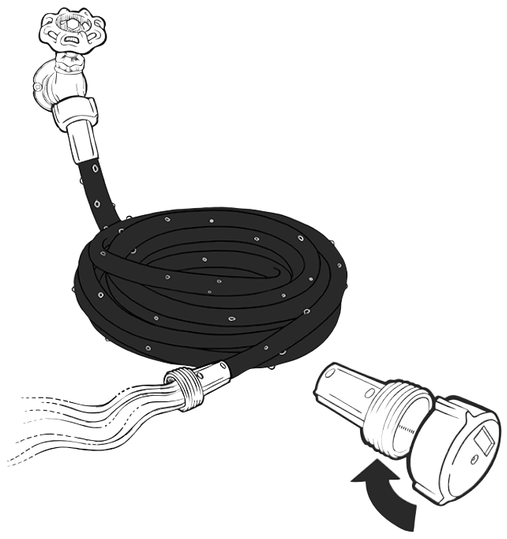
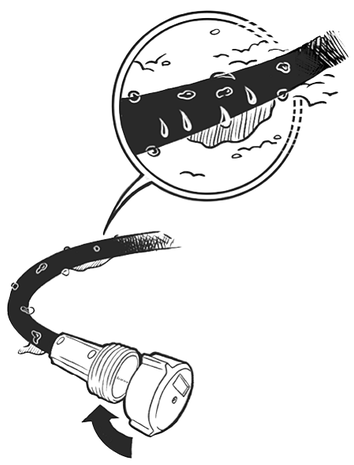
How to Install a Soaker Hose



Step 1.

Unravel the soaker hose and remove the end cap. Connect the opposite end of the soaker hose (the female connector) to a water source and run the water for a few minutes to flush out any debris from the hose. (Always flush new soaker hoses and repeat the process once or twice annually to remove any further debris.)

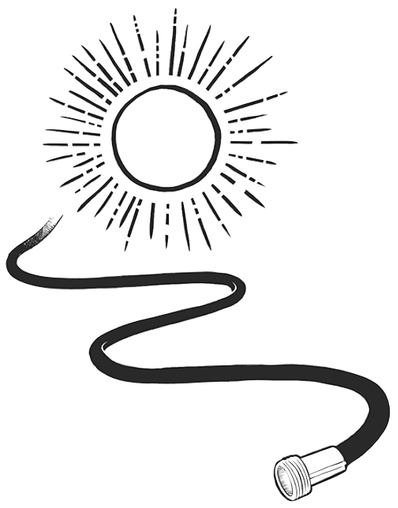


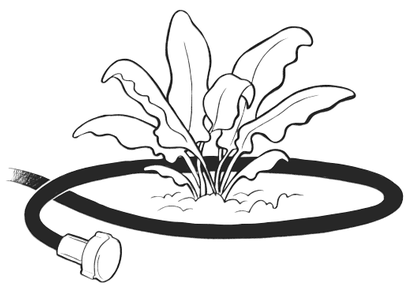
Step 2.

Shut off the water, replace the end cap and then run the water again to ensure the soaker hose is "weeping" properly. This means you should see many small drops of water coming out of the hose along its entire path. Shut off the water and disconnect the hose.

Step 3.

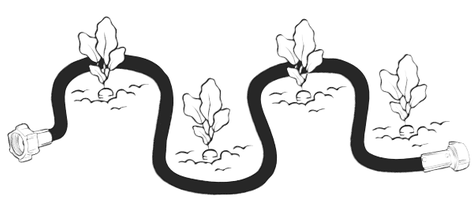
Leave the soaker hose in the sun for approximately one hour to soften. This will help remove the coiled "memory" from the hose and make it more flexible and therefore easier to maneuver around trees, bushes and flowers. It will also make the soaker hose bend and stay in position without the use of stakes as long as the bends aren't too sharp.



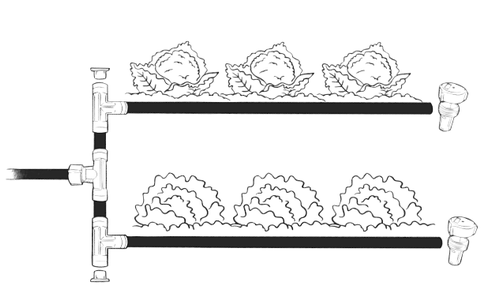


Step 4.

Plan your soaker hose layout. The female connector of the soaker hose should ideally be near a water source, with the water source at the highest point of the layout since water doesn't flow correctly up an incline. (Note: Oftentimes, the best place for the water source is directly in the middle of the layout. A T-shaped female feeder connector (sold separately) can be used at the water source to branch the water in two opposing directions as if having two separate soaker hoses.) Also keep in mind that the total length of soaker hose connected to a single water source should not exceed 150 feet. If more than 150 feet of soaker hose is needed, you'll need an additional water source.



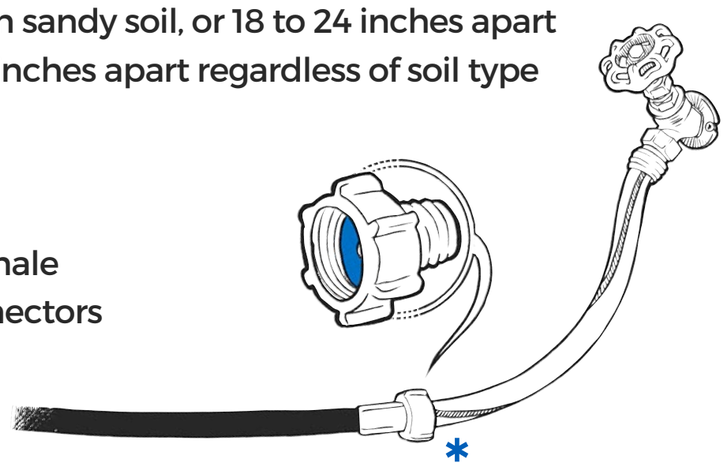
Stretch the soaker hose straight for crops or flowers planted in a straight line, or weave the hose in a nice flowing curve among plants spaced more randomly. Place the soaker hose about two inches from plant stems, or closer for new plantings or annuals, which tend to have less shallow roots. When installing, make every effort to keep the soaker hose as flat as possible to avoid uneven watering.



If you're installing rows of soaker hoses, space them 12 to 18 inches apart on sandy soil, or 18 to 24 inches apart on clay or loam soil. For small annuals, space rows of soaker hoses 12 to 18 inches apart regardless of soil type to ensure their roots receive sufficient water.

Step 5.

Cut off with scissors any excess soaker hose making sure you have clean 90-degree ends. Replace the male connector and end cap to seal the end. Our new soaker hoses now feature 100% plastic "push-on" connectors that can be pulled off the hose by working them back and forth and then pushed back on.



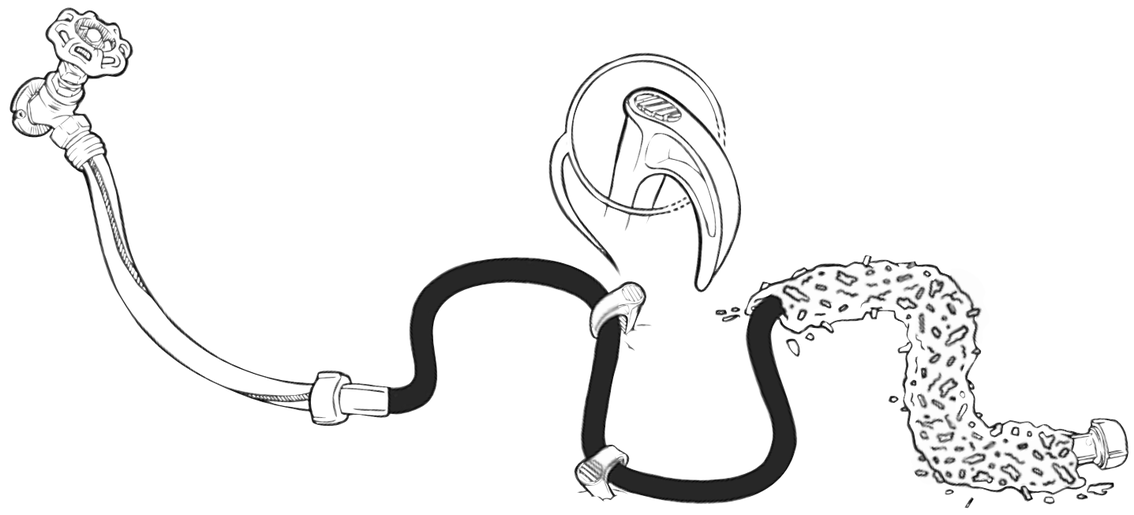
Step 6.

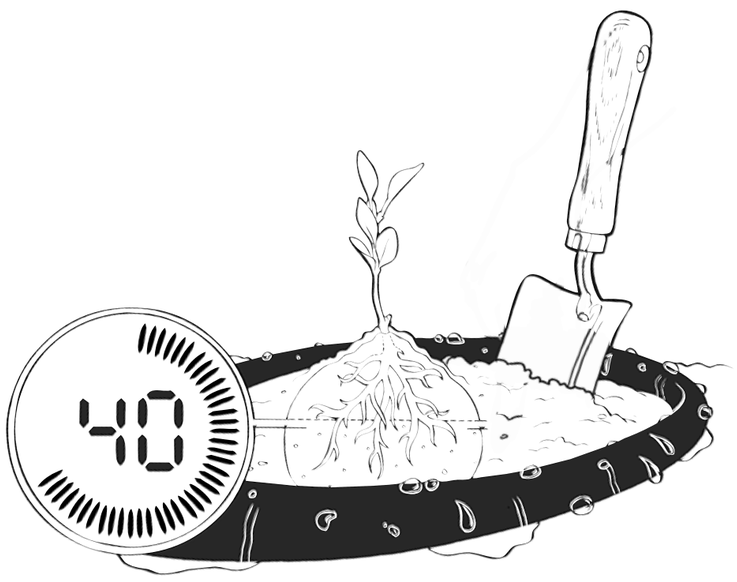
Connect the soaker hose to the water source via the female connector. If the soaker hose is near an outdoor faucet, connect the hose directly to the faucet; otherwise, you must connect the soaker hose to the faucet via a regular garden hose. The female connector of the soaker hose contains a patented, blue restrictor disc that reduces the flow of water by restricting the water through a very small hole. It also reduces the water pressure because of this restriction. It's intended to be used only at the water source (either the faucet or the garden hose). Without the blue restrictor disc in place, you can very easily overpower the hose. The water pressure will cause the soaker hose to weep too much water within the first few feet of the hose and have little or no flow further on.

When connecting multiple lengths of soaker hose, you should remove any additional blue restrictor discs to allow for an even flow and pressure along the entire length of the the hose.

Step 7.

Turn on the faucet only about ½ to ¾ of a turn. Start with a very small amount of water and adjust the pressure until the water drips slowly but steadily along the entire length of the soaker hose. The blue restrictor disc mentioned previously will maintain a water pressure of 20–25 pounds per square inch (PSI). Higher water pressure can create a hydraulic dam effect at the blue restrictor disc, which actually causes a reduction in water flow.





Step 8.

Leave the water running for about 40 minutes; then dig a spot in the garden with a garden trowel to determine the depth of soaking. The water should cover about half of the plants' root zones. If not, one adjustment you can try is to look for any elevation changes in your garden. Even them out either by cutting small valleys or building up areas in the garden so the soaker hose lies as flat as possible for balanced watering.

Also consider that some houses have incredibly high water pressure and flow rates, while others (such as those with well systems) have very low water pressure and flow rates. The soaker hose will only deliver the water that's available: It weeps at an average of .5 gallon–1 gallon of water per foot per hour.

For homes with high-pressure, high-flow systems (as high as 125 PSI in some cases), you might need to install a pressure regulator (sold separately). This will help balance the soaker hose system and make it less sensitive to how far open the faucet is.

For homes with low-pressure, low-flow systems (as low as 30 PSI in some cases), you might benefit from removing the blue restrictor disc altogether. If the soaker hose system is not working correctly when the faucet is fully open, remove the blue restrictor disc and start again by gradually increasing the water.

Step 9.

Once your soaker hose system is set, you can use metal garden stakes to hold the soaker hose in place. Then, if desired, cover the soaker hose with about two inches of mulch to camouflage the hose, retain moisture and prevent soaker hose deterioration as a result of prolonged sun exposure. Remember to leave accessible the end of the hose that connects to the water source.

Step 10.

Water the garden at least once a week for the amount of time determined in your test run. Alternatively, you can water the plants twice weekly for half the amount of time. During warmer periods of the year, watering time can be increased.

Items You Might Also Need:

- Garden hose
- Garden trowel
- Metal garden stakes
- Mulch
- Backflow-prevention device: Newer faucets come equipped with a backflow-prevention device. If you have an older faucet, however, you must connect a backflow preventer to prevent dirty water from flowing back into the drinking water supply.
- Pressure regulator
- Timer: Turns off the faucet after watering for the designated amount of time
- T-shaped female feeder connector
- Additional soaker hoses, female connectors, male connectors with end caps, garden hoses

Soaker hoses and additional EZ-Connect® pieces available at **swanhose.com**