



# Low Maintenance Plants

**L**ife can be busy and our gardens may not always receive the resources we once gave them. Choosing low maintenance plants can minimize the time required for upkeep and maximize the time you have to enjoy your garden. Some upfront investment in site preparation will further save time.

**Prepare your soil!** Good garden soil drains well yet holds enough moisture so that plants are not water stressed. The roots are able to expand into the surrounding soil and establish themselves more quickly. Healthier soil means less diseases, pests or plant death.

**Install an irrigation system,** whether it be drip, sprinkler or a combination of both. Consider putting your system on a timer. The Urban Farmer (Mill Valley and San Francisco) is an excellent resource for water conservation, innovative products, as well as good advice.

**Plant and space trees, shrubs and perennials to allow them room to grow and prevent overcrowding.** It is common practice to plant closer to fill in the space faster, removing some later. If you space plants to allow for their ultimate growth, less time will be spent pruning and shearing later.

**Apply mulches around plantings** to prevent weeds, conserve moisture, and keep roots cool. Minimize the size of lawns, use ground covers or cover crops such as clover when possible. Incorporate more hard-scaping such as paths, patios, decking or courtyard.

Choose shrubs that require a minimum of shearing or pruning. Pay attention to the ultimate height and spread. Predetermine how large you want them to become and stay within those bounds. Choose perennials that repeat bloom freely and do not require constant “deadheading”. Following is a list of likely candidates:

## Shrubs

Buxus (Boxwood)	Escallonia	Hebe	Camellia
Nandina (Heavenly Bamboo)	Dodonaea (Hopseed)	Rhododendron	Grevillea
Euonymus	Myrsine	Myrtus	Syringia
Oleander	Strelitzia	Carpet Roses	Rosemary
Viburnum	Podocarpus (Fern Pine)	Correa	Cordyline
Trachelospermum (Star Jasmine)	Sarcococca	Pittosporum t. (Wheeler’s Dwarf)	

## Trees

Olive	Arbutus Marina	Crabapple	Fig
Pistache (Pistacia Chinensis)	Podocarpus (Fern Pine)	Crape Myrtle (Lagerstroemia)	

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## Vines

Campsis radicans  
Parthenocissus spp.

Solanum jasminoides

Trachelospermum (Star Jasmine)

## Perennials

Dietes (Fortnight Lily)  
Grasses (Carex, Stipa,  
Fescue, Pennisetum)  
Tulbaghia (Society Garlic)  
Geranium spp.  
Asparagus sprengeri  
Zantedeschia (Calla Lily)  
Aspidistra (Cast Iron Plant)  
Yuccas, Sedums and other  
succulents

Salvia leucantha (Mex. sage)  
Hemerocallis (Daylily)  
Armeria (Sea Pink)  
Perovskia (Russian sage)  
Hosta  
Siberian Iris  
Marguerite Daisy  
Euphorbia

Dusty Miller Bergenia  
Phormium Erigeron  
Agapanthus Limonium  
Lantana Phlomis  
ferns Cyclamen  
Hellebore Erysimum  
Euryops Daisy Liriope  
Lomandra

## Groundcovers

Ophiopogon (Mondo Grass)  
Myoporum parvifolium  
Rosemary (Prostrata)

Vinca Minor (Periwinkle)  
Potentilla neumanniana  
Dymondia

Cotoneaster sp.  
Fragaria chiloensis  
Persicaria capitata

Gazania  
Ice Plants

## Long Blooming Annuals

Wax Begonia  
Pansy and Viola

New Guinea Impatiens  
Marigold

Vinca rosea  
Sweet Allysum

Cosmos



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