

Content Audit Report

Product/Service: Water timer for gardens

Focus Area: User guide

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Summary

This audit reviews the user guide for a **water timer**, focusing on ease of use, clarity, content structure, and how well it supports different types of users. The product itself works reliably. The guide includes strong elements, such as high-quality visuals and a helpful troubleshooting section.

However, it relies too heavily on QR codes and visual explanations, with limited step-by-step written instructions. This creates challenges for users who prefer printed guidance or are uncomfortable scanning codes, especially when those codes do not work as expected.

With focused improvements, the guide could offer a much smoother experience for all users, whether they are comfortable with technology or simply need clear, reliable instructions in a familiar paper format.

Strengths

High-quality visuals

The product visuals are clean, high-resolution, and visually consistent.

Clear technical data

Specifications such as water pressure, battery type, and operation limits are well-presented and easy to locate.

Comprehensive safety instructions

The safety section is detailed, clear, and covers a wide range of scenarios, showing strong attention to compliance and user protection.

Responsible storage & recycling guidance

Battery disposal, winter storage, and recycling information are clearly outlined.

Well-crafted troubleshooting section

This section stands out for its clarity and usefulness. It anticipates common problems and provides straightforward solutions using plain language.

Findings & recommendations

Finding	Description	Recommendation	Priority
Over-reliance on a single visual	The main instructional image tries to explain several procedures simultaneously, leading to visual overload and making it harder to follow.	Break the content into smaller visuals.	High
Illogical information flow	The first step appears on the right side of the diagram, which goes against natural reading order and makes it hard to find.	Reorganize the layout to follow a clear left-to-right or top-to-bottom flow.	Medium
Broken QR codes	The QR codes meant to lead to video guides or extra help do not work.	Test all QR codes regularly and provide a short fallback URL near each code.	High
Lack of standalone text instructions	Text-based step-by-step instructions are missing. Users must interpret visuals, which is challenging in outdoor conditions or for those unfamiliar with the symbols.	Add numbered written steps for each core procedure alongside the visuals.	High
Limited accessibility for non-tech users	The guide assumes users will scan QR codes and understand icons. This can exclude many people,	Include full printed instructions and avoid relying solely on digital content.	Medium

Finding	Description	Recommendation	Priority
	particularly older users or those less comfortable with technology.		
Complex language and passive tone	The use of passive voice, indirect phrasing, and technical references like "Fig. A-C" can hinder comprehension, especially for non-native English speakers.	Use clear, active voice and avoid abbreviations or technical shorthand.	Medium
Unintentional reset risk	It is not clearly explained that turning the dial at any time clears previous settings. This poses a risk of accidental schedule erasure, particularly in shared environments.	Clearly inform users that turning the dial will reset the timer and erase any saved settings.	High

Suggested content design principles

To improve clarity and usability, the guide should be organized into clearly labeled, task-based sections. Each section should focus on a single action the user needs to complete, and include:

- A short, descriptive heading written in plain, natural language
- A brief explanation of what the user is doing and why
- 3–5 numbered steps using active voice
- Optional supporting visuals (simple and focused)
- Highlighted tips or warnings when needed (for example, reset behavior)

This format is easy to follow outdoors and works well in printed guides.

Recommended information structure

To improve clarity and task orientation, we recommend adding the following core sections to the guide. Each one should be clearly titled and follow the suggested content design principles: plain-language headings, short explanations, and concise, action-driven steps.

1. Set the watering schedule
2. Start manual watering
3. Check and replace the battery
4. Reset the timer
5. Clean the filter

Example written instructions

Below are two samples of how the guide could present key procedures using a clear, consistent format. Each one includes a plain-language heading, a short explanation, simple numbered steps, and any important notes.

Set the watering schedule

Choose how often the timer waters and how long each watering cycle lasts.

1. Turn the dial to select how often the timer should water.
The options represent time intervals between each watering: 8hrs, 12hrs, 24hrs, 48hrs, 72hrs.
2. Choose a watering duration under the selected interval.
The timer offers 2–3 duration options for each frequency (for example, 10, 30, or 60 minutes).
3. Immediately press the **+1** button to set when the first watering should begin.
Press once for each hour of delay (for example, 5 presses = 5-hour delay).
If you don't press the button right away, watering will start immediately.
4. Watch for the green LED to blink 3 times. This confirms your setting.

Tip: Use shorter, more frequent watering for potted plants, and less frequent but longer watering for lawns.

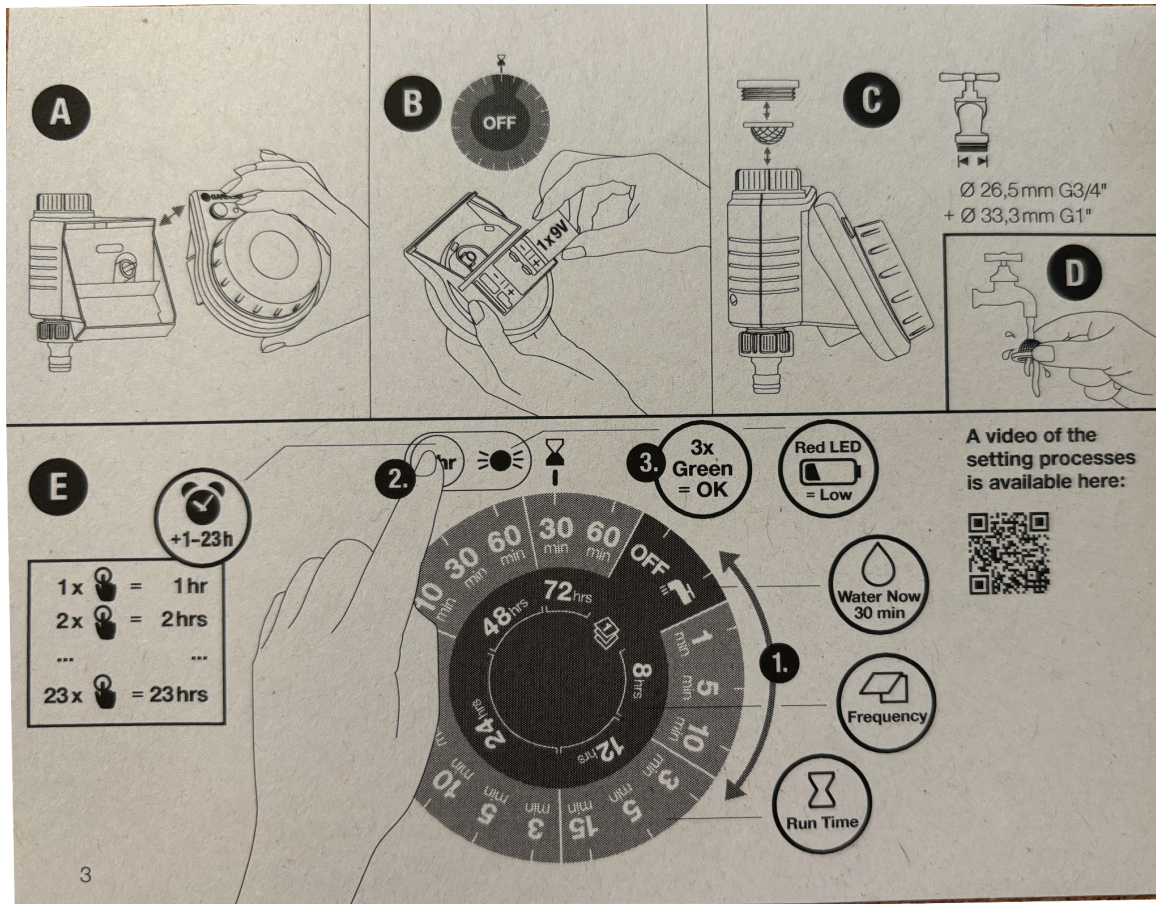
Start manual watering

Water immediately for 30 minutes.

1. Turn the dial to the tap icon.
The timer starts watering right away and will stop automatically after 30 minutes.
2. To stop early, turn the dial to OFF.

Note: After manual watering, the timer's previous schedule is cleared. You'll need to set it again.

Appendices



For example, at least 10 x 2-litre Drip Heads are required to control the Micro-Drip-System. The max. temperature for the water flow is 40 °C.

Avoid tensile strain.

→ Do not pull the hose connected to the Water Control.

CAUTION! If the control section is removed when the valve is open, the valve remains open until the control section is reattached.

with medical implants to speak with their physician and the medical implant manufacturer before operating the product.



DANGER! Risk of suffocation!

Small parts can be easily swallowed. It is also a risk that the polybag can suffocate children. Keep toddlers away when you assemble the product.

2. INITIAL OPERATION → (Fig. A–C)

A video of the setting processes is available here:



3. FUNCTION AND SETTING

→ (Fig. E)

Once the duration and frequency have been set, the values will be applied 5 seconds later. The green LED will flash three times to confirm this. The first watering operation commences. This will be the watering start time from now on. If you want watering to commence later than this, press the +1h button repeatedly within the 5-second time window until the desired start time has been set. All settings are deleted once the setting dial is turned again and new settings are made.

4. MAINTENANCE → (Fig. D)

5. STORAGE



To put into storage:

- The product must be stored away from children.
- To preserve the battery, it should be removed (Fig. B).
- Store the controller and the valve unit in a dry, enclosed and frost-free place.



Disposal:

(in accordance with RL2012/19/EC/S.I. 2013 No. 3113)

The product must not be disposed of to normal household waste. It must be disposed of in line with local environmental regulations.

IMPORTANT!


Dispose of the product through or via your municipal recycling collection centre.

Disposal of the battery:

- Please return a flat battery to a GARDENA dealer or dispose of it properly at your nearest recycling centre.

Dispose of the battery only when discharged.

6. TROUBLESHOOTING

Problem	Possible Cause	Remedy
Manual watering is not possible using the  button	LED next to start delay is blinking red 3x: battery is very low.	→ Insert a new (alkaline) battery.
	Tap is turned off.	→ Turn the tap on.
	Controller is not connected.	→ Mount the controller on housing.
Watering program is not being undertaken (no watering)	Program entry/modification during or just before the start pulse.	→ Make program entry/modification outside the programmed start times.
	Valve was opened manually previously.	→ Avoid possible program overlaps.
	Tap is turned off.	→ Turn the tap on.
	Controller is not connected.	→ Mount the controller on housing.
	LED next to start delay is blinking red 3x: battery is very low.	→ Insert a new (alkaline) battery.
	Minimum pressure of 0.5 bar not available.	→ Ensure a pressure of at least 0.5 bar.
Water Control does not close	Minimum quantity of water drawn is less than 20 l/h.	→ Connect more drip heads.
	Valve soiled.	→ Flush in the opposite direction to the normal flow direction.