



Laura's Water Efficient Garden - March.

Dead-head daffodils. Allow them to die back. Cut the leaves back at least six weeks after end of flowering.



Sow summer bedding seeds now in the warmth. Prune summer flowering deciduous shrubs such as Buddleja and hardy fuchsias. Many of these can be cut back to the same size every year.



Plant trees, shrubs, hedges and roses now. Don't damage soil by working it in the wet. Add garden compost, well-rotted manure or soil-improver to improve fertility and water retention in the summer.



Weed flower beds and add a layer of mulch - organic or gravel and crushed slate. It will keep plant roots cooler, retain moisture, and reduce the need for summer watering. And why not get a water butt now? You'll beat the summer rush.



Laura Davies, Senior Horticulturist - National Botanic Garden of Wales.

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Laura's Water Efficient Garden - May.

Apply mulch on soil to trap the moisture. Hoe weed seedlings on a hot, sunny day. Some will require a fork and a bit more elbow grease



Sow seeds for salad crops and herbs every few weeks for a regular supply of crops through the summer.



French and runner beans can be sown direct into the soil in May. Pumpkins grow extremely well if planted onto the top of a compost heap.



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Clip evergreen hedges and prune spring-flowering Clematis by removing dead or diseased stems. Lift and divide daffodils - after foliage dies back. Beat the summer rush and order your water butt now.



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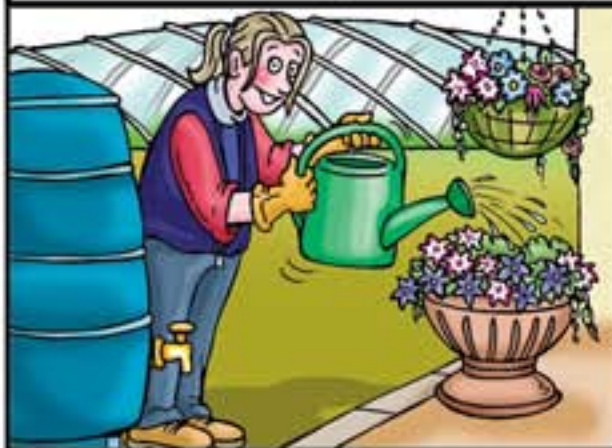
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Laura's Water Efficient Garden - July.

Containers and baskets allow very little rain through the compost, so water them with a watering-can using rainwater from your water butt.



Take cuttings of your favorite half-hardy perennials such as pelargoniums, fuchsias, osteospermums and diascias, to save yourself some money next year.



If you have a greenhouse, try and keep it as cool as possible on hot days so as not to stress your plants. Ventilate as much as possible and dampen the floor regularly.



It is still not too late to sow some carrots, fennel and oriental greens. Start sowing some crops for next year, such as, spring cabbage and spring onions.



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