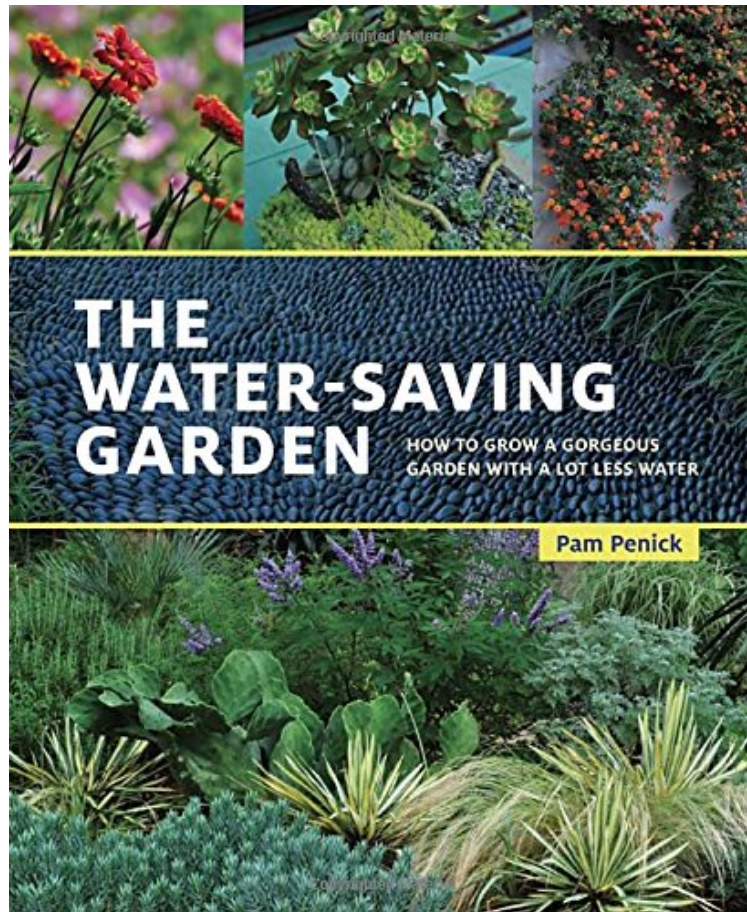


# The Water-Saving Garden: How to Grow a Gorgeous Garden with a Lot Less Water

*Pam Penick*

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**Pam Penick : The Water-Saving Garden: How to Grow a Gorgeous Garden with a Lot Less Water** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Water-Saving Garden: How to Grow a Gorgeous Garden with a Lot Less Water:

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Pretty pictures but not much information about them. By Diane G. Beatty It was disappointing for a desert gardener. The photos are of gardens in more moderate climates. Also, very few plants were identified with their latin names which are necessary if you want to research them or locate them to purchase. Common names often are the same for several different plants. Just knowing something is a succulent or in a certain genus is little help. Plants should be identified by genus and species. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. If you could have only one gardening book, this is it. By June B. Mays The first pages of some gardening books are filled with fluff that seems to have been written just to make the book longer. I sometimes flip through introductions and first chapters quickly without reading just to get to the meat of the book. Not this one! I read every

single word of *The Water Saving Garden*. From beginning to end, Penick's book about wise use of water in the garden was full of ideas and information. It was obvious to me that she had firsthand experience with the techniques she describes as well as with the drought tolerant plants she recommends. The major themes are changing our idea of beauty to one that is not as flowery, accepting plants that will survive dry periods with only occasional watering in order to use less water, and using hardscape to reduce areas that need water. By organizing ideas into chapters on design ideas, water retention, planting technique, adding the illusion of water, and plant selection, she made the book easy to reference and to use. The last section on plants gives short descriptions of 100 drought tolerant trees, shrubs, perennials, grasses, groundcovers, bulbs, and annuals that will save gardeners time spent in plant selection. I really liked the section on hardscape choices paths, patios, decks, walls, fences, gravel, boulders, and artifacts never need to be watered! For example, half buried loosely arranged boulders look good, help retain and slow down water, and provide planting pockets. She gives many examples of artistic ideas, such as a dry creek bed, pebble mosaics, spilling plants like *Dichondra argentea*, raked gravel, and grouping plants, evoke the feeling - the illusion - of water. Experienced gardeners as well as novices will benefit from reading this book. I recommend you buy the physical book for ease of reference. You will be going back to it a lot!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Perfect garden book for a modern gardener  
By maryannofgeorgetown  
Great pictures for ideas on a thoughtful garden. Lots of good details on how to evaluate your soil. This is the crux of any gardening. Plus, I love how she doesn't demonize all grass. My favorite look in this book a small section of grass with natives surrounding the garden. I found a little grass patch in my Arizona garden an attraction to birds since it brings down the temperature during the very hot part of the day, also a little square of green give your eye rest. Got some new updated ideas on water permeable garden paths and shade materials too. My friends found her info useful as well ( I shared my book).

A guide to growing beautiful gardens in drought-prone areas utilizing minimal water for maximum results. With climate change, water rationing, and drought on the rise, conserving water is more important than ever but that doesn't mean your gardening options are limited to cacti and rocks. *The Water-Saving Garden* provides gardeners and homeowners with a diverse array of techniques and plentiful inspiration for creating outdoor spaces that are so beautiful and inviting, it's hard to believe they are water-thrifty. Including a directory of 100 plants appropriate for a variety of drought-prone regions of the country, this accessible and contemporary guide is full of must-know information on popular gardening topics like native and drought-tolerant plants, rainwater harvesting, greywater systems, permeable paving, and more.

Penick (*Lawn Gone!*) proves that conserving water does not mean giving up gardening with her engaging, instructing, and nudging treatise. She approaches the politics of water conservation firmly and frankly, especially in her powerful introduction, asserting that "there's no one 'right way' to plant a garden that saves water." Penick is practical and reassuring throughout, convincing readers that vibrant water-saving gardens are viable." Publishers Weekly  
In an era of drought and unpredictable weather patterns, *THE WATER-SAVING GARDEN* could not come at a better time. With striking photographs and a designer's eye, Penick shows us just how gorgeous a water-wise garden can be. This is the must-have garden book of the year! Amy Stewart, author of *The Drunken Botanist* and *Wicked Plants* For those interested in both beautiful gardens and being good stewards of our precious water resources, *The Water-Saving Garden* is a timely must-read. Jim Peterson, Publisher, *Garden Design Magazine* Packed with design inspiration as well as practical advice, this timely book is a much-needed resource on creating and maintaining beautiful gardens with less water. Susan Morrison, Landscape designer and co-author of *Garden Up! Smart Vertical Gardening for Small Spaces* From eye-popping design regardless of budget to nitty-gritty DIY details, *The Water-Saving Garden* takes us down the creative path to gorgeous gardens that spare the water and pump up our style. Purpose, practicality, and passion: it's all right here. Linda Lehmusvirta, Producer of *Central Texas Gardener* on Austin PBS *The Water-Saving Garden* blends a passionate homage to water's importance for all life with practical, detailed advice about using less of it in the garden. Illustrations show enticingly diverse gardens and water-wise alternatives to lawns. Evelyn Hadden, author of *Hellstrip Gardening* and *Beautiful No-Mow Yards* In *The Water-Saving Garden*, Pam Penick repositions water-conscious gardens as a central concern for all gardeners. Rich with inspiring examples and sage advice, this book boldly declares that water-wise gardens no longer need to be about sacrifice or compromise, but pleasure and abundance. An excellent resource for gardens in any climate. Thomas Rainer, landscape architect and co-author of *Planting in a Post-Wild World* We all need access to nature for our well-being. Pam Penick has written a useful guide for creating beautiful gardens where saving water naturally follows. Steve Martino, landscape architect  
In an era of drought and unpredictable weather patterns, *The Water-Saving Garden* could not come at a better time. With striking photographs and a designer's eye, Penick shows us just how gorgeous a water-wise garden can be. This is the must-have garden book of the year! Amy Stewart, author of *The Drunken Botanist* and *Wicked Plants*  
About the Author  
PAM PENICK is a garden designer, award-winning blogger, and the author of *Lawn Gone!* She is a contributor to such magazines as *Fine Gardening*, *Organic Life*, and *Garden Design*, and has received several writing awards from the Garden Writers Association. She lives and gardens in water-challenged Austin, Texas.  
Excerpt. Reprinted by

permission. All rights reserved. Introduction Water is easy to take for granted in our country. Gushing from the faucet at the touch of a lever or twist of a knob, the most precious resource in the world clean drinking water gurgles into our homes like magic. Our great-grandparents may have hand-pumped a well, and their ancestors lugged buckets of water from the river. But we were so accustomed to the convenience and availability of fresh water that we design our homes and grade our property to shed water and then pay to pipe it back in and spray it across our yards when rainfall is scarce and often even when it isn't. With a heedlessness born of cheap, plentiful water a supply many regions can no longer count on we run our sprinklers automatically and excessively, carpet our yards with thirsty lawn without regard to climate, and let rainwater and irrigation run off our yards and driveways into the street. This is madness. We must stop treating water as a disposable commodity in our landscapes and gardens and conserve it like the precious, limited resource it is. The specter of drought, which has always haunted the American West, Great Plains, and Southwest, has lately spurred widespread interest in removing water-hogging lawns and an acceptance of drier gardens and native plants. Even in the wetter parts of the country, particularly the mid-Atlantic, Southeast, and Midwest, water conservation is increasingly popular. Combined with a renewed national interest in living more sustainably with less waste of our natural resources, water conservation and, more broadly, water management is now a priority no matter where one lives. This is not to say we must not water our gardens, and it's certainly not to say we must not have a garden. Planting a garden is a way of connecting with the natural rhythms of the seasons and with the earth itself. It's a deeply worthy endeavor that brings beauty into our lives and communities, offers islands of wildlife habitat amid acres of paved urban sprawl, and teaches us the slower virtues of patience and hope in a fast-paced, need-it-yesterday world. A garden is an expression of creativity, and the finest gardens are works of art that excite, delight, or move us. Gardens feed our bodies and our spirits. They soothe us when we're sick or sick at heart. Some can even accomplish that most miraculous feat of all: enticing our increasingly housebound children away from their computers and smartphones to trail their fingers in a pond, follow a butterfly's fluttering path, or explore a mysterious, winding path. All gardens except those consisting only of rocks need water to live. Even cacti cannot live without water. So how do we reconcile our wish to conserve, for those of us in drought-plagued regions, our pressing need to conserve this most essential resource with our desire for a garden, and more than that, for a beautiful garden? We do it by changing the way we garden and by shifting our ideas of what a garden can be and should look like. Just as we've learned to reduce water use indoors by turning off the faucet while we brush our teeth, installing low-flow toilets and showerheads, and waiting until the dishwasher is full before running a load, we can take similar water-saving measures in our gardens. These include choosing plants well adapted to our climate, irrigating less often and more efficiently, and using water-permeable paving. In addition, we can design gardens that actively collect rainwater and eliminate wasteful runoff. We can even use artistic arrangements of rock and plants to satisfy our sweet tooth for water by evoking the idea of it. Now that's getting creative! This book will show you that a water-saving garden can be so much more than just cacti or succulents, although certainly those can be beautiful too. A garden that sips instead of guzzles can be quite lush if planted with regionally appropriate plants. It's a matter of adjusting expectations of what a garden should be and creating a responsible garden in harmony with nature. It's about accepting the reality of one's climate and gardening accordingly. If you live in a dry-summer climate, acknowledge that your garden will not be as flowery then as in wetter seasons and forgo the thirsty bedding annuals or perennials. If your region is arid, replace the lawn (or at least most of it) with native plants that thrive on rainfall, with occasional irrigation to get through excessively dry periods. It's a commonsense approach with far-reaching impact and the added long-term benefits of saving you money and effort. All it takes is a willingness to garden in tune with local conditions. This may take some experimentation as climate change alters our traditional weather patterns, causing more extreme weather events including flooding and drought, deep freezes and heat waves. But the payoff is a garden that adds value to your life and your community without the burden of guilt about water waste, a garden that is more likely to survive if water shortages mandate watering restrictions, and a garden that gives more than it takes. We'll start in Part One by touring several inspiring water-saving gardens to see what's working, with particular attention to design ideas you can apply to your own yard. In Part Two you'll get practical, DIY-friendly techniques for holding on to rainwater through grading of soil, rain barrels, rain gardens, and water-permeable paving. We'll discuss irrigation, how to decide whether it's needed, and how to water efficiently, and you'll get the dirt on improving your soil's ability to hold water. Shade structures and windbreaks can also make a difference in preserving soil moisture, so we'll explore various ways of blocking sun and wind. Part Three is all about plants. We'll look at alternatives to the ubiquitous, thirsty lawn; how to group plants by watering needs, using native and adapted plants; and the best time of year to plant. Balcony and patio gardeners will appreciate a chapter devoted to saving water in container gardens. In Part Four we'll explore creative ways of adding the illusion of watery abundance in a garden. From dry creeks to stream-like mosaics to contemporary, colored-glass rivers, squeezing water from stone has never been so fun. Like stone, certain plants evoke the idea of water through a cascading or spraying form. In addition, ancient dry-garden traditions like Japanese Zen gardens and Moorish gardens have much to teach us about gardening with less water, and we'll see what can be reinterpreted for today's gardens. Part Five gets you started with a list of 101 plants with drought tolerance for gardens across the country. You'll find a variety of trees, shrubs, perennials, groundcovers, and more, with brief descriptions and growing information to help

you make the right choices for your climate and your gardens specific conditions.