

SUN vs. SHADE

Plants usually come labeled with their sun exposure requirements. Measuring sun exposure for plants is not an exact science. There will always be variables such as cloudy days and places where it gets to be 100 degrees in the shade. The definitions below are the generally accepted standards for determining sun exposure in the garden.

Full Sun: At least 6 full hours of direct sunlight. If a plant gets full sun from 11:00 to 3:00 it is also considered to be full sun. Many sun lovers enjoy more than 6 hours per day, but need regular water to endure the heat.

Partial Sun / Partial Shade: These 2 terms are often used interchangeably to mean 3 - 6 hours of sun each day, preferably in the morning and early afternoon.

- However if a plant is listed as Partial Sun, greater emphasis is put on its receiving the minimal sun requirements.

- If a plant is listed as Partial Shade, the plant will need some relief from the intense late afternoon sun, either from shade provided by a nearby tree or planting it on the east side of a building.

Dappled Sun: Dappled sunlight is similar to partial shade. It is the sun that makes its way through the branches of a deciduous tree. Woodland plants and underplantings prefer this type of sunlight over even the limited direct exposure they would get from partial shade.

Full Shade: Less than 3 hours of direct sunlight each day, with filtered sunlight during the rest of the day. Full shade does not mean no sun. There aren't many plants, except mushrooms, that can survive in the dark.