

Water for life

To survive, plants not only need light, air and nutrients but also water. Water enables plants to absorb the nutrients they need. When the soil dries out, the supply of nutrients is cut off.

Lack of water, and therefore lack of nutrients, is most evident in the leaves.

Watering with rainwater has many advantages:

- Saves precious and expensive drinking water.
- Rainwater is often softer (around 5 dH) than tap water (14–18 dH for spring water from Luxembourg sandstone), and many plants cannot tolerate this level of water hardness.
- Over time, tap water can alter the availability of nutrients in the soil.
- High levels of nitrate, chlorine and phosphate in tap water can adversely affect plant growth. However, rainwater has a lower mineral content.
- Collected rainwater takes on the ambient temperature and is not as cold as tap water.



Soil improvement

How and when to water

- Mulch protects the soil from drying out (see **Soil protection with mulch** information sheet).
- Do not water in bright sunlight as the water will evaporate before the plants can absorb it.
- It is best to water in the morning; watering in the evening attracts slugs and snails.
- Water with a well-distributed stream of fine water, close to the ground.
- Use a watering can for targeted watering of certain plants.





Collecting rainwater

The best solution is to collect rainwater from the roof. Here are some tips to ensure safe collection and storage:

- Consider installing a filter to prevent soiling from leaves, dust, bird droppings, etc.
- In the case of metal roofing, the water may be contaminated with copper, for example.
- When the tank is full, overflow stops ensure drainage to the wastewater system.
- Place the tank in the shade: heat and light accelerate the growth of algae and bacteria, removing oxygen from the water.
- Cover barrels and vats to keep water clean, prevent animals from drowning and prevent mosquitoes from breeding.

The City of Luxembourg offers subsidies for the installation of a rainwater collection tank.



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AGE - Leitfaden zum Umgang mit Regenwasser in Siedlungsgebieten Luxemburgs:
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AGE - Unser Trinkwasser - praktische Anleitung:
eau.gouvernement.lu