Yepez Signature Landscape

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Applies to: all plant material installed by Yepez Signature Landscape, LLC. Referenced in Sections 14 and 32 of the Project Contract & Disclaimer.

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Congrats, your new landscape is in! Think of this first year a lot like raising kids. Right now your new plants are the little ones: their roots are still tucked inside the soil they came in, and they're meeting Texas clay and Texas heat for the first time. They need you most in the early days, with frequent water, a watchful eye, and a gentle feeding. Then, little by little, you give them more independence. Raise them right this first year and they'll grow up strong and take care of themselves for years to come. This guide walks you through exactly what to do and when. No parenting books (or green thumb) required.

Quick-Start Card: For a printable two-page summary of these guidelines, see Section 16 or download a copy at yepezlandscapetx.com. **Forms & documents:** The Acknowledgment of Receipt, warranty claim forms, and all related documents are also available at **yepezlandscapetx.com**.

The short version

- **Warranty:** your plants may be covered for 30 days from installation, subject to the supplying nursery's terms and the exclusions in your contract, and only if you follow these guidelines. Section 2
- **Care is yours:** you water and care for your plants as described here, starting on the Installation Date.
- **The early months matter most:** water often at first, then less often but deeper. Section 4
- **Water is the #1 factor:** most plant losses come from too much or too little water, so check the soil before you water. Section 5
- **Something off?** Tell us in writing within 7 days of noticing it, before you cut, spray, or replace anything. Section 12
- **No guarantees:** these are research-based recommendations that give your plants their best chance to thrive, not a promise that every plant will survive. Details

Your year at a glance

Spring
March – May
Cut back grasses and hardy perennials. Feed once new growth starts. Refresh mulch.

Summer
June – September
Water by thirst group. Deadhead. Scout for pests weekly.

Fall
October – November
Ease off watering. Light shaping only. Best season to plant.

Winter
December – February
Water before hard freezes. Cover tender plants. Dormant pruning in late Jan–Feb.

1. Key terms

Installation Date: The day your plants go in the ground. The 30-day plant warranty and your care routine start here.

Completion Date: The day the whole project is finished. The 6-month workmanship warranty starts here.

Warranty window: Days 1–30 after installation, when plant material may be covered under Contract Section 14.

Written notice: An email, Client Hub request, or other written message describing the problem, sent within 7 days of noticing it. A phone call alone doesn't count.

Deep watering: Soaking the root zone. For beds, that means moist 6–8″ deep, which takes about 1¼–1½″ of water in our clay. For trees, it means moist 12–18″ deep, using 2–3 gallons per inch of trunk diameter.

Established: Roots have grown out into your native soil. That takes about 3 months for perennials, 5–7 months for shrubs, and 1–2+ years for trees.

Thirst group: Thirsty, Moderate, or Dry-Lover. It tells you how often each plant needs water.

Trunk diameter: Trunk width measured about 6″ above the soil. It's used to size tree watering.

Deadheading: Snipping off spent blooms to keep new flowers coming.

Dormant pruning: Pruning in late winter (late January–February) while plants are resting.

Transplant shock: Temporary droop, yellowing, or leaf drop in the first 2–4 weeks while roots adjust.

2. Your warranty at a glance

These are the Plant Care Guidelines named in Section 14 of your Project Contract & Disclaimer. Here's how the two fit together, in plain English.

Coverage	How your warranty works (Contract Section 14, in plain English)
Plant material	Warranted for **30 days from the Installation Date**, subject to the warranty terms and discretion of the nursery that supplied the plant. Our liability for plant material is limited to the terms that nursery extends.
Your part	Plant coverage depends on your following these Plant Care Guidelines. Not following them voids the plant material warranty.
Workmanship	Our workmanship is warranted for **6 months from the Completion Date**.
Not covered	Including but not limited to: acts of nature, improper maintenance, neglect, normal wear, pests, disease, and changes made by others. Also not covered: mulch and other biodegradable materials, and materials the client supplied.
Making a claim	Report the problem to us **in writing within 7 days** of becoming aware of it. We may inspect the area and determine the cause before any repair or replacement.

Coverage	How your warranty works (Contract Section 14, in plain English)
What voids it	Any area altered, modified, or serviced by someone other than YSL without our prior written consent.
Routine care	These guidelines are our written consent under Section 14 for routine care you do, or hire out, exactly as described here: watering, pruning, deadheading, and mulching at the times shown; fertilizing, if you choose to, per Section 7 and the label; the first steps listed in Section 11; and irrigation programming or repair by a licensed irrigator. Any other work on installed areas needs our written OK first. This consent doesn't make YSL responsible for work done by others, and damage caused by that work isn't covered.
After day 30	The plant material warranty period ends. Keep following these guidelines to protect your investment.

Separate from your contract: *diagnostic or corrective visits outside the Section 14 warranty may be billed at our standard rates. Ask us for the cost before scheduling.*

Your warranty timeline

Day 0
Installation. Your care routine begins.

Days 1–30
Plant warranty window. Follow Section 3 closely.

Day 30
Plant warranty ends.

Month 6
Workmanship warranty ends (from the Completion Date).

Years 1–2+
Trees become established.

If these guidelines and your signed Project Contract & Disclaimer ever differ, the Project Contract & Disclaimer controls. Sections 8 (Force Majeure) and 16 (Limitation of Liability) also apply. See also Section 15.

3. Your first 30 days

These 30 days are your warranty window and the most important stretch of your landscape's life. Roots are still confined to the original root ball, which dries out much faster than the soil around it.

Your 30-day checklist

- ☐ **Water** on the establishment schedule (Section 4). In 90°F+ heat, perennials and annuals may need water daily for the first 2 weeks.
- ☐ **Check** soil moisture before every watering with a moisture meter or your finger, at the depth listed for its thirst group (for new shrubs and trees, check the root ball 6″ down with a meter).
- ☐ **Recommended (not required for your warranty):** a root stimulator per the label (we use Fertilome Root Stimulator & Plant Starter Solution; an equivalent product is fine). Skip granular fertilizer for the first 8 weeks (Section 7).
- ☐ **Mulch** 2–3″ deep, pulled a few inches back from stems and trunks.
- ☐ **Irrigation:** confirm every zone actually reaches the new plants. A new bed usually needs its own schedule.
- ☐ **Log it** below. It takes seconds and helps us evaluate any warranty question quickly.
- ☐ **Report** anything that looks wrong in writing within 7 days (Section 12).

30-day watering log

Date	Watered?	How long / how much	Meter reading	Notes (heat, rain, how plants look)

Tip: snap a photo of your beds each week. Photos plus this log make it easy to show exactly what happened.

4. The establishment schedule

Watering often at first, then gradually stretching it out, trains roots to grow deep into your soil. In weeks 1–8, the goal is to keep the root ball and the soil right around it moist. Perennials and annuals have small root balls, so about ½″ of water each time is enough. Shrubs need about 1″, and trees get the gallons listed. From month 3 on, switch to full deep waterings. Frequencies assume warm weather (80°F+) unless noted. In cool months, water about half as often, and always check the soil first.

Plant type	Weeks 1–2	Weeks 3–8	Month 3 until established	Time to establish
Perennials & annuals	Daily to every other day in 90°F+ heat; every 2–3 days in mild weather. About ½″ of water each time.	Every 2–3 days, about ½″ each time	Once a week, 1¼–1½″. In 100°F+ stretches, split it into about ¾–1″ twice a week.	About 3 months
Shrubs	Every 2 days: about 1″ of water each time. That's about 1 gallon for a 3-gallon shrub, or 2–3 gallons for larger shrubs.	Every 3–4 days, about 1″ each time	Once a week, 1¼–1½″. In 100°F+ stretches, split it into about ¾–1″ twice a week.	5–7 months
Trees	Every 2 days, or at least 3× per week: 2–3 gallons per inch of trunk diameter	2–3× per week	June–Sept: 2–3× per week. Other months: see Section 6	1–2+ years (see Section 6)

Also during establishment

- **Days 1–30 (recommended, not required):** a root stimulator per the label, such as Fertilome Root Stimulator. No granular fertilizer yet. Some leaf drop is normal.
- **Weeks 3–8:** look for new growth. It means the roots are moving out into your soil.
- **After about 8 weeks (April–August):** recommended first light feeding with a balanced granular fertilizer, such as Fertilome Gardener's Special (Section 7).
- **Once established:** switch to the seasonal watering chart (Section 5).

Schedules are drawn from University of Florida establishment research (Gilman; Scheiber), Texas A&M Forest Service tree guidance, and Texas A&M AgriLife, and adjusted for our slower-draining clay. A hot, windy week near 100°F needs more water. A rainy week needs none. The soil has the final say, not the calendar.

5. Watering done right

What "deep watering" means, by the numbers

- **Beds (perennials, annuals, shrubs, grasses):** the target is soil moist **6–8 inches deep**. Texas A&M research shows 1 inch of water soaks about 12″ into sand, but clay needs about 2½ inches to reach that depth. In our clay, that works out to about **1¼–1½ inches of water** per deep watering. Measure it with an empty tuna can set in the bed. One inch of water equals about 0.6 gallon per square foot.
- **Split it up:** clay takes water in slowly. Run it in 2 shorter cycles, 30–60 minutes apart, so it soaks in instead of running off.
- **Thirsty plants** (hydrangea, ferns, annuals, and similar) have shallower roots, so they do better with about 1″ every 3–4 days in summer than with one big soak.
- **Hand-watering one shrub:** during establishment, aim for about 1″ of water over the root zone each time. That's about 1 gallon for a 3-gallon shrub (1″ over a 1½-ft-wide circle around the plant), or 2–3 gallons for 7–15-gallon shrubs (1″ over a 2–2½-ft-wide circle), applied slowly. Once established, shrubs get the full 1¼–1½″ deep watering. In University of Florida research, about ¾ gallon every 4 days kept 3-gallon shrubs alive, and more frequent watering grew them faster.
- **Trees: 2–3 gallons per inch of trunk diameter** per watering (Texas A&M Forest Service; University of Florida), soaking the root zone 12–18 inches deep. A 2″ trunk gets 4–6 gallons.
- **Check your work (trees and large shrubs):** before watering, push in a long screwdriver. If it won't go 6–8″ easily, it's time to water (Texas A&M Forest Service). After watering, the probe should slide easily to your target depth. Where it stops is where the dry soil starts.
- **Go slow:** use a hose at a trickle, a soaker hose, drip, or a 5-gallon bucket with small holes drilled in the bottom.

The rules

- **Check before you water.** For beds and established shrubs, test at the depth listed for each thirst group (1–4″). For new shrubs and trees, also check the root ball 6″ down with a meter or screwdriver. Dry means water. Moist means wait.

- **Deep, not daily, once established.** Texas A&M AgriLife advises never watering established plants daily. For most plants, water once a week or every 3–4 days (Dry-Lovers less often). Daily watering keeps roots shallow and washes nutrients away.
- **Mornings win.** Water before 10 a.m. Less water evaporates, and wet leaves dry out before evening, which helps prevent fungus.
- **Water the soil, not the leaves.** Aim at the root zone.
- **Rain counts.** An inch or more of rain counts as a watering. Skip your next one.
- **Irrigation systems.** Programming and seasonal adjustment are yours. If we installed your system, report defects to us in writing during the 6-month workmanship warranty. Otherwise, any licensed irrigator can service it, and we're happy to recommend one.

Do perennials really need water every 3–4 days?

New perennials need it more often, and established ones don't. During establishment (roughly the first 3 months), perennials need frequent water: daily to every other day in the first 2 weeks of summer heat, every 2–3 days through week 8, then about once a week at 1¼–1½″ (split into two waterings of ¾–1″ in 100°F+ stretches).

Once established, Texas A&M AgriLife recommends about 1 inch of water per week, applied **once a week or every 3–4 days, never daily**. NC State Extension notes that beds in clay may need water only once a week. University of Florida research found that newly planted perennials watered every 2–3 days performed as well as those watered daily, while daily watering sent more water and fertilizer below the roots. In long 100°F+ stretches, lean toward every 3–4 days for Thirsty and Moderate plants, and let your moisture meter decide.

Recommended tool: a soil moisture meter

It takes the guesswork out of watering, especially in our heavy clay, which can look dry on top while it's soggy underneath. Get a probe-style meter with a long probe (8–12″) so it reaches shrub and tree root balls. Find one on Amazon (search "long probe soil moisture meter"), or ask the team at Fuller's Nursery in Greenville. Typical readings: **1–3 dry** (water), **4–7 moist** (wait), **8–10 wet** (skip it, and check drainage).

Know your plant's thirst group

Thirst group	Your plants	Rule of thumb
Thirsty	Japanese Maple, Azalea, Hydrangea, Canna Lily, Elephant Ear, Ferns (Holly, Autumn, Wood), Annuals	About 1″ every 3–4 days in summer. Keep evenly moist, never soggy, and water when the top 1–2″ is dry. Afternoon shade and mulch help.

Thirst group	Your plants	Rule of thumb
Moderate	Crape Myrtle (tree form), Magnolia (Southern, 'Little Gem'), Redbud, Abelia, Crape Myrtle (shrub / dwarf), Indian Hawthorn, Knock Out Rose, Loropetalum, Arborvitae, Barberry, Boxwood, Holly (Burford, Nellie R. Stevens, etc.), Nandina, Privet / Ligustrum (Japanese, Waxleaf), Wax Myrtle, Black-eyed Susan, Daylily, Mexican Petunia, Asian Jasmine, Liriope	About one deep watering (1¼–1½″) per week in summer. Water when the top 2–3″ is dry.
Dry-Lover	Vitex, Desert Willow, Texas Sage, Dwarf Yaupon Holly, Juniper, Agave, Yucca (incl. Color Guard), Red Yucca (Hesperaloe), Coneflower (Echinacea), Gaura, Rosemary, Russian Sage, Salvia, autumn sage (greggii), Esperanza (Yellow Bells), Lantana, Turk's Cap, Muhly Grass	Once established, overwatering is the #1 killer. Water only when the soil is dry 3–4″ down.

Seasonal watering chart *(established plants)*

Group	Spring (Mar–May)	Summer (Jun–Sep)	Fall (Oct–Nov)	Winter (Dec–Feb)
Thirsty	About weekly	Every 3–4 days, about 1″ each time; check the soil every couple of days in 100°F+ heat	About weekly	Every 3–4 weeks if dry
Moderate	Every 7–10 days	Once a week, 1¼–1½″. In 100°F+ stretches, about ¾–1″ twice a week.	Every 10–14 days	Every 3–4 weeks if dry
Dry-Lover	Every 2–3 weeks	Every 7–14 days, only when dry 3–4″ down	Every 3–4 weeks	Only in long dry spells
Annuals in beds	About weekly	About 2× per week in clay beds, about 1″ each time. Containers: daily.	About weekly	Cool-season annuals: every 1–2 weeks if dry
Trees	See Section 6	See Section 6	See Section 6	See Section 6

Rain counts toward these totals. The Dry-Lover intervals come from YSL field experience with these Texas-adapted plants, and the rest are YSL's adaptation of Texas A&M and NC State guidance for our clay.

6. Watering your trees

Trees take the longest to establish. The Texas A&M Forest Service says at least two growing seasons, and University of Florida research estimates several months per inch of trunk diameter, depending on climate. They're also the most expensive plants to lose. Each tree watering is **2–3 gallons per inch of trunk diameter**, applied slowly. During extreme drought, the Forest Service's minimum is 1–2 gallons per inch.

Tree age	June – September	March – May & October	November – February
First year (after week 8)	**2–3× per week**	Weekly, or 2× per week in heat, guided by the screwdriver test	Every 2–3 weeks if dry

Tree age	June – September	March – May & October	November – February
Second year	1–3× per week, guided by the screwdriver test	Every 1–2 weeks if dry	About monthly if dry
Established (year 3+)	Every 2–3 weeks during extreme drought. Established trees without stress signs don't need extra water.	Only in long dry spells	Only in long dry spells

Is watering a tree every 2 weeks enough?

For an established tree, yes, even in a drought. The Texas A&M Forest Service recommends deep watering mature trees about every 2–3 weeks during extreme drought.

For a young or newly planted tree in summer, no. The Forest Service recommends young trees get 2–3 gallons per inch of trunk diameter, **2–3 times per week**, in normal summer conditions. Even in extreme drought, when watering is restricted, it recommends at least 1–2 gallons per inch of trunk diameter once a week. A root ball left dry for two weeks in July is one of the quickest ways to lose a new tree.

Water around the root ball and out toward the edge of the canopy, not against the trunk. Keep 2–3″ of mulch spread wide under the tree, pulled a few inches back from the trunk, and never piled into a "mulch volcano."

7. Feeding your plants

Recommendations, not warranty requirements

Feeding is recommended to help your plants thrive, but it isn't required to keep your plant warranty. You won't lose coverage for skipping a root stimulator or fertilizer. If you do feed, follow the product label and the timing below, because feeding too early or too heavily can harm new roots.

New roots burn easily, so feeding starts gentle and builds up. The products below are the ones we recommend, available at Fuller's Nursery in Greenville. Equivalent products are fine.

Product	When	How
Root stimulator e.g., Fertilome Root Stimulator & Plant Starter Solution	Days 1–30 after planting	Mix and apply as a soil drench per the label. Recommended, not required. It's labeled to help reduce transplant shock and encourage early root growth.
Balanced granular fertilizer e.g., Fertilome Gardener's Special 11-15-11	Recommended, not required. Basic nutrition: once in spring after new growth starts (around April) and at least 8 weeks after planting, and optionally again in early summer. Last feeding by late August.	Scatter at label rates keeping it off stems. Water it in well. Light or no feeding for Dry-Lovers.

- **Azaleas** need an acid-forming azalea/camellia fertilizer instead of an all-purpose one. Ask Fuller's which product they carry.
- No high-nitrogen or "weed & feed" products in beds. They can burn roots and harm ornamentals.
- Don't fertilize a plant that's wilting or stressed. Water first and let it recover.
- More isn't better. Always follow the label.

8. Seasonal care calendar

Spring *March – May*

- Finish cutting back grasses, liriope, salvia, Russian sage, ferns, and Turk's cap by early March.
- Tender perennials (lantana, canna, esperanza, elephant ear, Mexican petunia): wait for new green growth before judging freeze damage.
- Recommended: feed with a balanced granular fertilizer, such as Fertilome Gardener's Special, once new growth starts (around April).
- Refresh mulch to 2–3″. Keep it pulled back from trunks and stems.
- Turn irrigation back on and check every zone for leaks, broken heads, and dry spots.
- Prune spring bloomers right after they flower: azalea, Indian hawthorn, loropetalum, and redbud. Lightly shape Texas sage in early to mid-spring.
- After the last freeze (mid-to-late March), cut lantana and esperanza back to live wood, and Mexican petunia to the ground.

Summer *June – September*

- Switch to the summer column of the watering chart and the tree schedule. This is when most losses happen.
- Afternoon wilting that recovers by evening is a normal heat response. Check the soil before adding water.
- Skip heavy pruning because it stresses plants in the heat. Deadhead salvia, vitex, daylily, coneflower, black-eyed Susan, and lantana. Deadheading roses is optional for Knock Outs.
- Prune bigleaf and oakleaf hydrangeas only right after they flower, and finish by the end of July.
- Scout weekly for spider mites and bagworms (juniper, arborvitae), lace bugs (azalea), powdery mildew and bark scale (crape myrtle), and leaf scorch (Japanese maple, hydrangea, ferns).
- Apply the last fertilizer of the year by late August.

Fall *October – November*

- Water less as temperatures drop, but keep watering during dry spells. Fall is prime root-growing season.
- Light shaping only. Heavy pruning after late summer pushes out tender growth that won't harden before our first freeze (about mid-November).
- Leave most perennial stems standing through winter because they protect the crowns (see Section 9 for exceptions).
- Top up mulch before the first freeze, which usually comes around mid-November here.

Winter *December – February*

- Water deeply 1–2 days before a hard freeze. Moist soil holds heat better than dry soil.
- In a dry winter: Thirsty and Moderate plants every 3–4 weeks, first-year trees every 2–3 weeks, and Dry-Lovers only in long dry spells (see the watering charts). Set irrigation to skip freezing days.
- Cover tender plants (young agave, lantana, canna, elephant ear, rosemary) with frost cloth during hard freezes, and remove it once temperatures rise.
- Dormant pruning window (late January–February): crape myrtle, vitex, desert willow, holly, abelia, wax myrtle, nandina, and privet.
- Late February: cut back liriope, muhly grass, Russian sage, salvia, gaura, and Knock Out roses.
- Don’t judge freeze damage until spring. Scratch a stem with your fingernail. If it’s green underneath, the plant is alive.

9. Plant-by-plant quick reference

The plants we install most in Northeast Texas, with their thirst group, pruning timing, and the problems worth watching for.

Pruning rules of thumb

- **Spring and early-summer bloomers bloom on last year’s wood** (azalea, Indian hawthorn, loropetalum, redbud, bigleaf hydrangea), so prune right after they flower.
- **Summer bloomers bloom on new wood** (crape myrtle, vitex, abelia, roses), so prune in late winter.
- **Never remove more than ⅓** of a shrub in one year, or about ¼ of a mature tree’s canopy.
- **Renewal pruning:** remove the oldest ⅓ of canes at ground level, instead of shearing the top.
- **Cut to a bud or side branch** and never leave stubs. Clean your tools between plants, especially roses.
- **Go light after late summer.** New growth needs time to harden before our first freeze (about mid-November).

Sources: Texas A&M Earth-Kind “Proper Pruning Techniques”; NC State Extension “General Pruning Techniques.”

Plant	Thirst	When & how to prune	Watch for
Ornamental trees			
Crape Myrtle (tree form)	Moderate	Late January–February (blooms on new wood). Remove suckers at the base, crossing or rubbing limbs, and twiggy inner growth. Never top the trunks (“crape murder”). Remove no more than ¼ of the canopy in a year.	Powdery mildew; crape myrtle bark scale (white felt, black sooty bark); aphids.

Plant	Thirst	When & how to prune	Watch for
Vitex	Dry-Lover	Late winter (new wood). Thin crowded limbs, or cut back hard each winter to keep it shrub-sized. Deadhead spent spikes right after bloom for a second flush in about 6 weeks.	Root rot in soggy clay.
Desert Willow	Dry-Lover	Late winter: light thinning and deadwood only.	Overwatering and poor drainage. It's far more likely to suffer from too much water than too little.
Japanese Maple	Thirsty	While dormant in winter: dead, crossing, or rubbing branches only. Keep pruning minimal.	Leaf scorch (crispy edges) from sun and wind. Needs steady moisture and afternoon shade.
Magnolia (Southern, 'Little Gem')	Moderate	Minimal. Remove dead or crossing limbs in late winter, or shape lightly right after flowering.	Shallow roots, so don't dig or pile soil under the canopy. Scale insects with sooty mold; yellowing leaves (iron chlorosis).
Redbud	Moderate	Right after spring bloom (blooms on old wood). Light thinning only.	Canker on stressed trees; leafroller caterpillars; drought stress in its first summers.
Flowering shrubs (prune by bloom time)			
Abelia	Moderate	Late winter (new wood). Every 2–3 years, remove the oldest ⅓ of canes at ground level.	Few problems; occasional aphids.
Azalea	Thirsty	Right after spring bloom, finished by early July (old wood). Light shaping only.	Needs acidic, well-drained soil (raised beds). Our alkaline clay causes yellow leaves (iron chlorosis). Lace bugs (pale, speckled leaves); root rot in soggy spots. Never let it dry out.
Crape Myrtle (shrub / dwarf)	Moderate	Late winter: remove seed heads, tips, and dead or crossing stems. Don't cut it back to stubs.	Powdery mildew; crape myrtle bark scale; aphids.
Hydrangea	Thirsty	Bigleaf and oakleaf (old wood): right after blooms fade, finished by the end of July. Remove spent heads and a few of the oldest canes. Panicle and smooth types, like 'Annabelle' (new wood): late winter.	Afternoon wilting and leaf scorch. Needs afternoon shade and steady water.
Indian Hawthorn	Moderate	Right after spring bloom. It sets next year's buds over the summer. Light shaping only.	Entomosporium leaf spot (red-purple spots, then leaf drop). Water at the base, never overhead, and rake up fallen leaves.
Knock Out Rose	Moderate	Mid-to-late February, after hard freezes: cut back by ⅓–½. Deadheading is optional.	Black spot. Rose rosette disease (red, bunched "witches' broom" growth, excessive thorns) spreads, and affected plants must be removed.

Plant	Thirst	When & how to prune	Watch for
Loropetalum	Moderate	Right after spring bloom. Remove up to ⅓.	Yellow leaves with green veins (iron chlorosis), common in our alkaline clay.
Texas Sage	Dry-Lover	Early to mid-spring, lightly. Don't shear it into balls (that cuts the blooms), and don't prune in fall.	Overwatering and poor drainage; cotton root rot (sudden summer wilt and death).
Evergreen & hedge shrubs			
Arborvitae	Moderate	Light shearing of new growth, spring through early summer. Never cut into bare interior wood because it won't grow back.	Spider mites and bagworms, both common in North Texas heat. Needs good drainage. Some browning after a hard freeze.
Barberry	Moderate	Late winter or after spring growth. Remove up to ⅓, and wear gloves.	Leaf spot in wet weather. Generally tough.
Boxwood	Moderate	Shear lightly after the spring growth flush. Keep the base wider than the top so the lower leaves get light.	Shallow roots dry out fast. Root rot in poorly drained clay; winter bronzing; leafminers.
Dwarf Yaupon Holly	Dry-Lover	Shear in late winter, and lightly again in early summer if needed.	A very tough Texas native. Overwatering is the main risk.
Holly (Burford, Nellie R. Stevens, etc.)	Moderate	Late winter for shaping, with a light touch-up in early summer. Berries form on last year's wood, so heavy pruning means fewer berries.	Scale insects; spider mites in heat; yellowing leaves (iron chlorosis).
Juniper	Dry-Lover	Spring: tip-prune only. Never cut into bare interior wood.	Bagworms (small cone-shaped cocoons); spider mites; tip blight; soggy soil.
Nandina	Moderate	Late winter: remove the oldest ⅓ of canes at staggered heights. Don't shear.	Listed as invasive in Texas because it spreads by seed, so pull any seedlings. Berries can be toxic to birds and pets, so berry-free dwarf types are best.
Privet / Ligustrum (Japanese, Waxleaf)	Moderate	Heavier shaping in late winter (up to ⅓); light shearing through summer.	Whiteflies and scale with sooty mold. Some privets spread invasively in Texas, so pull any seedlings from dropped berries.
Wax Myrtle	Moderate	Late winter: shape and remove suckers. Tolerates light pruning most of the year.	Few pests. Can be damaged in very hard freezes, and it suckers at the base.
Succulents & desert accents			
Agave	Dry-Lover	Remove dead lower leaves only.	Rot from overwatering, so it needs sharp drainage in clay. Agave snout weevil (sudden collapse).
Yucca (incl. Color Guard)	Dry-Lover	Remove dead lower leaves and spent bloom stalks anytime.	Rot from overwatering. Sharp leaf tips.

Plant	Thirst	When & how to prune	Watch for
Red Yucca (Hesperaloe)	Dry-Lover	Cut spent bloom stalks at the base.	Very few problems. Don't overwater.
Hardy perennials			
Black-eyed Susan	Moderate	Deadhead through summer; cut back to the base in late winter.	Powdery mildew; leaf spot in humid weather.
Coneflower (Echinacea)	Dry-Lover	Deadhead, or leave seed heads for the birds. Cut back in late winter.	Crown rot in wet clay; powdery mildew.
Daylily	Moderate	Remove spent flower stalks; cut foliage back after a freeze; divide every 3–5 years.	Daylily rust; aphids; thrips.
Gaura	Dry-Lover	Cut back by half after the first big bloom; cut to the base in late winter.	Rots in wet clay, so it needs drainage. Naturally short-lived (3–5 years).
Rosemary	Dry-Lover	Lightly, after the spring bloom. Don't cut into old bare wood.	Root rot in wet clay, so it needs excellent drainage. Can be damaged in hard freezes.
Russian Sage	Dry-Lover	Cut to 6–12″ in late winter, once new growth appears at the base.	Flops and rots in rich or wet soil.
Salvia, autumn sage (greggii)	Dry-Lover	Trim back by ⅓ in late winter; lightly trim mid-summer for fall blooms. Comes in red, hot pink/fuchsia, coral, and salmon.	Leggy growth; root rot in soggy beds.
Tender perennials (die back in freezes)			
Canna Lily	Thirsty	After frost blackens the leaves, cut to the ground, or leave until March for extra crown protection. Remove spent blooms in summer.	Canna leaf roller (rolled, chewed leaves). Needs steady water.
Elephant Ear	Thirsty	After frost, cut to the ground and mulch heavily over the roots.	Tropical. It may not return after a hard winter. A heavy feeder and drinker, and its sap can irritate skin.
Esperanza (Yellow Bells)	Dry-Lover	Leave frost-killed stems until after the last freeze (mid-to-late March), then cut back to live wood.	May return if its roots are mulched, but in hard winters it can act like an annual.
Lantana	Dry-Lover	Leave frost-killed stems until after the last freeze (mid-to-late March), then cut back to live wood. Don't cut back in fall.	Freeze die-back (normal); whiteflies; powdery mildew.
Mexican Petunia	Moderate	Cut to the ground after the last freeze. Pull runners that escape the bed.	Listed as invasive in Texas: it spreads by seed and runners. Consider dwarf types like 'Katie'.
Turk's Cap	Dry-Lover	Cut to the ground in late winter.	Very few problems. A tough Texas native.

Plant	Thirst	When & how to prune	Watch for
Grasses, groundcover & ferns			
Asian Jasmine	Moderate	Mow or cut back to 3–4″ in late winter every year or two; edge it regularly.	Very tough. Iron chlorosis in alkaline soil.
Ferns (Holly, Autumn, Wood)	Thirsty	Late winter: cut out tattered fronds before new fiddleheads emerge.	Needs shade and steady moisture. Scorches in afternoon sun.
Liriope	Moderate	Cut to 3–4″ in late winter, before new shoots emerge.	Crown rot in wet spots; snails and slugs.
Muhly Grass	Dry-Lover	Cut to 4–6″ in late winter.	Very few problems. Don’t overwater.
Seasonal color			
Annuals	Thirsty	Deadhead spent blooms to keep flowers coming.	Shallow roots dry out fastest, especially in containers. Expect about one season (roughly 3–6 months).

Don’t see your plant? Ask us, and follow its thirst group in the meantime.

10. Normal, not a defect

Plants are living things. None of the following is a defect or a warranty issue:

- **Transplant shock:** some leaf drop, yellowing, or droop in the first 2–4 weeks.
- **Winter die-back:** lantana, canna, elephant ear, esperanza, Mexican petunia, Turk’s cap, and some salvias die back in a freeze. Most return from the roots in spring, but tropicals like elephant ear may not survive a hard winter.
- **Seasonal leaf drop:** crape myrtle, vitex, desert willow, Japanese maple, redbud, hydrangea, and Russian sage lose their leaves every fall. Southern magnolias and hollies also shed some older leaves in spring as new growth comes in.
- **Winter color:** ornamental grasses and liriope turn tan until they’re cut back. Some junipers and arborvitae bronze in the cold.
- **Natural life cycles:** gaura often lives only 3–5 years, and most agaves bloom once (often after many years) and then die, usually leaving pups behind.
- **Natural variation:** bloom color, size, timing, and growth rate vary somewhat between plants of the same variety.
- **Mulch breaks down:** it needs topping up every year. That’s routine maintenance and isn’t covered by the warranty (Contract Section 14).

11. When something looks wrong

Identify the problem before you treat it. Most stress comes down to water, so check the soil first. Don’t apply pesticides, fungicides, or fertilizers until you’ve confirmed they fit the problem, and always follow the label.

What you see	Likely cause	First step
Wilting, and the soil is dry 2–3″ down	Underwatering	Deep soak now. Check that irrigation actually reaches the plant.
Wilting or yellowing, and the soil is soggy	Overwatering / root rot	Stop watering and let the soil dry. Check drainage and irrigation run times. **Report it to us in writing.**
Droops in the afternoon, perks up by evening	Normal heat response	Check the soil. If it’s moist, don’t add water.
Yellow leaves with green veins	Iron chlorosis (alkaline clay)	Report it to us in writing, then apply a chelated iron product per the label.
Crispy brown leaf edges	Leaf scorch (heat, wind, uneven water)	Water deeply and consistently; keep mulch in place.
White powder on leaves	Powdery mildew	Water at the base, in the morning, and keep air moving around the plant.
Red-purple spots on Indian hawthorn, then leaf drop	Entomosporium leaf spot	Stop overhead watering and rake up fallen leaves. **Report it to us in writing.**
Pale, speckled azalea leaves with dark specks underneath	Lace bugs	**Report it to us in writing.**
Fine webbing or speckled leaves	Spider mites	Spray leaf undersides with a hose. **Report it to us in writing.**
Small cone-shaped cocoons on juniper or arborvitae	Bagworms	Report it to us in writing, then hand-pick and destroy them.
White felt or black sooty bark on crape myrtle	Crape myrtle bark scale	Treatment timing matters. **Report it to us in writing.**
Red, bunched growth and excessive thorns on roses	Rose rosette disease	Don’t prune other roses with the same tools. **Report it to us in writing.**
Sudden wilt and death in mid-summer, soil moist	Possible cotton root rot	Don’t replant in that spot yet. **Report it to us in writing.**

12. When to contact us

Report first. Then treat.

If a plant shows stress beyond what these guidelines describe as normal, contact Yepez Signature Landscape before treating, cutting back, removing, or replacing anything. Problems caught early are usually easier to address. Adjusting your watering and hosing off spider mites are fine anytime.

Your contract requires written notice. Under Section 14, warranty claims must be sent to us in writing within 7 days of your becoming aware of the issue. A phone call is a great place to start, but always follow it with an email or a Client Hub request. We may inspect the area and determine the cause before any repair or replacement.

Missing the 7-day window, or having someone other than YSL alter or service the area without our written consent, can void coverage under Section 14.

Separate from your contract, diagnostic or corrective visits outside the Section 14 warranty may be billed at our standard rates. Ask us for the cost before scheduling.

Phone: (903) 408-0674 **Email:** jose@yepezlandscapetx.com
Client Hub: Client Hub Login (also linked at the top of yepezlandscapetx.com) **Web:** yepezlandscapetx.com

Include with your notice: a photo of the whole plant, a close-up of the problem, your 30-day watering log or current watering schedule, and the date you first noticed it.

13. Acknowledgment of receipt

No signature needed. These Plant Care Guidelines are published at yepezlandscapetx.com. Under Section 14 of the Project Contract & Disclaimer, you're responsible for reviewing and following them. Under Section 32, approving your quote confirms you've had access to them and reviewed them, and that not following them may void the plant material warranty.

The Plant Care Quick-Start Card is a summary for convenience only. It doesn't replace these guidelines, and it isn't used for warranty or legal purposes.

The version that applies to your project is the one published on the date you approved your quote. We may update these guidelines over time, and each version is dated on the cover.

14. Go deeper: sources & further reading

These guidelines follow research-based recommendations from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, the Texas A&M Forest Service, and other land-grant universities, adapted by YSL for Northeast Texas Blackland Prairie clay (USDA Zone 8a). Freeze timing is estimated from nearby weather stations, with a first freeze around mid-November and a last freeze around mid-to-late March.

Watering research

1. Watering Trees During the Texas Drought. Texas A&M Forest Service (Karl Flocke). 2–3 gal per inch of trunk diameter, 2–3× per week for young trees in summer.
2. Watering Trees During Drought. Texas A&M Forest Service. Mature trees every 2–3 weeks in extreme drought; the screwdriver test.
3. Watering Newly Planted Trees. Texas A&M Forest Service. Two growing seasons to establish.
4. How to Water. AgriLife Extension, Dallas County. Month-by-month tree schedule.
5. Know When and How to Water Your Lawn and Garden This Summer. Dr. Larry Stein, Texas A&M AgriLife. About 1″ per week, once a week or every 3–4 days, never daily.
6. So What Constitutes an Effective Rain Event? Texas A&M Earth-Kind (Stein). How deep 1″ of water soaks into sand, loam, and clay.
7. How to Keep Your Lawn and Landscape Alive Through Summer Heat. Dr. Mike Arnold, Texas A&M Horticultural Sciences (2026).
8. Irrigating Trees and Shrubs During Establishment. Dr. Ed Gilman, University of Florida. Gallons per caliper inch; establishment time.
9. Effects of Irrigation Volume and Frequency on Shrub Establishment. Gilman et al., *Journal of Environmental Horticulture* 27(3), 2009.
10. Watering to Establish Shrubs. University of Florida IFAS.
11. Herbaceous Perennial Irrigation Research (Scheiber, Beeson, Gilman). USDA-NIFA project, University of Florida. Establishment frequency trials.
12. Extension Gardener Handbook, Ch. 10: Herbaceous Ornamentals. NC State Extension.
13. Watering Trees and Shrubs. University of Arizona Extension. Target root depths; the soil-probe method.

Pruning & plant care

1. Proper Pruning Techniques. Texas A&M Earth-Kind.
2. General Pruning Techniques. NC State Extension.
3. Crape Murder. AgriLife Extension, Williamson County.
4. Crape Myrtle Bark Scale: A New Exotic Pest. AgriLife Extension fact sheet.
5. Texas Lilac Vitex: A Texas Superstar. AgriLife Extension, Bexar County.
6. February Is the Rose Pruning Month. AgriLife Extension, Travis County.
7. Rose Rosette Virus. AgriLife Extension.
8. Texas Sage. Brazos County Master Gardeners (AgriLife).
9. Learn to Live With Ugly After Freeze Damage. AgriLife Today (2024). Leave freeze-damaged stems into March in North Texas.
10. Azalea. Texas Plant Disease Handbook.
11. Entomosporium on Indian Hawthorn. Texas Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab.
12. Cotton Root Rot. Texas Plant Disease Handbook.
13. Straight Talk About Iron Deficiency and Plants. AgriLife Extension, Bexar County.
14. Mexican Petunia. Texas Invasives database.
15. Earth-Kind Plant Selector. Texas A&M. Water-need ratings by species.

16. Freeze Information for North Texas. National Weather Service, Fort Worth.

Further reading

1. Texas Gardener Magazine. Texas gardening magazine published since 1981. Practical, Texas-specific seasonal tips. Consumer magazine, not peer-reviewed.
2. Texas Master Gardener Program. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension volunteer program.

Products referenced

1. Fertilome Root Stimulator & Plant Starter Solution. Product information sheet.
2. Fertilome Gardener's Special 11-15-11. Label rates and uses.
3. Fuller's Nursery, Greenville, TX. 4701 Stonewall St. · (903) 422-3380.

Product mentions are recommendations only. YSL isn't affiliated with these brands or retailers. Always read and follow product labels.

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15. Recommendations, not a guarantee

These guidelines are recommendations based on research from Texas A&M and other universities and on our own field experience. Following them gives your plants their best chance to thrive, but no care plan can guarantee that every plant will survive or perform a certain way. Weather, soil conditions, pests, disease, and each plant's own health are beyond anyone's full control.

Following these guidelines is required to keep the 30-day plant material warranty in effect. It does not extend or expand that warranty or any other term of your Project Contract & Disclaimer.

If these guidelines and your signed Project Contract & Disclaimer ever differ, the Project Contract & Disclaimer controls. Sections 8 (Force Majeure) and 16 (Limitation of Liability) also apply.

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16. Quick-Start Card

Our 2-page Plant Care Quick-Start Card sums up the essentials in one place, so it's easy to keep on the fridge or by the hose. It's posted alongside these guidelines at yepezlandscapetx.com.

The card is a convenience, not a replacement. It doesn't cover everything in these guidelines. For warranty and legal purposes, these full Plant Care Guidelines, together with your Project Contract & Disclaimer, are the only documents that apply. If the card and these guidelines ever differ, these guidelines control.

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