

GREEN GARDENER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL



INSTRUCTIONS

This self-assessment tool is designed to help you evaluate your own landscaping practices at your own sites, and to identify ways to improve them. The scores from this tool will be used to determine if the Green Gardening techniques taught in class are practiced in the field. The scores are not used to compare one student to another. Therefore, there is not a minimum score for Green Gardening practices.

When considering these questions, answer based upon a single landscape site that you manage - one that demonstrates the majority of your Green Gardening practices. Do not answer based upon techniques practiced at multiple sites, unless the question specifically asks for this information.

Each heading describes the Green Gardening curriculum topic, e.g **IRRIGATION**, and a general exercise on which several questions will be based. In the example provided, answer how often you troubleshoot the irrigation system at your one selected site. Choose the answer that best describes your practices. At the bottom of each answer is a score (1, 4, 7). Write that score in the box to the right.

IRRIGATION

<i>Exercise: Evaluate your irrigation practices</i>					
18	I troubleshoot my irrigation system:	Never, or about once per year	About twice per year	Quarterly or more often	
	Score:	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>

Intermediate scores

If your best answer falls between two columns, you may select a number from between the two scores. For example, in the example below a score of '4' is selected if you change the irrigation scheduling four times per year, and a score of '7' is selected if you adjust monthly or more often. If your practices fall between quarterly and monthly, you might score a '5' or a '6'. If your practices fall between no adjustment and quarterly, you may score a '2' or a '3'.

21	Irrigation Scheduling	I don't adjust the scheduling	I adjust the scheduling four times per year	I use a smart controller on my site <u>(or)</u> I adjust monthly according to the Watering Index at sbwater.org <u>(or)</u> I adjust monthly based upon current CIMIS data	
	Score:	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>

(AND) / (or) Qualifiers

Many answers include (AND) / (or) qualifiers.

(AND):

To gain a score from an answer with **(AND)** qualifiers, all elements must be true (*troubleshooting is performed based upon information from soil probes, catch can tests, and a recording of results in the Walk Through Site Evaluation – all must be true for a ‘7’ score*).

17	I troubleshoot my irrigation system:	With major breaks	Based upon observation of dry spots, plant conditions, run off, etc.	Based upon soil probes <u>(AND)</u> Catch can tests <u>(AND)</u> A formal walk-through evaluation (attached)
	<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a 1</i>	<i>Give yourself a 4</i>	<i>Give yourself a 7</i>

(or):

To gain a score from an answer with **(or)** qualifiers, at least one or the other of the statements must be true (*a smart irrigation controller is used on site, or the controller is adjusted monthly according to web based information, or the controller is adjusted monthly according to current CIMIS data – one statement must be true for a score of '7'*).

21	Irrigation Scheduling	I don't adjust the scheduling	I adjust the scheduling four times per year	I use a smart controller on my site <u>(or)</u> I adjust monthly according to the Watering Index at sbwater.org <u>(or)</u> I adjust monthly based upon current CIMIS data
	Score:	<i>Give yourself a 1</i>	<i>Give yourself a 4</i>	<i>Give yourself a 7</i>

Total scores

When all questions have been answered, total the score from each topic into the box at the end of the section. Then transfer these scores to the appropriate boxes on the last page, and add them up for a total score.

Total Score: Irrigation and Scheduling	
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Again, this self-assessment tool is designed to help you in the field, and to help the Green Gardener program measure the effectiveness of our training. The scores are not used to compare one student to another, and there is not a minimum score.

Thank you for helping to improve the Green Gardener Program!

GREEN GARDENER SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

SOIL CONDITIONS

Exercise: Sample the soil from the yard of one or more clients for the following evaluation. Use the three techniques from class (touch, smell, observation) to evaluate the qualities of the soil.

SOIL CONDITIONS	1	Analyze the soil texture by rubbing it between your fingers			
		The Texture of this Soil Is: _____			
	2	Soil texture:	I don't know	I have evaluated the soil texture based upon the feel of the soil between my fingers	I have evaluated the soil texture based upon touch AND I have adjusted plant material and irrigation practices based upon it.
		Score:	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7
					<i>Write your score here:</i>
	3	Analyze the soil organic matter by sight: dark brown soil means higher organic matter, light tan soil means low organic matter			
		The organic matter content for this soil is: (based upon color): <u>Low</u> / <u>Medium</u> / <u>Rich</u>			
	4	Organic matter based upon color	I don't know	I have evaluated the organic mater of the soil based upon the color of this soil	I have evaluated the soil organic matter based upon color AND I have adjusted soil amending and mulching based upon it
	Score:	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	
				<i>Write your score here:</i>	

SOIL CONDITIONS	5	<p>Analyze the soil organic matter by smelling it: A rotten egg smell means compaction and low air circulation, a rich, forest-like smell means high biological activity.</p> <p>The biological activity of this soil is (based upon odor):</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Anaerobic (foul smelling)</u> / <u>Limited Activity (little smell)</u> / <u>High Activity (rich odor)</u></p>			
	6	Soil biological activity based upon odor:	I don't know	I have evaluated the soil biological activity based upon the odor of this soil	I have evaluated the biological activity of the soil AND I have adjusted mulching, aeration, fertilizing and soil amending based upon it
	Score:	Give yourself a 1	Give yourself a 4	Give yourself a 7	Write your score here:
	7	Soil Type and Irrigation: I adjust the irrigation schedule according to the soil type at the site:	I don't	I sometimes adjust the schedule according to soil type	I always adjust my irrigation schedule according to soil type
	Score:	Give yourself a 1	Give yourself a 4	Give yourself a 7	Write your score here:
	Total Score: Soil Conditions				

FERTILIZING

Exercise: Look at the bags of fertilizers that you use, and compare them to the Green Gardener Fertilizer Worksheet (attached) Answer the 'Your Fertilizer' questions (below) for your primary turf and landscape fertilizer (if different)

		Your Fertilizers				
		Turf Fertilizer		Trees / shrubs Fertilizer		
FERTILIZING	8	1. Fertilizer name:		1. Fertilizer name:		
		2. N /P /K numbers:		2. N /P /K numbers:		
		3. Soluble Nitrogen:		3. Soluble Nitrogen:		
		4. Pounds used per application:		4. Pounds used per application:		
		5. Number of applications per year:		5. Number of applications per year:		
		6. Square feet of lawn		6. Square feet of area:		
		Fertilizer knowledge: Based upon 'Your Fertilizers' questions (above)	I can't provide any of this information	I have listed the fertilizer names, N/P/K, and soluble nitrogen for the fertilizers I use	I have answered all of the questions	
		Score:	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	Write your score here:

Selecting And Applying Fertilizers For Water Quality Protection

LAWN FERTILIZERS Product Name		% Soluble Nitro.	Fertilizer Analysis			TURF: per 1,000 sq. feet		
			N	P	K	Pounds Fertilizer / 1,000 sq ft per year	Apps. / year	MAX. Pounds / App.
Whitney Farms lawn Food with Iron		0.5%	8	3	5	38	2	19
Miracle-Gro Lawn Food (dry) (Xtra last)		16.5%	32	3	5	9	2	5
Ringer Lawn Restore		23%	8	2	4	38	3	13
Whitney Farms Lawn Food		25%	8	2	4	38	3	13
NuLife Golden Pellets		49%	21	3	5	14	4	4
Scotts Turf Builder with Iron (slow release)		66%	27	3	4	11	5	2
Super Turf		80%	25	5	5	12	6	2
Turf Supreme		100%	16	6	8	19	8	2
Evergreen Lawn Food		100%	18	4	4	17	8	2
Turf Royale		100%	21	7	14	14	8	2

GENERAL PURPOSE FERTILIZERS Product Name		% Soluble Nitro.	Fertilizer Analysis			TURF: per 1,000 sq. feet		
			N	P	K	Pounds Fertilizer / 1,000 sq ft per year	Apps. / year	MAX. Pounds / App.
Whitney Farms All Purpose		1%	5	5	5	60	2	30
Milorganite		8%	6	2	1	50	2	25
Island Seed and Feed Custom Organic		10%	5	5	4	60	2	30
Peters Season Long All Purpose		20%	15	15	15	20	3	7
Alaska Dry Rose and Flower		30%	5	7	3	60	6	10
Lilly Miller Rose and Flower		52%	5	8	4	60	6	10
Vigoro Rose Food (coated)		49%	15	5	13	20	6	3
Scotts All Purpose		72%	18	13	13	17	6	3
Scotts Rose Food		65%	20	11	12	15	6	3
Lilly Miller All Purpose Planting		80%	10	10	10	30	6	5
Miracle Gro All Purpose		100%	15	30	15	20	8	3
Lilly Miller Lawn & Garden		100%	16	16	16	19	8	2
Maxicrop Liqified Seaweed		100%	1	0	4	<i>Use as foliar and soil biostimulant, pest/disease resistance, micronutrients</i>		
Growmore Seaweed Extract		100%	0.1	0.1	1.5			
Acadian Sea Kelp Extract		100%	1	1	2			

FERTILIZING	9	General	I fertilize all accounts equally on a calendar basis	I fertilize all accounts based upon the recommendations on the bag	I fertilize based upon recognition of deficiency symptoms or a soil / plant tissue analysis	
		<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>
	10	Selecting And Applying Fertilizers	I don't measure the fertilizer <u>(or)</u> I usually fill the fertilizer spreader and run it until it's empty	I apply fertilizers according to label instructions	I select and apply fertilizers for water quality protection by limiting the soluble nitrogen applied at any one time	
		<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>

GRASS CYCLING						
<i>Exercise: Consider your mowing practices</i>						
GRASS CYCLING	11	Grass Cycling	I always collect and dump the grass clippings	I always collect clippings and use them in a mulch / compost pile, and grass cycle	I always grass cycle except for specific circumstances (list below:) <i>Reason:</i> <i>Reason:</i>	
		<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>
Total Score: Fertilizers / Grass Cycle						

MULCH and COMPOST

Exercise: Evaluate your mulching and green waste reduction activities

MULCH	12	Green-waste reduction	I remove most prunings and clippings from the site	The small leaves and clippings are composted or mulched on-site, large material is removed	All greenwaste remains on-site, I rarely take anything off-site	
		<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>
	13	Identify areas where mulch is used for <u>weed suppression</u>	I don't use mulch	1 - 3 inches deep (satisfactory for water conservation, not deep enough for weed suppression) <u>(or)</u> Mulch piled against plant trunk / stem, structures	Mulch is 4 - 6 inches deep and well tended (AND) Mulch is moved away from plant trunk / stem, buildings	
		<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>
	14	Identify areas where mulch is used for <u>water conservation</u>	I don't use mulch	Mulch is spotty, bare ground is showing <u>(or)</u> Mulch is piled against plant trunk / stem, structures	Mulch is 3 inches deep and well tended (AND) Mulch is moved away from plant trunk / stem, structures	
		<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>

COMPOST

Exercise: Evaluate your composting and green waste reduction activities

COMPOST	15	Composting	I don't add compost or use greenwaste from my sites	I put the greenwaste into piles on or off the site to get them out of the way and let them decompose slowly <u>(or)</u> Compost / mulch is generated at another site and brought in	I compost or mulch with all of the greenwaste materials, and manage the compost pile carefully	
		Score:	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>
Total Score: Mulch and Compost						

IRRIGATION

Exercise: Evaluate your irrigation practices

IRRIGATION	16	"Walk Through Site Evaluation": Complete the attached field evaluation	I can not fill in any of the 'Walk Through Site Evaluation'	I have partially completed the 'Walk Through Site Evaluation'	I have completed the 'Walk Through Site Evaluation' for all stations and have identified recommendations	
		<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a 1</i>	<i>Give yourself a 4</i>	<i>Give yourself a 7</i>	<i>Write your score here:</i>
	17	I make repairs to the site's irrigation system:	With major breaks	Based upon observation of dry spots, plant conditions, run off, etc.	Based upon soil probes (AND) _____ Catch can tests (AND) _____ A formal walk-through evaluation (attached)	
		<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a 1</i>	<i>Give yourself a 4</i>	<i>Give yourself a 7</i>	<i>Write your score here:</i>
18	I troubleshoot the site's irrigation system:	Never, or about once per year	About twice per year	Quarterly or more often		
	<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a 1</i>	<i>Give yourself a 4</i>	<i>Give yourself a 7</i>	<i>Write your score here:</i>	

Walk Through Site Evaluation

	Station Number								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Irrigation System and Landscape Description									
Plants									
Plant types: Warm Season, Cool Season, Mix, Dichondra, Ornamental, Drought Tolerant, Vegetables, Trees w/mulch, Ground Cover									
Valves not separated by plant water requirements									
Valves not separated for sun exposure									
Area over-watered									
Dry spots									
Soil compaction – need to aerate									
Excess grass thatch									
Needs mulch									
Sloped area									
Run – off									
Ponding near plants									
System type: Rotor, Spray, Bubbler, Drip									
Sprinkler Systems									
Broken or clogged heads									
Heads/nozzles not matched									
Uneven or extended head spacing									
Low head drainage									
Spray pattern blocked or misdirected									
Incorrect spray arc									
Overspray									
Sunken heads									
Heads not vertical to ground									
Unequal pressure/unequal discharge rate									
Misting due to high pressure									
Low pressure									
Broken/leaking valve or pipe									
Drip Systems									
Pinched or broken tubing									
Tubing pulled off of emitters									
Emitters too close to plant									
Low pressure causes flow vs. drip									
Missing/broken emitters									
Clogged emitters									
High pressure									
Comments: _____ _____									

IRRIGATION	19	Site Evaluation: When setting up an irrigation schedule	I don't set up the irrigation schedule based on site conditions	I set up the schedule according to <u>SOME</u> of the following: - Slope - Texture (clay/sand) - Plant Material - Hydrozones - Sun / Shade	I set up the schedule according to <u>ALL</u> of the following: - Slope - Texture (clay/sand) - Plant Material - Hydrozones - Sun / Shade (AND) I use a scheduling tool, such as the water calculator at www.sbwater.org	
		Score:	Give yourself a 1	Give yourself a 4	Give yourself a 7	Write your score here:
	20	Catch Can Test / Distribution Uniformity (DU):	I have not done a catch-can test	I have performed a catch-can test, determined DU, and set a base irrigation schedule <u>ON ONE LAWN STATION</u>	I have performed catch-can tests, determined DU, and set a base irrigation schedule <u>ON ALL LAWN STATIONS</u>	
		Score:	Give yourself a 1	Give yourself a 4	Give yourself a 7	Write your score here:

IRRIGATION	21	Irrigation Scheduling	I don't adjust the scheduling	I adjust the scheduling four times per year	I use a smart controller on my site <u>(or)</u> I adjust monthly according to a scheduling tool like the Watering Calculator (sbwater.org) <u>(or)</u> I adjust monthly based upon current CIMIS data	
		Score:	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>
		Total Score: Irrigation and Scheduling				

RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE

Exercise: Consider plant placement and selection

RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE	22	Right Plant in the Right Place Field Evaluation: Complete the attached field evaluation	I cannot fill in any of the RPRP Field Evaluation	I have partially completed the RPRP Field Evaluation	I have completed the RPRP Field Evaluation and have identified recommendations	
		Score:	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>
	23	Appropriate plant selection and placement	I do not have any authority over plant selection and placement <u>(or)</u> I do not make recommendations of site-appropriate plants <u>(or)</u> I replace plants with the same type that was removed	When selecting plants I consider the unique water, soil and sun needs <u>(or)</u> I do not have the authority to select plants, but I do make recommendations of appropriate plants to the client or supervisor	I carefully consider the <u>function and the unique water, soil and sun</u> needs of the plants <u>(AND)</u> I fill out a 'Right Plant In the Right Place Field Evaluation' <u>(AND)</u> A plan for corrective steps is created <u>(AND)</u> Plan is discussed with site owner / manager	
			Score:	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7
Total Score: Right Plant, Right Place						

**Right Plant in the Right Place
Field Evaluation**

Client _____
Date _____

Category	Observation	Recommendation
Hydrozones		
Soil Zone		
Wind Zone		
Topographic Zone		
Plant size		
Growth Rate		
Appropriate Trees		
Appropriate Shrubs		

PRUNING

Exercise: Be able to identify and practice proper pruning cuts

PRUNING	24	Pruned forms	Most of the pruning I do is shaping the outer branches and leaves of a plant with power equipment	Most of the pruning I do is a mix of shaping the plant and cutting out dead, diseased, and damaged branches	I rarely need to prune because plants have been selected for their natural form AND Most of the pruning I do is periodically cutting out dead, diseased, and damaged branches	
		<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>
	25	Pruning tools	I rarely oil and sharpen my pruning tools	I periodically oil and sharpen my pruning tools	I regularly inventory, organize, replace and care for my pruning tools	
		<i>Score:</i>	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>
	Total Score: Pruning					

PESTS AND PESTICIDES: Integrated Pest Management - (IPM)

Exercise: Evaluate your pesticide use (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, systemics, weed n' feed, organics, others) and pest management practices

IPM	26	Pesticides	<p>I use pesticides preventatively, or on a scheduled basis (monthly, quarterly, etc) <u>(or)</u></p>	<p>I do not use pesticides of any type because it is not in my job description <u>(or)</u></p>	<p>I do not use pesticides of any type because I promote my landscaping services as 'pesticide free' <u>(or)</u></p>	
			<p>If I see a pest I try to control it quickly, usually with chemicals</p>	<p>I occasionally use pesticides if other efforts fail to control the pest</p>	<p>If pesticides are necessary I select those that have low hazard to humans, beneficial insects, and the environment <u>(AND)</u></p> <p>I change the habitat and my practices to fix the landscape so the pest cannot return</p>	
		Score:	<i>Give yourself a</i> 1	<i>Give yourself a</i> 4	<i>Give yourself a</i> 7	<i>Write your score here:</i>

IPM	27	Applicators license: Qualified Applicators License (QAL) / Qualified Applicators Certificate (QAC)	None	Supervisor has a QAL / QAC	I have a QAL / QAC	
		Score:	<i>Give yourself a 1</i>	<i>Give yourself a 4</i>	<i>Give yourself a 7</i>	<i>Write your score here:</i>
	<p><i>Note: If you are applying pesticides of any kind as a part of your business other than as a full-time employee of a school or association you may be required to hold a pesticide applicators license or certificate. Contact the County Agricultural Commissioners office for information.</i></p>					
	28	Insectary plants	I can not identify an insectary plant	I can identify a couple of insectary plants	I intentionally plant insectary plants in strategic spots in the landscape	
		Score:	<i>Give yourself a 1</i>	<i>Give yourself a 4</i>	<i>Give yourself a 7</i>	<i>Write your score here:</i>
	Total Score: Integrated Pest Management					

TOTAL SCORE PAGE

Put the total score from each section in the boxes below and then add them up.

Total Score: Soil Conditions:	
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Total Score: Fertilizers / Grass Cycle:	
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Total Score: Mulch	
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Total Score: Compost	
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Total Score: Irrigation and Scheduling	
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Total Score: Right Plant, Right Place	
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Total Score: Pruning	
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Total Score: Integrated Pest Management	
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TOTAL SCORE: ALL CATEGORIES	
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The scores from this tool will be used to determine if the Green Gardening techniques taught in class are practiced in the field. The scores are not used to compare one student to another. Therefore, there is not a threshold score for Green Gardening practices.

Thank you for helping to improve the the Green Gardener program!