



Utilize the following scorecard to estimate inches of infiltration you have gained in your yard and to see if your yard qualifies as a “Carolina Yard.” A minimum of 36 inches is needed to earn this designation. This form can be filled out on your computer and emailed (or printed out to be faxed or mailed) to a Clemson Extension Agent for evaluation. If you have achieved an action listed below, please click the box under the *Action Achieved* column and a check mark will appear. The number of inches you earn will automatically be totaled as you go along! At the bottom of this scorecard you will find your grand total inches earned! Once you reach 36 inches or more, you can submit your form.

[This form is intended for use with Adobe. Some functions may not be available with other PDF software.](#)

Principle 1 MAINTAIN HEALTHY SOIL		
ACTION #	ACTION	ACTION ACHIEVED
1	Collect a soil sample to determine what soil amendments may be needed for what you want to grow. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
<i>Principle 1 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:</i>		

Principle 2 RECYCLE YARD WASTE		
2	Use appropriate bags to contribute lawn clippings to local composting efforts. Place bags outside of ditches and away from storm drains. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
3	Create and maintain a compost pile with kitchen scraps and yard waste. No animal products, please. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
4	Create worm compost by using the digestive power of worms to recycle kitchen scraps and organic material. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
5	Recycle grass clippings by leaving them on the lawn. Mulching lawn mowers or mulching blades are not necessary. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
6	Mow lawns to a height suggested by Clemson University for your specific lawn. Use the higher recommended height when the lawn is under stress, such as during times of drought and very high temperatures. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
<i>Principle 2 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:</i>		

Principle 3 MULCH MATTERS		
7	Maintain a 2-3 inch layer of organic mulch over the roots of trees, shrubs and in plant beds. Remember to leave at least a hand’s width of space between the mulch and the plant’s trunk or stem. If possible, apply mulch out to the outermost branches of your shrubs and trees. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
8	Use fallen leaves and pine needles as mulch under trees and shrubs. They make attractive, natural mulches and are cost-free. If you have more than you can use, share them with a friend or neighbor. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
9	Create self-mulching areas under trees where leaves can stay where they fall. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
10	Prevent erosion and soil loss by applying mulch to areas where lawn will not thrive, such as shaded, steeply sloped and high traffic areas of your yard. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
<i>Principle 3 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:</i>		

## Carolina Yards Scorecard

Principle 4 <b>RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE</b>		
<i>ACTION #</i>	<i>ACTION</i>	<i>ACTION ACHIEVED</i>
11	Design and maintain a yard that thrives predominantly on rainfall once plants are established. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
12	Reduce the need for water, fertilizer and pesticides by choosing plants suited to the site conditions in your yard. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
13	Save energy by using trees and shrubs to shade the eastern and western walls of your home. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
14	Use deciduous trees or shrubs on southern exposures to allow sunlight to passively heat your home in winter. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
15	Group plants according to their maintenance needs. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
16	Determine how much open lawn area is ideal for children, pets and recreation. Where possible, use low-maintenance groundcovers, shrubs, mulch or other pervious materials that allow water to infiltrate. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
17	Decrease soil erosion by planting groundcovers where lawn will not grow well, such as under trees or on steep slopes. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
18	Reduce yard waste by choosing plants that will not require frequent pruning when they reach maturity. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
<i>Principle 4 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:</i>		
Principle 5 <b>GARDEN LIKE A LOCAL</b>		
19	Choose native plants (flowers, trees, shrubs, vines and groundcovers) for your yard, considering those most suitable to site conditions. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
20	Protect native trees and shrubs in your yard. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
21	Avoid heavy traffic or storing equipment under mature trees and shrubs to help preserve established plant communities and prevent erosion or soil loss. When doing any construction activities in your yard, protect as much mature native vegetation as possible. Create a “do not disturb” area if necessary. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
22	Protect your native shoreline plants. Never prune or remove vegetation at the water’s edge without first seeking proper guidance. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
23	Plant a buffer of native plants along your shoreline that is at least 2 feet wide or as wide as your buffer ordinance allows. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
24	Garden like a local! What else can you do that is natural and local to make your yard sustainable? Briefly describe how you are “gardening like a local” in the space below. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
<i>Principle 5 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:</i>		

## Carolina Yards Scorecard

Principle 6 REMOVE INVASIVES		
ACTION #	ACTION	ACTION ACHIEVED
25	Help stop the spread of invasive exotic plants by removing them from your yard. Contact the South Carolina Department of Plant Industry and the South Carolina Exotic Pest Plant Council ( <a href="http://www.se-eppc.org/southcarolina">www.se-eppc.org/southcarolina</a> ) for more information on invasive plants. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
26	Remove invasive exotic aquatic plants by cutting, pulling or raking. Never prune or remove aquatic vegetation without first seeking proper guidelines. When using herbicides, remember the label is the law. Improper use of herbicides can be dangerous so be sure to consult a professional. Dead plant material should be removed from the water to reduce pollution. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
<i>Principle 6 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:</i>		
Principle 7 BE WISE WHEN YOU FERTILIZE		
27	Walk around your yard at least weekly and observe your plants and lawn for early signs of problems. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
28	Fertilize only as needed to maintain the health of lawns and landscape plants. If plants show signs of stress, such as yellow leaves or stunted growth, identify the problem before applying fertilizer. For turfgrass, do not exceed the rate of 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per application. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
29	Use slow-release fertilizers. Buy fertilizers that contain 50% or more of the nitrogen in slow-release forms. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
30	Establish a 10 ft. to 30 ft. “no fertilizer, no pesticide” zone along your shoreline. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
<i>Principle 7 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:</i>		
Principle 8 MANAGE YARD PESTS RESPONSIBLY		
31	Learn to identify five beneficial insects that provide natural control of harmful pests. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
32	Wherever possible use non-chemical approaches for pest control; cultural controls, such as pruning out damaged or affected areas, hand-removing insects, and clearing away infected or diseased debris are all ways to reduce pest populations naturally. <b>Credit: 2 inches.</b>	
33	Use lower toxicity pesticides such as horticultural oils, insecticidal soaps and biological controls. These effective, safe materials can control most plant pests. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
34	Avoid routine applications of pesticides. Treat only affected areas rather than spraying your entire lawn or yard. When using pesticides, the label is the law. Require that your yard maintenance company, if used, follow these strategies. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
<i>Principle 8 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:</i>		
Principle 9 WATER WISELY		
35	Put a rain gauge in your yard and track rainfall to avoid unnecessary watering. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
36	Water your lawn and other plants only when they show signs of stress. Comply with any existing watering restrictions in your community. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	

**Principle 9 WATER WISELY (continued)**

37	Use a drip or microspray irrigation system to more efficiently water plants and plant beds. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
38	Design or modify your sprinkler system to water lawn areas separately from plant beds, which require less water. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
39	Walk your yard when the irrigation system is on to ensure that water is being applied to lawn and plant beds only, not the pavement. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
40	Calibrate your sprinkler(s) to apply ½ to ¾ inch of water per application. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
41	Connect an automatic rain shut-off device to your sprinkler system’s timer and set the device to 1/2 inch so it will override the timer when enough rain falls. Check to see if the shut-off device is working properly. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	

*Principle 9 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:*

**Principle 10 RAIN AS A RESOURCE**

42	Where possible, direct downspouts and gutters to your rain garden or plant beds where rain will soak into the ground rather than run off your yard. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
43	Create a rain garden to catch, hold and filter stormwater. Once installed, add your rain garden to the SC Low Impact Development Atlas at <a href="http://www.clemson.edu/carolinaclear/lidmap">www.clemson.edu/carolinaclear/lidmap</a> to show you are lowering environmental impacts in your community. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
44	Collect rainwater runoff from your roof in a rain barrel or cistern. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	

*Principle 10 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:*

**Principle 11 REDUCE RUNOFF**

45	Sweep grass clippings, fertilizer and soil from driveways and streets back onto the lawn. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
46	Remove yard debris and trash from street gutters so it will not get washed into storm drains. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
47	Do your duty and pick up after pets. Properly dispose of waste in the trash. This will help reduce bacteria. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
48	Create an at-home kit for chemical spills and leaks. Household chemical containers that are empty, or those filled with cat litter or sorbent materials, should be properly disposed of and not put out at the curb. More information on this can be found at the Carolina Clear website. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
49	Use mulch, permeable pavers, stone, gravel or other porous surfaces for walkways, patios and driveways. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	

*Principle 11 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:*

**Principle 12 PROVIDE FOR WILDLIFE**

50	Learn to identify five kinds of wildlife that live in your yard. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
51	Plant native plants to provide wildlife habitat. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
52	Provide a water source, such as a birdbath or a pond. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
53	Keep natural wildlife shelters in your yard that may include woodpiles and older trees. Bugs and insects are an important food source for other wildlife. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	

Principle 12 <b>PROVIDE FOR WILDLIFE</b> (continued)		
<i>ACTION #</i>	<i>ACTION</i>	<i>ACTION ACHIEVED</i>
54	Provide wildlife shelters such as a bird or bat house. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
55	Establish a butterfly garden by providing nectar and host plants for butterflies and beneficial insects. <b>Credit: 2 inches</b>	
<i>Principle 12 TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:</i>		
<b>GRAND TOTAL INCHES ACHIEVED:</b>		

Please email this completed form to Terasa Lott at [terasa@clemson.edu](mailto:terasa@clemson.edu). You can also mail the form to: Terasa Lott, Clemson Extension – Darlington County, 300 Russell Street, Room 222, Darlington SC 29532. The information that you provide below will be used to contact you regarding your yard’s certification. Thank you for taking the time to get certified and for all you do to protect South Carolina’s environment!

Name:

Address:

County:

Phone:

Email:

If you are willing to have your name and town (NOT address) listed in a news article or press release, recognizing you and your certified yard with others across the county or state, please initial here:



*Find out more about stormwater, watersheds and how you can be a solution to stormwater pollution in South Carolina by visiting the Carolina Clear website at [www.clemson.edu/carolinaclear](http://www.clemson.edu/carolinaclear).*



*Take the next step and learn more about horticulture; including soils, plant nutrition, basic botany, entomology, plant pathology, vegetable and fruit gardening, and landscape design. Visit Clemson’s South Carolina Master Gardener Program at [www.clemson.edu/extension/mg](http://www.clemson.edu/extension/mg).*



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