



California Native Plants for your Landscape

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<http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu>

The benefits of gardening with Natives:

- Reduced water, pesticide and herbicide use and fewer chemicals in our water supply.
- Plants that are naturally adapted to our climate and soil conditions.
- Reduced time and energy in maintenance.
- A garden that reflects your own unique style and taste.
- Your own enjoyment. Natives will attract the native bees and birds.

Design Basics:

- **Define your style.** Visit gardens and take photos of those you like (and those you don't).
- **Know your space.** Take note of your unique micro climate. Where is the shade/sun, reflective walls? Slopes or areas that flood? Views (ones to hide or ones to enhance)?
- **Define your goals.** How do you use your garden? How could you use it?
- **Hydro-zones** (group plants with the same water needs). Understand how your neighbors' watering affects your yard.
- **"Slow it. Spread it. Sink it."** Using permeable hardscapes, gray water systems, dry creek beds etc., where possible will enable you to keep rainwater on your property.
- **Evaluate your site:** What do you have that you'd like to keep (large trees/shrubs, hardscape, paths)
- **Right Plant, Right Place.** Do your research. Where does it come from? What size is it at maturity? Water use? Hardiness? When is it dormant? How and when do you prune it? When does it bloom? What exposure does it need?

Landscape Plot Plan:

- Draw your yard to scale using either grid paper or architectural ruler.
- Add everything that you are keeping on your plan. Note shade from existing trees (yours and your neighbors').
- Make some copies or use tracing paper over your plan.
- Add paths, mounds, trees, large shrubs...these are the things you are not going to change easily. Use a garden hose to lay out paths, use place holders for large shrubs. Look at it from different angles (don't forget from inside your house).
- Now add the perennials, grasses and ground covers.
 - Keep things low near the walkways.
 - Plant in odd numbers.

- Avoid straight lines (unless you are going for a very formal look)
- Plant large groups of the same plant, to create harmony.
- Stagger plants (think triangles).
- Fill in with low-growing groundcover.

Installation:

- Fall is the optimum time to plant Natives. Winter and early Spring are also good times.
- Plant selection. Avoid root-bound plants. Smaller plants will often be more successful
- Drainage test: Dig a hole 1' deep; fill with water; let drain; fill with water again; measure the amount of drainage in one hour: Less than 2" in one hour you have poor drainage; add 2" – 3" of finished compost and wait until your drainage improves for best success.
- Plant on a cool day or early in the morning.
- Check to make sure your soil is not too wet (if the mud sticks to the shovel, wait).
- Make sure your plant is well hydrated before you plant.
- Dig your hole as deep as the container and 1-1/2 – 3 times as wide. The root ball should be slightly higher than the ground.
- Fill the hole with native soil.
- Water well.

Watering:

- Water regularly for the first season. Water deeply (just past the root ball) and infrequently (don't let the root ball dry out.)
- Check the moisture of the soil before you water.
- Water in the winter during drought years
- Very basic rule of thumb:
 - 1st year/ 1x week
 - 2nd year/ 1x every 2 weeks
 - 3rd year/ 1x every 3 weeks
 - 4th year/ 1 x monthly if needed in the summer

Mulch:

Use a nice layer of mulch avoiding the trunk of trees and the base of shrubs. Place the mulch over the irrigation (if you are using). Leaving the natural leaf litter on the ground also provides many benefits. This will reduce weeds, provide nutrients for your soil, regulate temperatures.

Pruning and Maintenance:

Know your plants and know how and when they like to be pruned; it is most often when they are dormant. Pruning is not usually necessary for the first year.

RESOURCES:

WHY?

Someone still need convincing? Here's a great website that has all the facts and figures displayed in an easy to convince argument: Santa Monica Garden/Garden study including plant lists. <https://www.smgov.net/departments/ose/categories/landscape/garden-garden.aspx>

CHOOSING THE WRONG PLANTS

Don't plant something you, your neighbors and your wild lands will be battling for years to come.

- <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15345>
- <http://www.plantright.org>
- List of invasive species with alternatives:
<http://cal-ipc.org/landscaping/dpp/pdf/SFDPPPprintable.pdf>

DESIGN:

Websites that offer design tips and plans already created:

- CNPS - State site has Garden Plans for six different garden styles and situations.
http://www.cnps.org/cnps/grownative/garden_plans.php
- UC Davis Arboretum. They have designs for a California Native Garden, Low Maintenance Garden and Wildlife Attracting Garden.
http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/plan_california.aspx
- UC Berkeley's Landscape Architecture Department was asked to provide plans for a housing development in San Lorenzo. There are different garden styles along with a plant list, including plant information and care.
http://ced.berkeley.edu/downloads/courses/2015_SanLorenzo-drought-project.pdf
- Yerba Buena Nursery has Lawn Replacement Designs (we can't endorse any nursery) but the plans are a good resource. They are located much closer to the coast than we are so take that into consideration, you may want to swap out plants.
http://www.yerbabuenanursery.com/lawn_alternatives_article.php
- Homeowner's Guide to Beneficial Storm Water Management, good information on how to slow the runoff, spread it out to the garden and give it time to sink back into the ground. <http://www.sscr.cd.org/pdf/Slowit.Spreadit.Sinkit.vfinal.pdf>
- Our Master Gardener Website, select menu option "Demonstration Gardens" and look for Sunnyvale, Palo Alto, Berger Drive, South County Teaching and Demo, and Martial Cottle Park Community Education Center. <http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu>
- Going Native Garden Tour, April 22nd and April 23rd. Free, registration is required.
GNGT.org

ONLINE PLANT LISTS:

- The Haagen Dazs Honey Bee Haven: Plant list. <http://hhbhgarden.ucdavis.edu>
- UCANR How to Attract and Maintain Pollinators in Your Garden. <https://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/pdf/8498.pdf>
- Santa Clara Valley Water District Landscape Rebates, qualifying plant list: http://www.valleywater.org/uploadedFiles/Programs/WaterConservation/Landscaping/P_LANT%20LIST%20WITH%20COVER2013.pdf
- UC Davis Arboretum: list of the All-Stars including a photograph and information on each one. http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/arboretum_all_stars.aspx
- California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara Valley Chapter, has a wonderful website full of information and education videos. <http://www.cnps-scv.org>

PLANTING:

- Evaluating and, if needed, improving your soil. <http://pcmg.ucanr.org/files/166278.pdf>
- Care and Maintenance of California Native plants from the Sonoma County Master Gardeners. <http://sonomamg.ucanr.edu/files/29783.pdf>

WATERING:

- Plant Database San Jose Water Company, watering, plant lists and ideas <http://www.sanjose.watersavingplants.com>
- UC ANR Drip Irrigation in the Home Landscape. 32-page booklet on how to install drip irrigation. \$7.00. <http://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/Details.aspx?itemNo=21579>
- UC the California Garden Web, great tips on irrigation. http://cagardenweb.ucanr.edu/Drought /Drought_Irrigation_Tips /
- 5 steps for establishing drought-tolerant plants. <http://publicgarden.ucdavis.edu/apg-feed/5-steps-for-establishing-drought-tolerant-plants>
- UC Master Gardener Program of Sonoma, Drip Irrigation Basics. http://sonomamg.ucanr.edu/Drip_Irrigation/

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