

Growing a Great Garden Maintenance

Watering

All gardening containers used in the LGT garden are self-watering, meaning plants get watered from the bottom up. Each system has a reservoir at the bottom of the container. You add water to the reservoir through the fill tube that pokes out of the top of the system, or through a hole at the side.

Key benefits of watering from the bottom include:

- Even and efficient watering
- Stronger roots
- Better nutrient absorption
- Salts are pushed away from the growing medium to keep the dirt moist
- Conserves water
- Easier for plants' roots to absorb the nutrients and deliver to the rest of the plant

Do self-watering containers work?

Different plants require different levels of water consumption. Having a full reservoir takes care of this need. Your plants are smart. They know what they need and how much to drink. They'll help themselves to the water provided whenever they need it, which is why the reservoir should always have water available.

Tips for watering seedlings

For small seedlings, we recommend watering plants from below by adding water to the bottom tray and allowing plants to soak up what they need. Ensure any standing water is drained after one hour. You can place your clear plastic dome over your seedlings when you leave for the weekend, to ensure moisture levels in your plants. Remember, over-watering can be as harmful as under-watering – keep an eye for signs of stress!

Tips for self- watering growing containers

- The basin of the Earthbox/GrowBox containers have a capacity of 12 liters
- Water is absorbed by the potting soil in the two corners where it was packed down because of the wicking properties of soil
- When plants are small, add water approximately once per week. As they grow and mature, you will need to add water more frequently (3-5 days), eventually watering every 2-3 days for heavily fruited plants.
- DO NOT let the reservoir go dry, as it will interrupt the upward flow of water to the roots. Think of a using a sponge that has completely dried out to mop up a spill - it loses its ability to soak up water!
- Placing a small container underneath the overflow holes of the growing container. Earthbox Juniors are supplied with a container. We recommend using boot trays under your Earthboxes, or plant saucers.
- Always water the container via the water access tube – the only exception is for a few days immediately after transplanting where it is helpful to water plants at their base to ensure roots are in moist soil.



The Water Cycle

Water is constantly being recycled! The water in our bodies could have once sat in the Atlantic ocean! The water your garden plants transpire might one day be soaked up by the roots of a desert cactus.

Introduce the concept of transpiration of leaves by covering the leaves of a well-watered plant.

Ask students: What will we find in the bag if we leave it overnight? Why?

You'll find water in the bag from the plant transpiring!

