

# HARDISON LANDSCAPING

Thanks for choosing Hardison to plant your new landscape. We picked plants that are tried and true for our area (Zone 7b) — they love our hot, humid summers, our clay soil, and our weather patterns. These plants will thrive here once they get settled.

**New plants often look a little sad at first** — yellow leaves, droopy branches, or some leaves falling off. This is super common! It's called **transplant shock**. It doesn't mean the plant is dying — it's just getting used to its new spot and growing new roots.

**The biggest mistake people make? Overwatering.** In our heavy clay soil, too much water can pool around the roots and rot them. So please:

- Water **deep but not too often**.
- Always check first with your finger (more on that below).
- Be patient — most plants bounce back and look great after a few months.

## Step 1: The Easiest Way to Know If a Plant Needs Water

Stick your finger into the dirt near the plant (about 2–3 inches deep, not right against the stem).

- Feels **dry**? Time to water.
- Still feels **damp or cool**? Wait — don't water yet.

This "finger test" is the best trick. It works way better than guessing or a schedule because rain, sun, and wind change things every day. Clay soil looks dry on top but can still be wet underneath, so always check!

## Step 2: Quick Rules for Our Clay Soil

- Water **deep** so it soaks 4–6 inches down (deeper for trees). This helps roots grow strong and deep.
- Water **less often** — let the soil dry out a little between waterings so roots don't rot.
- Use **mulch** — put 2–3 inches of mulch (like wood chips or bark) around each plant but keep it a couple of inches away from the stems. Mulch keeps the soil moist longer and stops weeds.
- Best time to water: **Morning** — less water evaporates, and plants stay healthier.
- If it rains a good amount (about 1 inch), skip watering that week.

## Step 3: How to Water with a Regular Garden Hose

Most people use a garden hose for new plants. Here's the easy way:

- A normal garden hose puts out about **10 gallons per minute** when it's fully open (no spray nozzle attached). (Your hose might be a little faster or slower — you can test by timing how long it takes to fill a 5-gallon bucket on full blast.)

#### Important hose tips:

- **Don't use a spray wand/nozzle** (the thing with different patterns like mist, shower, or jet). They slow the water way down and make it hard to get a deep soaking.
- If you must use a wand, set it to **full/open/straight stream** only.
- Best way: Take the wand off completely and let the hose run a **slow trickle** or gentle stream right at the base of the plant. This lets water soak in slowly without running off the clay.

### Spring (March–May) – Plants are growing new roots

Water more often at first to keep the soil moist, then ease up.

- **Trees** First 1–2 weeks: Water every other day if dry → **1 to 1.5 minutes** per tree. After that: Every 3–4 days → still about **1 to 1.5 minutes** when needed.
- **Shrubs** First few weeks: Every 2–3 days if dry → **30 seconds to 1 minute** per shrub. Later: 2–3 times a week → same amount.
- **Perennials** (flowers like hostas, daylilies) First 1–2 weeks: Light water every day or two → **30 seconds to 1 minute** per plant. Later: Every 3–5 days → same.
- **Ornamental Grasses** (like muhly grass) Early: Every 2–3 days → **30 seconds to 1 minute** per clump. Later: Twice a week → same.

### Summer (June–August) – Hot and steamy, plants dry out faster

Water deeper but less often. Check often during heat waves.

- **Trees** → Once or twice a week if dry → **1.5 to 2 minutes** per tree.
- **Shrubs** → 2–3 times a week → **30 seconds to 1 minute** per shrub.
- **Perennials** → Every 3–4 days → **30 seconds to 1 minute** per plant.
- **Ornamental Grasses** → Once or twice a week → **30 seconds to 1 minute** per grass.

### Fall (September–November) – Cooler, more rain, roots get stronger

Water less — plants slow down for winter.

- **Trees** → Every 7–10 days if dry → **1 to 1.5 minutes**.
- **Shrubs** → Same timing → **30 seconds to 1 minute**.
- **Perennials** → Once a week if no rain → **30 seconds to 1 minute**.
- **Ornamental Grasses** → Every 10 days or so if dry → **30 seconds to 1 minute**.

## Winter (December–February) – Plants mostly sleep, use very little water

Only water if it's been dry for weeks and the ground isn't frozen.

- **Trees** → Once a month if needed → **about 1 minute**.
- **Shrubs** → Once a month if needed (especially evergreens) → **about 30 seconds**.
- **Perennials & Grasses** → Almost never — skip unless super dry.

### Extra Tips

- Water **slowly** — let it soak in. No fast blasting that creates puddles or runoff.
- If plants look wilted but the soil is still damp — wait! Overwatering is the #1 killer.
- Yellow or droopy leaves early on? Normal transplant shock — keep following these steps.
- If something still looks bad after a month or two (big dieback, not just a few leaves), give us a call. We're here to help!

Your new yard is going to look awesome as it grows in. You've got this!