


These plants have been selected because they are attractive, often available in retail nurseries, non-invasive, easy to maintain, long-term performers, scaled for residential landscapes, and of course, once established — drought tolerant. In some cases, there are so many excellent WaterSmart plants in a particular group, like salvias, that we chose the group, and gave several examples.

 and N = Native Plant

Shrubs

1 Manzanita  Arctostaphylos species & hybrids, N	2 California Lilac  Ceanothus species and hybrids, N	3 Western Redbud  Cercis occidentalis, N	4 Geraldton Wax flower  Chamelaucium uncinatum
5 Rockrose  Cistus species	6 Grevillea  Grevillea species and hybrids	7 Toyon  Heteromeles arbutifolia, N	8 Texas Ranger  Leucophyllum species
9 Oregon Grape  Mahonia aquifolium, N	10 Dwarf Myrtle  Myrtus communis 'Compacta'	11 Rosemary  Rosmarinus officinalis	12 Coast Rosemary  Westringia fruticosa

Succulents

13 Aeonium  Aeonium species	14 Agave  Agave species and hybrids
15 Aloe  Aloe species and hybrids	16 Rock Purslane  Calandrinia grandiflora
17 Live Forever  Dudleya species and hybrids, N	18 Hens-and-Chicks  Echeveria species and hybrids

Vines

19 Bougainvillea  Bougainvillea
20 Japanese Honeysuckle  Lonicera japonica
21 Japanese Wisteria  Wisteria floribunda

Groundcover

22 Carmel Creeper  Ceanothus griseus horizontalis species and hybrids, N	23 Silver Carpet  Dymondia margaretae
24 Ice Plant  Lampranthus species	25 Trailing Lantana  Lantana montevidensis
26 ROSEMARY  Rosmarinus officinalis 'Prostrata'	Huntington Carpet Rosemary  Rosmarinus officinalis 'Huntington Carpet'
27 Stonecrop  Sedum species and hybrids	28 Woolly Thyme  Thymus pseudolanuginosus
26 Prostrate Rosemary  Rosmarinus officinalis 'Prostrata'	26 Lockwood de Forest  Rosmarinus officinalis 'Lockwood de Forest'

Grass*

29 New Zealand Cabbage  Cordyline australis
30 Pink Muhly Grass  Muhlenbergia capillaris
31 Elijah Blue Fescue  Festuca glauca 'Elijah Blue'
32 New Zealand Flax  Phormium tenax and some species and hybrids

Perennials

33 Kangaroo Paw  Anigozanthos species and hybrids	34 California Sunflower  Encelia californica, N	35 Trailing African Daisy  Osteospermum fruticosum	36 Monkey Flower  Mimulus, Native species and hybrids
37 PENSTEMON, Native species  Penstemon heterophyllus, N	37 Foothill Penstemon  Penstemon parryi, N	37 Parry's Beardtongue  Penstemon spectabilis, N	
38 SALVIA SPECIES  Salvia africana lutea	38 Dune Sage  Salvia africana lutea	38 Germander Sage  Salvia chamaedryoides	39 LAVANDULA SPECIES  Lavandula dentata
38 Cleveland Sage  Salvia clevelandii, N	38 Mexican Bush Sage  Salvia leucantha	38 Autumn Sage  Salvia greggii	39 French Lavender  Lavandula dentata
41 Strawberry Tree  Arbutus 'Marina'	42 Pindo Palm  Butia capitata	43 Chitalpa  Chitalpa tashkentensis, N	40 Peruvian Verbena  Verbena peruviana
44 Australian Willow  Geijera parviflora	45 Crape Myrtle  Lagerstroemia indica	46 Sweet Bay  Laurus nobilis	47 Fruitless Olive  Olea europaea 'Swan Hill'
48 Desert Museum Palo Verde  Parkinsonia (Cercidium) x 'Desert Museum'	49 Chinese Pistache  Pistacia chinensis	50 Coast Live Oak  Quercus agrifolia, N	

Trees

* Includes Ornamental Grasses & Grass-like Plants



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Many of the plants in this guide are labeled and on display at the San Diego Botanic Garden in Encinitas and the Water Conservation Garden in El Cajon. These gardens are excellent places to get ideas for a new or retrofitted landscape that looks beautiful and saves water.



These Nifty 50 plants have been selected because they are attractive, often available in nurseries, non-invasive, easy to maintain, long-term performers, scaled for residential landscapes and, once established, drought-tolerant. In fact, these plants thrive in San Diego's semi-arid climate and can help restore regional authenticity to your home.

What's exciting is that authentic also means sustainable. Plants native to Mediterranean climate zones love it here as much as you do. They adapted over thousands of years, and the animal species that depend on them for food and habitat adapted, too. In fact, there are thousands of ground covers, grasses, succulents, perennials, shrubs, vines and trees to choose from.

For more information, go to WaterSmartSD.org.

Water Like a Pro

10 essential steps to saving water in the garden you have or in the new one you design.

- 1. Check Your Water Pressure**
If pressure is too high, a pressure regulator should be installed; if low, options may include drip irrigation or low-flow sprinkler nozzles. High water pressure – over 70 psi – can cause sprinklers to fog, reducing the amount of water that is applied to your garden. Low water pressure – under 30 psi – can reduce a sprinkler's distance, leaving unwatered areas.
- 2. Inspect Your System**
Once a month, manually cycle through each irrigation zone. Check, adjust, or replace sprinkler heads and drip emitters that are missing, blocked, broken, or watering hardscape.
- 3. Use a Landscape Watering Calculator**
Use the city of San Diego's Landscape Watering Calculator <http://apps.sandiego.gov/landcalc/> to produce a watering schedule. The calculator is based on historical weather data for your zip code, along with the water requirements of the plants, the soil, and the sprinkler type in each of your irrigation zones. It's free, easy to use, and works for any location in San Diego County.
- 4. Hydrozone Properly**
Have one water-use level per irrigation zone. Water-efficient plants react to overwatering and underwatering the same way – they lose their foliage and produce fewer flowers until all you see are branches. To avoid this, limit the plants within each irrigation zone to one water-use level.
- 5. Use One Type of Sprinkler Per Zone**
In each of your irrigation zones, the plants should have the same water use level and the sprinklers should have the same application and efficiency rates.



- 6. Take Care of Your Trees**
Water trees less frequently but for longer periods than shrubs and perennials. Give your trees their own irrigation zone, use drip irrigation and water each tree at the dripline – the outside edge of the tree's canopy. As the tree grows, move irrigation outward to stay at the dripline.
- 7. Baby Your New Plants**
New plants need extra water during their first 12 months in your garden, which is called the establishment period. Water daily for two weeks after planting to mimic the watering routine in most nurseries. Maintain the establishment period watering schedule through your new garden's first summer.
- 8. Water at Sunrise or Sunset**
Soil absorbs the most water from irrigation when the temperature, evaporation rate and wind are lower.
- 9. Don't Water When it Rains**
Connect a rain sensor to a standard irrigation controller. Watering will stop automatically when the sensor detects rainfall. The system will stay off until the sensor dries out.
- 10. Replenish Your Mulch**
Maintaining a three-inch layer of mulch protects soil from direct sunlight and evaporation. It also absorbs water, reducing runoff and providing more moisture for your soil.

For more information, go to WaterSmartSD.org and check out our eGuide to a WaterSmart Lifestyle, landscape classes, irrigation rebates, other programs and incentives.