



Suggested Weekly Irrigation Schedule

The following chart suggests a weekly schedule for spray-head irrigation, assuming clay soils common to San Clemente. Generally, the times indicated below are the MAXIMUM times you will need for full sun areas. Start with this schedule and customize it based on the needs of your landscape. Increase the times only if your plants show signs of stress. If stress occurs only in isolated areas, check your irrigation system (e.g. crooked heads, blocked spray patterns, leaks, etc) before increasing run-times.

MONTH	TURFGRASS	TREES, SHRUBS & GROUNDCOVER	% OPTION*	NOTES
January & February	2 days, 2 cycles** of 2 minutes	1 day, 2 cycles of 3 minutes	30%	Turn water off before it rains and let soil dry before turning water on again.
March	3 days, 2 cycles of 3 minutes	2 days, 2 cycles of 3 minutes	50%	March/April is the most active growth period for grass and other plants.
April	3 days, 2 cycles of 4 minutes	2 days, 2 cycles of 4 minutes	70%	
May	3 days, 3 cycles of 3 minutes	2 days, 3 cycles of 3 minutes	80%	
June	3 days, 2 cycles of 5 minutes	3 days, 2 cycles of 3 minutes	100%	
July & August	4 days, 3 cycles of 3 minutes	2 days, 3 cycles of 4 minutes	100%	
September	4 days, 2 cycles of 3 minutes	2 days, 2 cycles of 4 minutes	70%	In September, plant water needs drop by ~30% even if the temperature remains hot because the days are shorter, so evaporation decreases. Also, plants begin to go into a dormant phase where they need less water. This rapid drop in water needs will continue in Oct-Nov.
October	3 days, 2 cycles of 3 minutes	2 days, 2 cycles of 3 minutes	50%	
November	2 days, 2 cycles of 3 minutes	1 day, 2 cycles of 4 minutes	40%	
December	2 days, 2 cycles of 2 minutes	1 day, 2 cycles of 3 minutes	30%	

* Most newer automatic controllers have a “% option” button or dial (or called the “Water Budget” feature on some controllers) that permits the watering run times for all electric irrigation valves managed by that controller to be increased or decreased with just one adjustment by percentage. The initial watering schedule is made for the July/August runtime, the 100% water need for plants in summer. As an example, if it were November, the % Option feature would need to be manually turned to 40% in order to automatically reduce the summer schedule and to save water.

** By “cycling” the irrigation controller to turn on for the recommended number of minutes at least half an hour apart, deeper watering and healthier root growth are gained, while runoff is reduced.