



Benefits of timers for your garden

One of the easiest ways to keep your vegetable garden or lawn in good health is to install automatic watering. Replacing hoses and sprinklers with an irrigation system – complete with a timer or controller – has multiple benefits.

- You'll use less water potentially saving money if you are on metered water, as scheduled watering is targeted, not indiscriminate.
- Water timers prevent over-watering as they provide the ability to efficiently apply irrigation with a time released application. This also stops plant health problems associated with over-watering – waterlogged soils can promote a range of fungal diseases.
- You'll save time, freeing you up for other jobs in the garden.
- Holidays can also be planned knowing your garden will stay alive with controlled watering.

There are a range of irrigation timers and controls available from simple clock timers that you attach to a garden tap to complex electronic systems with multiple programmable zones. Here are some considerations for timers.

- A reliable timer is the central part of your watering system. While there are various models and makes on the market, most home gardeners only need a simple system that can be programmed to run water for a specific duration each day. The key consideration when purchasing a timer is determining your needs up front – this ensures you'll buy something that's fit for purpose. Ask yourself questions like – Does your garden have many different plant zones that require differing amounts of water?
- How many months will you need to water your garden for during the summer – weeks or months?
- How frequently do you face restrictions and does the day or time you can water change as restrictions ramp up?
- Do you go away for long periods of time during the summer holidays?
- How far down the automation route do you feel confident with going?

Some programmable timers can be linked directly to a rain sensor; this allows full automation of garden watering. The sensor can detect rain and then cancel any automatic watering setting once rain is detected. Or you can override the settings manually if rain is forecast.

Setting your timer to water during the early hours of the morning or at night is recommended during the heat of summer. Watering in the early hours minimises evaporation and delivers water to the plant when they drink the most.

While most timers are fairly simple to operate and can be switched on with the turn of a dial or switch of a button, we recommend reading the manual and getting expert help if your timer is not working as it should.

Timers (also known as controllers) ensure your irrigation system is easy-care, so research the available options and get automated.



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