stake if necessary.

# 5 MULCH

**It is a good idea to mulch around your plants.** A 2-3" layer of wood chips, oak leaves, or aged compost helps retain soil moisture, keep roots cool, suppress weeds, and adds organic matter to the soil. Plus it looks nice and tidy! **DO NOT** cover the trunk of the plant with mulch, as this can cause the plant to rot. Leave a 3-6" radius of bare soil around the trunk.

# 6 SET UP A WATERING SCHEDULE



How often you water depends on your soil type, the season, and type of plant. Use the following guidelines to set up your watering schedule.