

Why, when and how to water

In the video at the start of the Unit, Nezha says she will water the sedum after she plants it. Read the information below to discover why it's vital to water a plant after planting. Then test your understanding by completing the activities.

Why water?

Moving to a new home is very stressful for a plant. Exposure to the air can cause roots to become dry and the plant to lose water. It is vital to water a plant as soon as possible after planting to restore its moisture levels. Watering a plant after planting also helps to settle the roots into the soil. It transforms large air spaces in the soil into medium-sized ones – the perfect size to hold water for plants!

When to water?

Plants which are newly planted will need watering regularly and consistently until their root systems become established. The amount of water it needs and how often it needs it will be different for each plant and each planting situation. It will also differ according to the soil texture. Light, sandy soils need watering more often because water easily drains away. Heavy, clay soils need watering less often because they hold more water within them.

Here's a general watering schedule for new plantings!

How to water?

When watering a plant, consider how deep its roots penetrate the soil. A little water sprinkled on the soil surface will not reach most of its roots. The plant will not get enough water. Watering in this way also encourages roots to grow close to the soil surface rather than lower down where there is groundwater. This causes the plant to suffer during dry weather.

A good technique is to give a plant a long, thorough application of water around the base of the stem(s). The water – and roots – penetrate deeper in the soil using this method. The best time of day to water a plant is early morning when the cooler temperature reduces loss of water through evaporation.

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Number of weeks after planting	How often to water the plant
1 to 2	Daily
3 to 12	Every 2 to 3 days
Until fully established*	Weekly

* Consult a plant encyclopedia to calculate accurate quantities for individual plants