TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Right Plant, Right Place

Blue Lobelia

Lobelia siphilitica.
Great blue lobelia.
Prefers moist soil, part shade but will grow in drier locations. 2-3 feet high with blue flowers in July and-August

Red Lobelia

Lobelia cardinalis.
Cardinal flower.
Prefers moist soil, part shade but will grow in sunny drier locations. Keep watered after planting. 2-3feet tall. Blooms red in July through September.

Purple Coneflower

Echinacea purpurea.
Purple coneflower
Full sun, part shade. tolerates dry soils. Self seeds. 2-3 feet tall. blooms June through august. Leave seedheads in place to feed the goldfinches.

Lance Leaf Coreopsis

Coreopsis lanceolata.
lanceleaf coreopsis.
tolerates poor soil if well drained. Full sun. 2 feet tall. Self seeds vigorously.

Find the right place for the plants you received today!

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Right Plant, Right Place

Tallamy, Doug
- o Bringing Nature Home
- o Nature's Best Hope

Vogt, Benjamin – Prairie Up
Rainer, T and West, C – Planting in a Post Wild World
Hunter, Majorie – Gardening with the Native Plants of Tennessee
NWF.org/Native Plant Finder
www.tnipc.org – Invasive Plant Primer for the Home Landscape
- o Invasive plant list of Tennessee
- o Emerging invasives of Tennessee

Plants.ces.ncsu.edu
Tennessee Smart Yards (tnyards.utk.edu)
Pollinator.org
NWF.org/native plants and NWF.org/Native Plant Finder
Awaytogarden.com – podcasts and newsletter

Facebook groups
- Invasive Plant ID and Removal in the US and Canada
- Nurturing Nature

Nurseries
- Tennessee Naturescapes Oliver Springs, TN (info@tennesseenaturescapes.com)
- Overhill Gardens, Vonore, TN (overhillgardens.com)
- Native Plant Rescue Squad (nativeplantrescuesquad.org)
- Prairie Moon (prariemoon.com)
- Roundstone Native Seed (roundstoneseed.com)

Plants for our geographic area
- NWF.org/nativeplants
- Pollinator.org

TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Manage Soils and Mulch

Knox County Master Gardeners YouTube channel has numerous videos on this topic.
Check the Speakers Bureau playlist:

Soil Testing: How to collect and submit a soil sample
Waste to Wonder: Composting
Hot Composting, part 1 (build the pile)
Hot Composting, part 2 turn the pile)
Fall Composting
Worm Composting
Winter Cover Crops
Winterize Your Garden

Don't Treat Your Soil Like Dirt!

Soil Testing done by UT Soil, Plant & Pest Center (Nashville)
https://soillab.tennessee.edu/
--->> Soil Testing Options
--->>> Lawn & Garden

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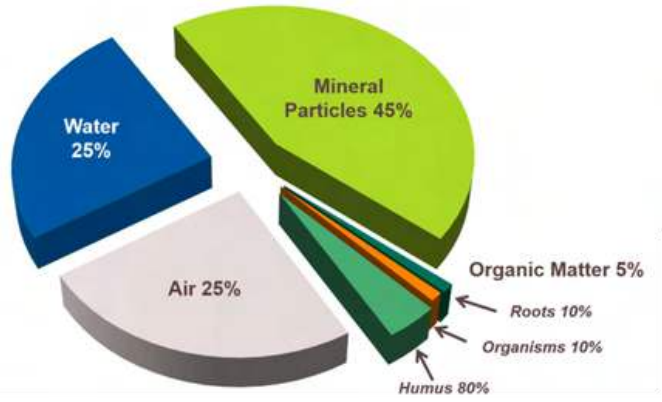
TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

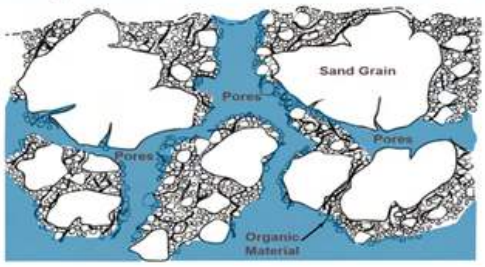
Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Manage Soils and Mulch

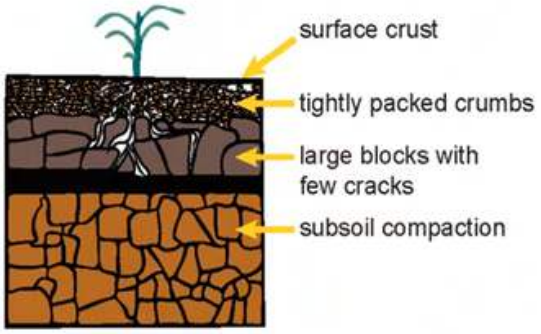
Soil Composition



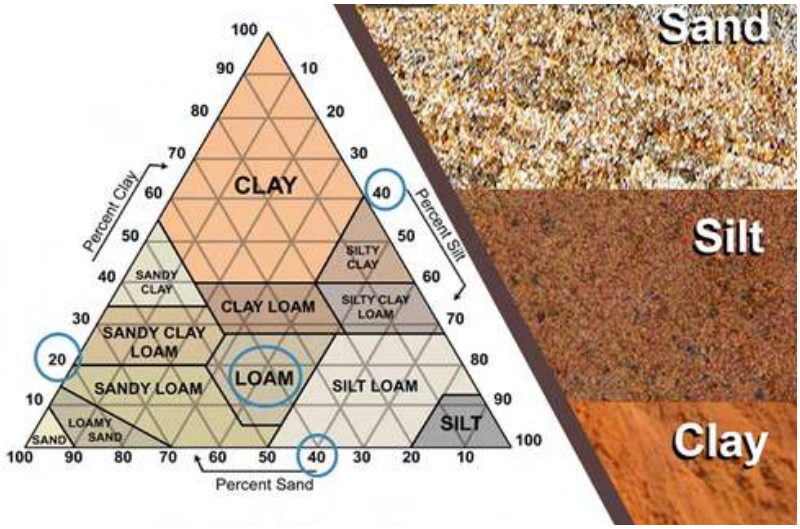
Healthy Soils Structure - Infiltration



1% increase of organic matter increases water holding capacity (360 gallons per 1,000 sq. ft.)



Limited plant growth



Add organic matter:

- Gardens: 2″- 3″ of organic amendment; dig in or till to a depth of 6″- 8″.
- Shrubs & Trees: 3″ – 5″ of organic amendment; mix in to depth of 1 foot.
- Lawns: Core aerate and top dress with ¼″ to ½″ of compost.

A mulch is *any* material applied to the soil surface for protection *or* improvement of the area covered.

- Only need 2″- 3″ of mulch for trees and shrubs. Mulch to the drip line.
  → Keep mulch away from the trunk. **NO MULCH VOLCANOS!!**
- No more than 3″ for flower beds; keep away from stems.

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Manage Soils and Mulch

- **Using Mulches in Managed Landscapes**

https://uthort.tennessee.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/228/2023/11/SUL12%20Mulches%20in%20managed%20landscapes.pdf

- **Composting & Mulching**

https://uthort.tennessee.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/228/2023/11/C%20816_6%20composting%20and%20mulching%20UGA.PDF

- **Winter Cover Crops video**

https://youtu.be/1isK97k2QJksi=_xXwZhBpa95MUIqw

- **Media & Drainage Demonstration video (pine bark, peat mix, soil, perlite)**

https://youtu.be/qcatbG-Qt4M?si=L0pgjLrPHo83Wegx

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Provide For Wildlife

uthort.tennessee.edu/wildlife-2/

- Native Plants
  - Native Plant database, Suppliers, Landscaping for wildlife
- Attracting and Supporting Pollinators and Wildlife
  - Managing Wildlife Around Your Home
  - Tips for Reducing Human-Wildlife Conflicts Around the Home
  - Butterfly Gardening
  - Hummingbird Gardening in TN
- Nuisance Wildlife Management
  - Deer Resistant Plants

http://www.Tnwatchablewildlife.org

- tips on bird, reptile, mammal, insect and amphibian identification, specifics on birdhouse design, educational tools for children, places to view wildlife

Leaps -- Tennessee Frog and Toad Id Page

https://www.leaps.ms/Tennessee%20Frog%20and%20Toad%20ID%20Page.htm

- Identify frogs and toads by their name, photo, or recorded call!

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

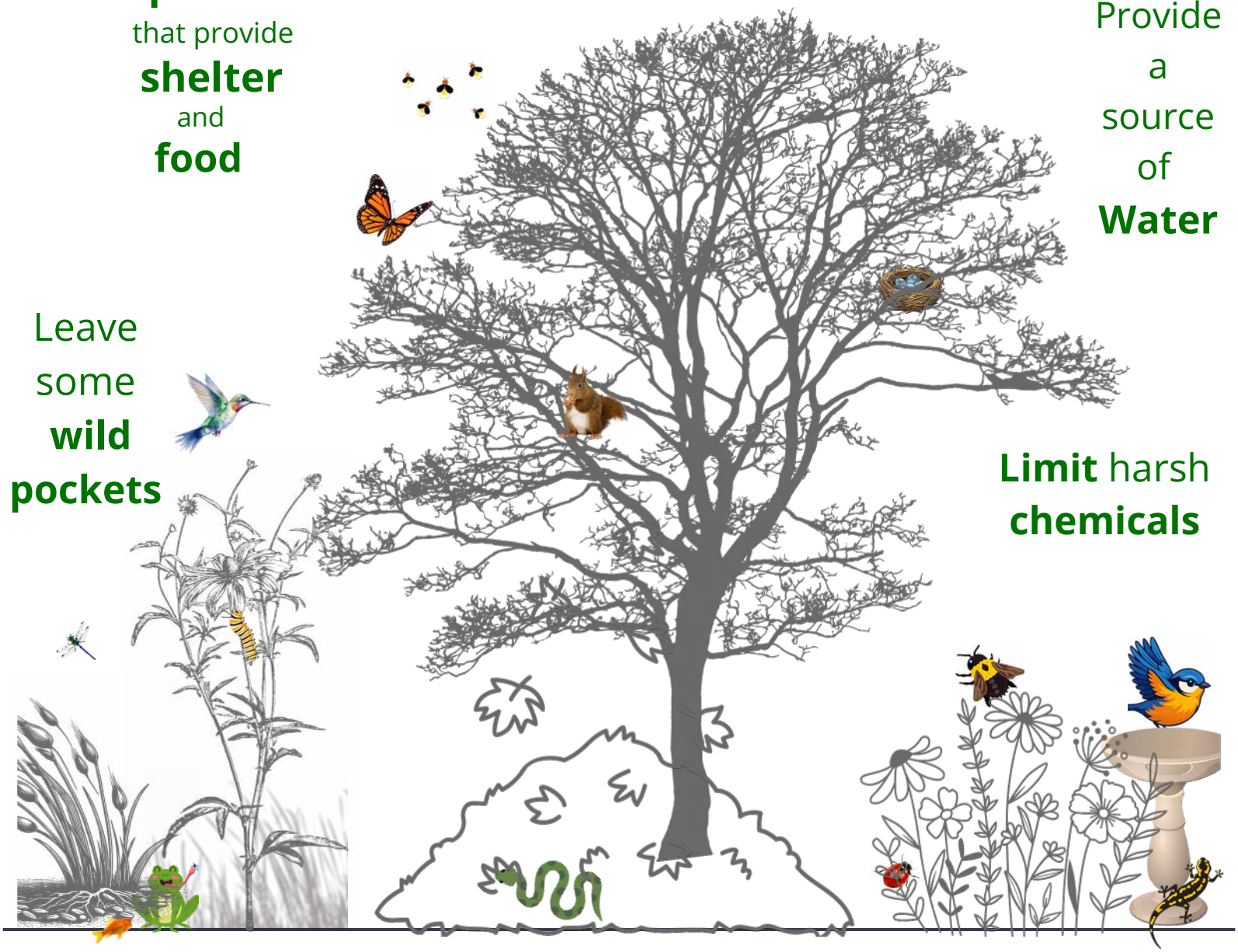
Provide For Wildlife

Include native **plants** that provide **shelter** and **food**

Provide a source of **Water**

Leave some **wild pockets**

Limit harsh **chemicals**



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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Reduce Reuse Recycle

Pile

Bin

Tumbler

Piles should be 3 ft to a side optimally.

Vermicomposting is a good scalable option

https://www.epa.gov/recycle/how-create-and-maintain-indoor-worm-composting-bin

This bin is a little wet worms like it drier!

NOTE:

Springtails and isopods in the bin are not a problem and help decomposition

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Reduce Reuse Recycle

If it rots, it composts, but you may not want it in your soil - or your bin!

Compost this	Not this
Vegetables, fruit and food scraps	OILS or DAIRY
Yard waste - leaves, grass clippings, twigs	pesticide/herbicide residue
	Plastic
	Metal
	Glass

https://fieldreport.caes.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/C-816_6.pdf

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Leave grass clippings on lawn (or compost it).

Use composted grass clippings, leaves, pruned plant parts, kitchen scraps to improve soils.

Locate plants to increase home energy efficiency. (eg trees on southwest side of house for shade)

Use landscape waste on site - mulch with newspaper.

Incorporate salvaged materials into landscaping.

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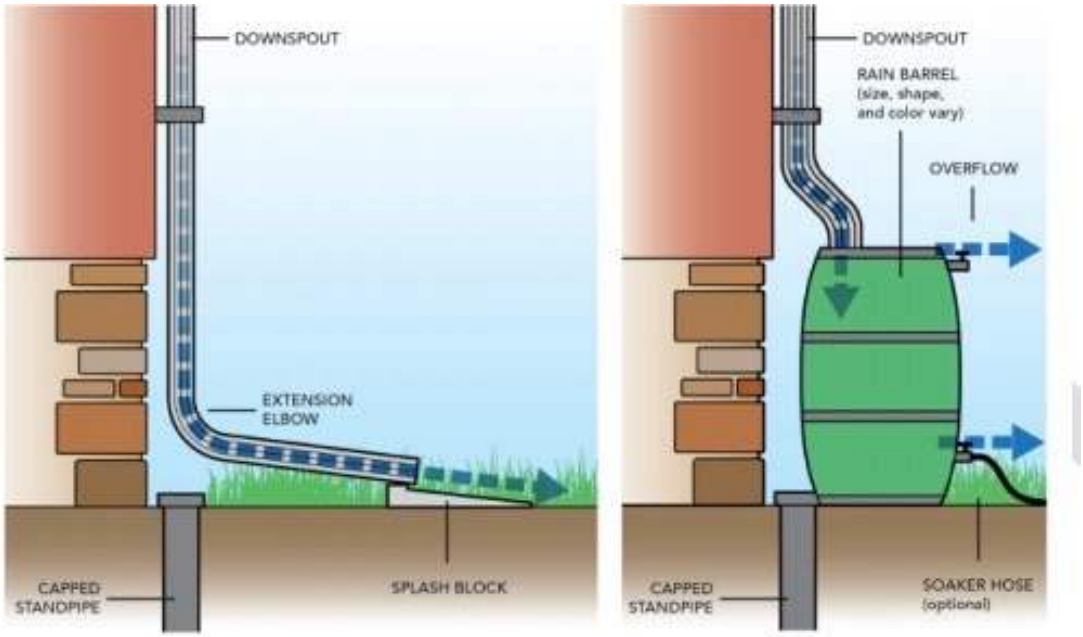
TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Reduce Stormwater and Pollutants

Disconnect & Redirect Downspouts



DOWNSPOUT DISCONNECTED FROM SEWER SYSTEM

DOWNSPOUT CONNECTED TO RAIN BARREL

☑ ? ✕

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Reduce Stormwater and Pollutants

Individual Actions Accumulate to Community Impact

Annual

30	Pounds Lawn Fertilizer Not Used	2250
96000	Gallons Rooftop Runoff Retained	7.2M
308	Pounds Waste Diverted	23100
0.175	Acres in Native Plants	13

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Reduce Stormwater and Pollutants

Resources:

Home Stormwater Mapping

See your property like a rain drop sees it and find opportunities to use rainwater runoff as an amenity.

Rain Gardens for Tennessee

Create a sponge in your yard to soak up rainwater runoff and open the door to different water-loving plant options.

There are over 90 municipal Stormwater Programs across Tennessee. Find out if there are local resources with this map.

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Protect Water's Edge

Resources:

Live Staking for Tennessee's streams and shores

An economical way to revegetate water's edge with native plants that support wildlife and protect property from erosion.

Keep Riparian Areas Healthy by Removing Invasive Species

Identify and control invasive species in riparian areas and establish buffers with lush native plants.

Just as we have a mailing address, we also have a watershed address. We are all connected by water. Find your Watershed Address with this map.

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

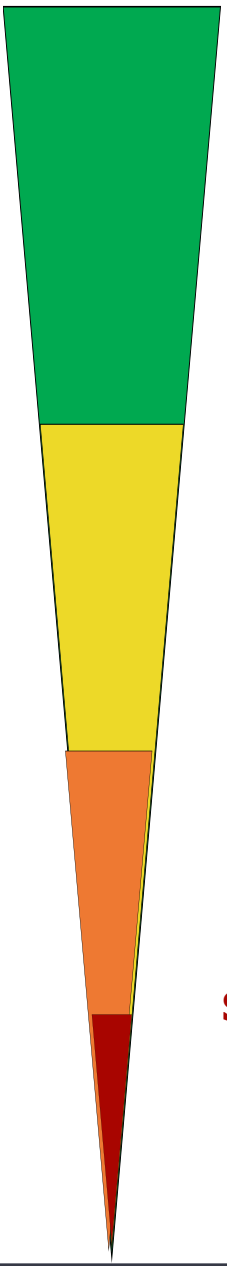
Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Manage Yard Pests

IPM

(Integrated Pest Management)

Start with the **least environmentally harmful** method then progress, if needed, to more invasive inputs



Step 1: Cultural Control

- Choose plants wisely (to thrive in your yard's conditions)
- Use good planting practices (proper depth, clean tools)
- Crop rotation

Pests =
any unwanted insects, fungus, weeds, etc.

Step 2: Physical Control

- Remove pests by hand, spray off with water, remove affected leaves, etc.
- Set up barriers, nets to prevent further destruction

Step 3: Biological Control

- Use 'good bugs' (ladybugs, lacewings) to control 'bad bugs'
- Plant certain flowers & herbs (allium, marigold) to attract the good bugs or repel the bad ones

Step 4 (Last Resort): Chemical Control

- Follow label instructions CAREFULLY (temperature, wind, precipitation, amount)

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Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Manage Yard Pests

- Several Different **Pest Management publications**

https://soillab.tennessee.edu/home-plant-pest-management-ut-extension-resources/

(organic & conventional **veg garden pest** control, **turfgrass** diseases, **weed** management plans, disease control for **trees**, **shrubs, and flowers**, and others…)

- **Video** about **IPM Basics (Integrated Pest Management)**

https://youtu.be/mLaZvS5gEic?si=VPH1yfLvZmhq5y8m

- **Spotted Lanternfly**

https://utia.tennessee.edu/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/269/2023/10/W1032.pdf

Mobile Weed Manual (app or browser)

https://www.mobileweedmanual.com/home

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Fertilize Appropriately

Don’t fertilize before it rains. Read labels and apply fertilizer sparingly and only what you need - soil tests are very helpful.

Water soluble fertilizers are more prone to leaching out after rains or watering...

TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Fertilize Appropriately

- **Instructions for collecting and submitting a soil sample for testing –**
  - You'll get great, ***specific advice*** about **fertilizing** YOUR garden or lawn

https://soillab.tennessee.edu/soil-testing/lawn-and-garden-soil-samples/

- **KCMG video with detailed instructions for how to collect and submit a soil sample for testing**

https://youtu.be/HWZIjLOzGsQ?si=-QBr_ka8q9qlgSfh

- **Lawn Maintenance Calendar**

https://uthort.tennessee.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/228/2025/01/PB1903-2025.pdf

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Water Efficiently

Mowing grass high creates a deeper root system and reduces water needs

Use rain barrels to catch roof top run off and water your plants with it

Use a rain gauge to check on your need to water

Direct sprinkler heads to keep the water in your beds andprevent runoff

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Water Efficiently

UT Hort Educational Resources

- Water Management & Irrigation
  - **Rain Barrels** Make Good Sense
  - **Basics of Irrigation** in Residential Landscapes

https://uthort.tennessee.edu/stewardship-2/

Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center

- Sort flowers by **watering needs**

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/combo.php?fromsearch=true&distribution=TN&habit=&duration=&moist_dry=1

Water Conservation in the Vegetable Garden

https://water.unl.edu/article/lawns-gardens-landscapes/water-conservation-vegetable-garden/

Methods of Landscape Irrigation

https://water.unl.edu/methods-landscape-irrigation/

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TENNESSEE SMART YARDS

Smart Yards and Friends Festival Resources

Planting Seeds from Pesticide Swap

Due to the small fluffy seeds of many native grasses/wildflowers and the low volume of seeds used in small areas, a carrier material will need to be used to spread the seeds. Some types of carriers are pelletized lime, vermiculite, and cat litter. Mix the seed with the carrier in a 1:1 ratio based on volume. This will provide a more substantial product to spread. Also, mix flour with seed/carrier until the mix is white. This will allow you to see where the seed has already been sowed. You want to spread the mix evenly and not run out before the entire site is seeded.

If hand spreading, go over the area lightly the first pass to make sure that you have seed on the entire area. If you reach the end of the site and still have seed left, then go over the entire area again or concentrate on the areas that are not white. This should allow you to get an even stand. If using a hand broadcaster, prepare the mix in the same manner and spread. Again, it is advisable to go over the area lightly the first time to make sure there is enough seed. Slightly overlap the edges of the areas sowed on each pass.

If at the end there is seed left, adjust the opening of the broadcaster to try to make a complete pass over the area again. If possible, walk the areas where the edges overlapped. This should provide an evenly sowed site.

The Xerces society's information on site preparation for wildflower establishment