Drip Irrigation Quick-Guide

What are the benefits of an automated drip system?
- Sprinkler systems are around 75-85% efficient, drip systems typically are 90% or higher.
-Watering at the root zone instead of overhead watering, reduces risk of plant diseases.
-Slow release, deep watering, encourages strong root development
-The automated timer allows for unattended plants. You can get away for the weekend, or week, without worry of plants dying from drought damage.
-Regular, consistent watering promotes healthy growth and reduces stress on the plant.
-Drip systems are highly customizable and can easily be edited to accommodate changes to the landscape.

The Design Process:

Step 1. Planning map

-Measure distances
-Take note of how many plants/pots. Large plants may require multiple emitters. Densely planted areas that may be better suited for in-line drip tubing, soaker hose or spray emitters.
-Draw out a rough map.
-Work up a supply list.

Step 2. Purchasing the supplies

-Don't be afraid to overbuy on the tubing and connector pieces. Often, you'll find that you need these later for adjustments or repairs. ½'' tubing couplers, barbed connector pieces, emitters, and tubing are regularly used in modification or repair of drip systems.
-Consider using Teflon tape on pipe threads for a good seal. Applying plumber's silicon paste to the rubber washers on hose bibs keeps the rubber lasting longer and creates a better seal.
-Make sure to purchase compatible Thread types. "Hose Thread" and "Pipe Thread" are distinguished by a rubber washer (Hose Thread) or slightly flared threading (Pipe Thread)

Step 4. Emitter and Tubing Placement

-Try to use the least amount of ¼" tubing as possible.
-Length of drip tubing from the faucet should not exceed 200 ft. You can however, have a length of 200 feet going one direction and have another 200 feet branch another direction.
-Emitter spacing should ideally be around 18-24"
-Only put 2 emitters on a single 6mm (1/4") tube. (Too many emitters on a small line will result in uneven watering due to restricted flow.)
-Use elbow connectors to create sharp, clean corners without kinking the line.
-Use anchor pins to cleanly secure tubing out of the way.

Step 5. Tests and revisions

-Run the system and check for leaks. Use the 'Water Now' button on your timer to manually override the timer schedule and test your
-Watch how long it takes for the soil to become visibly dampened, and how much surface area it appears to cover. Place a bowl or pan beneath one emitter to help visualize how much water is being released. Adjust time as needed.

Courtesy of Molbaks, Woodinville, WA