

What to do in your garden

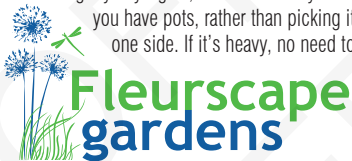


June is a great month, with lots coming into flower, and there's more to come. Your hanging baskets, garden pots, summer bedding and plants in the borders will give you so many more flowers if watered and fed regularly, especially during the hot weather (a weekly saturation is great). Concerned about over watering? That rarely happens, even if watered four times a day (unless you have a sealed liner in a hanging basket, then all will just drown. Pierce a few holes in it with a knife or even a screwdriver near the bottom) all flowers will still flourish.

To figure out if your hanging basket needs water, slightly lift the basket from the bottom. Pick up a large carton of milk (at least two pints). If it's well-watered, it should weigh roughly the same, if not slightly more. To rehydrate, water in small amounts (half a pint/large cup at a time), give it 10 minutes to let gravity take effect, then lift again and repeat if needed. Then leave until slightly dry again, but not too dry. Let it go to a pint. If you have pots, rather than picking it up, slightly tilt to one side. If it's heavy, no need to water. If you can,

water the rest of your garden every so often as well. Once again, you will be rewarded for your commitment. Feeding with chicken pellets or blood, fish and bone etc are good for all plants. Give the soil a light dusting and water in. If rain is predicted though that will do. Try and miss the leaves, as unless you water them off, it can burn. Start to deadhead regularly, weekly if you have the time. Don't think of it as a chore, think about harvesting the old flowers to tidy up the plant knowing it will bring on even more. This can include sweet peas, Roses, Cosmos and a lot of summer bedding, apart from Fuchsias.

There are some border plants to leave, especially for birds and for future autumn/winter structure/interest. Poppies and Paeonia seed pods can look structural in late summer. Leave hydrangea heads for winter protection. Leave alliums in situ, or even when they fall over or come away from the ground, use another plant as support. Drop it through and let it stand amongst the plants, and you will get seedlings in a couple of years.



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