



# **WATERING YOUR GARDEN OVERVIEW**

**Overview of watering methods, tools, and conservation**

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Watering is the most fundamental need of your Learning Garden and it will be the most regular responsibility for the Garden Team to manage. We provide several tools and recommend student activities to engage the school audience. As a Garden Team, you will need to become acquainted with the watering needs of your Learning Garden and the different methods you can use to water. Consider the tools, activities, and water conservation recommendations below:

## **Your three primary methods for watering your garden are:**

1. Top water by hand, using a hose and spray nozzle. Managed by one person at a time.
2. Top water with students, use Upcycled Watering Can Activity or Little Raincloud Activity. Involves up to one full class at the same time.
3. Drip irrigation, use your drip irrigation system and set up a hose splitter to water multiple beds at one time. Managed by one person at a time.

## **When does the most sense to top water with a hose or with students?**

Top watering is an effective way to water your Learning Garden throughout the entire growing season. It allows you to confidently water exactly as your plants need. Top watering is highly recommended when you have recently planted as you can most effectively water the entire surface of the soil, wetting all the germinating seeds.

## **When does it make the most sense to use the drip irrigation?**

Drip irrigation is an effective way to water your Learning Garden once the plants are several weeks old, and have grown deeper roots. Drip Irrigation is less effective when germinating seeds as it may not soak the surface of the soil. Drip irrigation may be able to be connected to a timer allowing you to water on weekends, and during summer break. Speak with your facilities manager and Big Green staff to discuss watering timer options.

## **Remember that water is a precious resource—here are some tips for conservation!**

1. Check soil moisture to assess how much water your garden needs before watering.
2. Turn off the water when you are not using it, and fix any drips or leaks to avoid waste.
3. If water leaks out the bottom of your garden when you are watering, it likely does not need more water.
4. Apply mulch to bare soil between plants to avoid losing water to evaporation
5. Avoid watering in the heat of the day as the sun will evaporate water on the soil surface.
6. Your drip irrigation system is a great water conservation method. Drip irrigation gets water to plants roots below ground more efficiently than a hose sprayer.