

Now is the Prime Time to Prep and Plan for Fall

Soon fall will officially be upon us, and most of us will be relieved to open the windows, turn down the air conditioner and venture outside to enjoy the fresh air once the temperatures finally drop. It will also be the perfect time to inspect how our yards fared through the summer heat and create a to-do list for the cooler weather.

The possibilities are endless for creating a beautiful, easy-to-care-for landscape that thrives in our environment and uses less water are endless, and the time to get started is now.



We all want to have a stunning and sustainable desert landscape that transforms our yard into a private retreat while ensuring we are wise with our outdoor water use. However, knowing how to create a perfect landscape best suited to our arid climate can seem like a daunting task.

Proper planning is a must

A great yard begins with a great plan. When designing your landscape and developing your unique plan, it's important to consider your preferences and purposes, such as:

- The look you want to achieve
- How you will use your yard
- The amount of time you want to spend taking care of your yard
- Your budget

Developing your unique plan is vital because it will incorporate what you like into all phases of planning and building your yard.

Pick the right plants

We know the desert offers a surprisingly diverse selection of low-water-use landscape plants and trees. Still, it can be an intimidating task to figure out how to utilize these plants to their full potential. To assist you with selecting the perfect plants for your yard, we have the ideal interactive resource for homeowners, businesses, and anyone looking for a little extra desert-adapted flower power with the [Plants for the Arizona Desert](#) website. This searchable site will help take the guesswork out of finding the right plants, shrubs, and trees for your yard. Also, fall is the time to sow wildflower seeds to have them bloom in the spring. Check out our [low-water-use Annuals page](#) for some colorful inspiration.

Why plant in the fall?

Whether you are looking to update your landscape with more water-efficient plants or need to replace those that suffered at the hands of the record-breaking summer, the fall planting season is ideal. Beginning in late September and until early December is a great time to transform your yard for many reasons:

- Soil temperatures are still warm, which encourages root growth and development.
- Plants have time to get properly established in their new surroundings before they must deal with a bout of desert heat in the summer.
- Plants require less water with cooler temperatures and without the relentless summer sun.

Don't forget about watering

Water is a precious resource, especially for us here in the desert. Being water-wise is a year-round responsibility, so now that temperatures are cooling, it's an ideal time to take stock of how water-efficient your yard is.

- Proper plant selection and appropriate irrigation can significantly reduce water consumption and ensure your plants thrive.
- The fall weather is perfect for an irrigation check-up. It's as simple as turning on your irrigation system and walking around your yard to find and fix leaks. AMWUA's Smart Home Water Guide can help.
- Seasonal adjustment of irrigation schedules is one of the easiest and most effective ways to avoid wasting water. You should adjust your irrigation at least four times a year. Learn more about properly watering your new plants and how to adjust your watering schedule for fall and heading into winter.

Find some help

There are a variety of ways you can get help and additional information when you need it.

- The AMWUA communities have professional conservation staff dedicated to assisting their residents and businesses use water efficiently. Take a moment to virtually visit your local water conservation office to explore the resources available to you.
- If you are not the DIY type, it is essential to hire the right person to help you design, install, and maintain your landscape and ensure your irrigation system is running as efficiently as possible. As in any profession, not all landscape service providers are equal. The landscape professional you select to assist you should be a trusted partner who will provide expert advice, guidance, and services to help bring your outdoor living space to life.

Being wise with our outdoor water use is essential, regardless of the time of year. A well-planned, properly-planted, water-efficient landscape will save you time, water, and money and also ensure your yard becomes the outdoor retreat you have always envisioned. So get ready to head outdoors, enjoy the weather, and plant wisely.

For over 50 years, the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association has worked to protect our member cities' ability to provide assured, safe, and sustainable water supplies to their communities. For more water information, visit www.amwua.org.