

# 7 Steps to Prepare Your Garden for Summer

Now is the perfect time to prepare your garden for the stress of summer's heat and drought. For your lawn, check out our [seasonal lawn care tips](#).



## 1. Soil health

Healthy, fertile soil is the key to a thriving summer garden as the plant's roots have access to moisture and nutrients. Add homemade compost and organic manure and/or [Seasol Super Compost](#) to help improve its structure and long-term health.

While in the soil, put your fingers down into it. If it feels dry, add water. If you find that water is pooling onto or running off the soil surface it may be repelling water. Applying a soil wetter such as [Seasol Super Soil Wetter & Conditioner](#) will help to ensure that water gets to where it's needed.



## 2. Plant health

Strong, healthy plants can cope better with the sun and high temperatures. Inspect your plants for signs of stress, pests, diseases, and damaged foliage. Prune off affected areas, remove insects by hand (wear gloves), with a hose or use a natural spray such as [EarthCare White Oil insect spray](#) (don't apply in the heat).

Pests and diseases may indicate that a plant is sick or struggling. Look out for other signs that indicate a weakened or stressed plant including wilting (lack of moisture and heat stress) and brown and crisp leaves (lack of moisture over a long period).

Understanding your garden's health and regular applications of [Seasol](#) helps to maintain plants to keep them looking good all season long.



## 3. Plant choice and location

When designing or updating a garden, plant selection is essential. Choosing the right plants for the right location can be as easy as reading the information on its plant tag or getting local advice from staff at hardware or garden centres.

Heat and drought-tolerant plants include:

- Cactus and succulents due to their foliage will survive on very little nurturing.
- Plants with small grey or silver leaves including lavender, senecio, or convolvulus.
- Olive trees and rosemary because of their small but tough green leaves.

Heat and sun-sensitive plants such as hydrangeas and maples (Acer) can work, but they need a lot of attention. Protection (a shady position or morning sun), irrigation (well-watered), and nutrients (they are strong and can withstand heat).



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## 4. Watering and irrigation

Watering plants wisely is the key to summer garden success. Set up a regular watering pattern to ensure your plants don't dry out. Depending on plant requirements and any local water restrictions, maintain a routine of watering less often but for a longer period to ensure the roots go down into the soil.

Water plants in the cool of the day, either early morning or evening, when there is less chance of water evaporation. Apply water to the soil, not the foliage, as this is where the roots absorb water.

When using the hose to water plants, always check that the water is cool before applying it to plants. Water in hoses left in the sun heats up, so run it before directing the water onto the garden.



## 5. Mulch

To keep soil and plant roots cool and moist, apply mulch. A thin layer of mulch helps protect soil and roots from heat, and evaporation and reduce water wastage.

Mulch comes as organic and non-organic and can be used on soil or potting mix. Organic mulch includes sugar cane, pea straw, lucerne and bark. Ideal for vegies, herbs, citrus and a cottage garden.

Non-organic mulch includes gravel and pebbles. Use these types of mulches around Aussie natives, and plants such as olives, lavender, rosemary, succulents and cactus.



## 6. Feeding the garden

Maintaining a regular feeding pattern through spring sets plants up for strong growth leading into summer. It aids their resilience to heat, drought and the stresses of summer.

For plants in the garden or pots regularly, either apply a fast-acting liquid such as **PowerFeed All Purpose including Natives** or a slow-release fertiliser such as **PowerFeed with Torforte All Purpose including Natives** (or use a combination of both fertiliser types).

Also, check out our [range of specific plant foods](#).

Apply in the cool of the day, either early morning or late evening. Never apply a fertiliser in the heat of the day especially to the foliage, as it may burn it.



## 7. Summer gardening tips

Follow these tips to keep your garden looking good and work in the cool of the day.

- **Indoor plants:** Move plants back from windows and away from air-conditioners to prevent foliage burn and damage from blasts of cold air.
- **Outdoor pots:** On days of extreme heat, move pot plants to a cooler position in the garden. Underneath the shade of a tree or verandah is ideal.
- **Garden plants:** Cover heat and sun-sensitive plants with shade cloth to prevent drooping and burning. Remember to remove it at night.
- **Harvest produce:** Harvest produce as it's ready and in the cool of the day.
- **Clean up gardens:** Keep the garden tidy and ensure taps and hoses are working properly. These tips are critical in bushfire areas.



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