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Free to Print

Planning!
The Perfect
Landscape

Introduction to
“**Circles, Curves**
and **Colors**”

By John R. King, Jr.

Use this guide in conjunction with Volume I, Solving the Landscape Puzzle, to create your ultimate landscape creation that will provide you with a multitude of *foliage*, *flowers* and *fruit* for years to come.

It promotes *color*, *cold hardy* and *low maintenance*, for a long term investment opportunity, where your money literally grows year after year.

This free pamphlet will get started on a do-it-yourself planning, planting, maintaining and enjoying an experience that will entertain you, your family, friends and neighbors for years to come.

greenthumbartist.com

Circles, Curves and Colors

A guide for creating landscape designs. It profiles a design system that is simple to use by anyone, allowing a person to create a personal landscape project for their home and garden anywhere in the state or country.

The concept is overlaying a graph onto a work sheet, with a layout of the desired area to be landscaped. Flowerbed lines are developed before plants are considered. Multiple lines can be explored through the use of color, achieving the desired flow. The design is created with a series of circles and curves using a compass or object with a radius.

Simple symbols are used in the graph to identify geometric patterns. The graph allows for proper spacing of plants.

When the design is completed, the symbols identify the proposed type of plant material.

A plant list is developed. The plants are divided into groups, according to *growth characteristics, i.e. appropriate height and width:

- a. groundcover
- b. foundation
- c. portal
- d. background/screening
- e. accent
- f. trees
- g. vines, etc.

Design intent is accomplished by using plants and materials that correspond to the style desired.

The design is transferred (copied) onto a presentation sheet, labeled, and the process is finished.

REDEFINING YOUR LANDSCAPE GOALS

When it's time to make a change to your existing landscaping, things you need to consider?

1. What is wrong with the existing design?

What changes would you like to see? Would you make different plant choices? Are there blank spaces that need to be filled?

2. Is the problem with the maintenance?

Is the garden out of control; can maintenance practices be changed?

Are there too many plants? Have the existing plants crowded out each other?

3. What are your future plans with the property?

What is the intended use of the property; Residence, Rental, Commercial?

Do you plan to sell in the near future; if so approximately when?

4. How are the existing plants affected by changes?

Have new arrangements been considered; is removal required? Do you wish to save plants by relocation; where? Is transplanting possible; cost?

5. Has a plan been developed for the proposed landscaping?

Have architectural details, future growth and maintenance issues been taken into consideration?

6. Have soil conditions been taken into consideration?

How will drainage, contamination; i.e. construction debris, affect future growth? Is soil enhancement necessary?

7. Does the irrigation system need to be updated to accommodate the changes being considered? Will 100% coverage be achieved? Has the proper "DRY Zone" for termite protection, been established along the foundation of the building?

8. Is a construction project affecting the current landscaping? Is access available for construction? Will existing turf areas be affected?

9. Who is going to complete the redevelopment project?

As a do-it-yourself project, by a lawn maintenance company or a landscape contractor. What is the time frame for completion?

10. Has a budget been established? Is there a need for instant completion or can the work be phased in?

Redeveloping Your Landscaping!

“Proper Planning” will help eliminate future mistakes and create a long-term investment opportunity.

10 considerations when redefining your outdoor living space!

1. Consider multiple possibilities when planning your new landscaping. Experiment on paper with different space considerations before choosing the ultimate combination.
2. Do you want more grass or less? Is sun or shade a factor?
3. What specific family needs do you have for the yard; patio, pets, pool, playground or parking?
4. Are trees for shade and/or temperature modification desired or should the tree canopy be reduced or removed.
5. Should elevation be considered? Would a deck, berm or swale be an attractive and/or useful addition? Is there a slope?
6. Is there a recreational element in your desire for a change; adding a putting green, outdoor kitchen, basketball court or pool?
7. Is there a special gardening interest to be included in the new landscaping; green house, vegetable garden, rose garden, gazebo or water feature?
8. Is additional storage capability necessary? A storage building, etc.
9. Is screening for privacy or security necessary? Could it be accomplished? by landscaping or fencing? What height is required and/or allowed! If fencing is used. What material will the fence be composed of; wire, chain link, aluminum, wood or vinyl?
10. Have maintenance issues been considered? Who will take care of the landscaping? Does the design feature long flowing curves or tight spaces difficult to mow? When it's time to make a change to your existing landscaping, things you need to consider?

1. What is wrong with the existing design?
What changes would you like to see? Would you make different plant choices? Are there blank spaces that need to be filled?
2. Is the problem with the maintenance?
Is the garden out of control; can maintenance practices be changed?
Are there too many plants? Have the existing plants crowded out each other?
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Have new arrangements been considered; is removal required? Do you wish to save plants by relocation; where? Is transplanting possible; cost?
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How will drainage, contamination; i.e. construction debris, affect future growth. Is soil enhancement necessary?
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Landscape Planning

Landscape Planning

1. Proper Planning

“You never plan to fail, you fail to plan!”

2. Time Saving Documents

Survey (Bank)

Floor Plan (Architect/Builder)

3. Municipal Requirements

Residential vs. Commercial

4. Easement

Sight Lines, Utilities

5. Design Principles

Balance: Symmetrical vs. Asymmetrical,

Repetition, Proportion, Flow

Odd Numbers, Curiosity

6. Design Development:

Circles, Curves, and Colors

Tools

Ruler - Architect vs. Engineer

Worksheet

Field Measurements

Layout

Graphing

Line Development

Plant Placement

Rough Draft

Presentation Copy

PROPER LANDSCAPE PLANNING

Steps to Developing a Successful Landscape Design

**Take Field Measurements
(use site plans and blueprints if available)**

Initial Layout

Graphing Overlay

Line Development

Plant Placement

Rough Draft

Final Design

Obtain Copies

Hand Color

Presentation Copy

Develop Estimate

WORK SHEET

This is the paper you will develop your project on. Using this paper allows you to experiment with your plan. You don't have to worry about mistakes or eraser marks. You'll develop your planting bed lines on this draft.

ROUGH DRAFT

As the name implies, this is close to the a finished design, but not the final presentation. It will have notes you've written on it, etc.. All your plant symbols have filled in the spaces. Outdoor spaces have been defined. You've chosen the plants for your project. It's your work sheet completed.

FINAL DESIGN

Now you will overlay a piece of vellum (special tracing paper) on your worksheet/rough draft and trace the details. At this time you'll add plants names and other identifiers as needed. Be careful when working, because you want this copy as close to perfect as possible. It represents your work. Obtain several copies (Xerox). **Note:** Use a black and white copy for plant placement when you begin layout and installation.

HAND COLOR

After the copies have been made, create a color version. Use different color to link plants together or show their differences. This establishes the flow, rhythm, balance, etc. of the design. Color can be used to represent the color of flowers and/or foliage. Use water color markers or colored pencils to complete the project.

PRESENTATION COPY

To protect your work of art consider having it pressured mounted on foam board and having it laminated. Now it's ready to hung on the wall, to be enjoyed from the inside, to remind you what you've created outside.

FIELD MEASUREMENTS

This is the first step when developing a successful landscape design. Field measurements are what they sound like, you are standing outside next to your project and must take measurements to determine the area that is to be landscaped (Having a site plan and/or blueprint will save time).

To be determined:

- Project placement on property (boundaries)

- Proximity to other structures, utilities

- Location of walks, drives, parking, patio, pool, fences, etc.

- Existing landscaping or trees that are to remain

- Right away or easements

- Air Conditioners, Gas (tanks)

Make a rough sketch of the project, artistic ability is not important. Record the measurements as shown in the illustrations.

To find the placement of the project; i.e. home. Measure from each corner of the house to the corresponding property line. This will allow you to place the home on your worksheet with the proper front back and side yards shown.

For sidewalks and driveways use a straight line, either the foundation of the home or a line perpendicular to a corner. When using the foundation, measure from known points example: windows, doors or the center of a wall. Be sure to measure at a 90 degree angle. To mark a driveway, pull a long tape measure from the corner of the house at the same angle mentioned prior, then take a measurement off the tape at marked intervals, from the tape to the driveway, using the same angle. If the walk or drive is the same width you only need to measure one side. When that line has been marked on your worksheet, use your scale ruler to mark dots at the proper width with several feet apart on the drawing, then connect the dots.

SITE PLANS / BLUE PRINTS

To save a lot of time check for copies of the site plan (survey) of your property or blueprints (plans of your home or project). These are very important documents, so you probably have them in a safe place, where you keep information concerning your house, i.e. safety deposit box. You can take measurements directly from them.

Site Plans / Survey will show the building outline on the property. It identifies property boundaries and easements. It will show existing walks, drives, etc. It's provided to the homeowner by a Survey Company. It is required of the lending agency if the home is financed.

Most site plans are in Engineering Scale: 1/10, 1/20, 1/30 etc., depending on the size of the property.

A certified copy will have a raised surveyors seal, making it an important & valuable document!

Blue Prints /Floor Plans (the name *blue print* comes from a former printing technique; most are now Xerox copies or *black line*). This is the footprint of the home or building, it will generally have windows and doors marked. It's provided by a contractor, draftsman or architect.

Most blueprints are in Architectural Scale: 1/8, 1/4, 3/16; etc.

Warning

To be readable with a scale ruler, a copy must be the exact size of the original or the scale will be useless.

INITIAL LAYOUT

Transfer of field notes, blueprint and/or site plan information to work sheet

The size of the worksheet (paper) will depend on the size of the project. Most projects can fit on a 24" X 36" Easel Pad sheet.

Remember you're limited to a 36" wide final drawing because of the Xerox Copier Capability.

I prefer one with preprinted lines allowing me to use them as a guide when drawing. Any scale can be used on this paper.

The graph on the easel pad is 1" = 4'.

If a larger sheet is needed, use the paper for the initial layout, then overlay a sheet of vellum (of the right size) and trace your drawing. Add the necessary lines to complete the layout. Obtain a print (copy) of the vellum and set the vellum aside; you can use it for the final presentation copy. The copy will become your new worksheet.

Transfer the field notes or blueprint/site plan information to the worksheet. Consider the space available on the paper. Either start with the property boundary or a corner of the building, making sure the project fits on the paper, in the scale you've chosen. Mark a corner and work around the paper until you return to the original starting place.

If you don't come back to the starting point, check your measurements. The smaller the scale you are trying to read/convert, the more difficult the process.

Denote all windows and doors (entrance and garage). For these I like to use a / cross line for a door and a squiggle line ~ for a window for a screen enclosure use a straight line - . Add sidewalks, driveways, ac units and pool equipment, etc. anything not on the blueprints/site plan. Show existing plants/trees that will be part of the new design.

CONVERTING SCALE DRAWINGS

The larger the scale you draw in, the easier it is for you to get a feel for the drawing, Each person should chose a scale they feel comfortable working with.

I prefer One Inch Equals Four Feet, denoted as 1" = 4'.

Using your scale ruler (either architectural or engineering) you are going to convert the scale noted on the site plan or blueprint to the scale you wish to use. Always check the scale on the paper, it is usually listed in what's called the title block, a section on the drawing that identifies the owners name and person who designed or prepared the plans. If the scale is not listed, measure a marked line to determine the scale used.

Most blue prints are rendered in one quarter scale, so all you'll have to do is trace over, with the vellum.

Measure lines, using the scale listed, and convert them into the scale you wish to use. If you have a copy you can note measurements on the plans (or use light erasable lines if not). This will assist you determining certain measurements such as curves, etc.

Mark the new "up scaled lines" on the worksheet.

Here are examples of a 10 foot line in different scales:

1" equals 4'

1" equals 8'

1" equals 10'

1" equals 20'

GRAPHING OVERLAY

Developing a graph helps in several ways:

1. It helps define space.
2. It assists with the design process.
3. It allows for proper spacing.

After transferring your measurements to your work sheet, start at any corner of the building (working out) or edge of property (working in). Mark lines on 3 foot intervals, using the scale you've chosen to work with. If you're using a pre-lined paper (example easel pad) ignore the lines, using them only as a guide. When you have one set completed, go in the opposite direction, marking another set of lines; forming a graph (horizontal versus vertical). If possible don't cross building lines or hardscapes; i.e. sidewalks, driveways, etc. with the graph lines.

Important: use a pen to mark the graph lines, you want to them to be permanent on your worksheet.

The lines will form a 3x3 squares, representing a 9 square foot area for a plant to grow in.

To help keep track of walls, sidewalks, driveways, etc. use a highlight marker to identify these areas.

3x3 inch @ 1/4 scale

Architect

3x3 inch @ 1/8 scale

Architect

3x3 inch @ 1/10 scale

Engineer

LINE DEVELOPMENT

When you have completed the graphing overlay on your work sheet, you are ready to develop the lines of your flower bed (s).

On the work sheet find a starting point relating to your project. From this location, start to experiment with your compass. Draw a circle then work off the radius, continuing the line until you've gone around your project.

Exploring different lines will give you the opportunity to find the best combination for the project. Try starting at a different point or vary the size of your radius. I find that if I start in one location and can have my line end at the same starting point, I've established a great flow for my project.

Remember to create long soft flowing curves! Consider easy maintenance with your design. No tight spaces or required backing up with lawn equipment.

When exploring different lines, use your color markers to identify them, don't worry if they interact.

You can use the graph lines to make sure you're allowing enough space for the plantings.

When creating flowing spaces like the "River of Grass", you'll want to mark a dominant line on one side of the plan. Use your ruler to mark increments along the opposite of the line, equal distance apart and fill in the dots (like developing a sidewalk or drive). This will establish movement of the design.

When you have found the line you wish to use for the project, darken it, allowing you to focus only on that line. If several colors overlap, use the most dominate color to overlay the others. You have now established the flower bed line for your design.

PLANT PLACEMENT

Once you have established your proposed flower bed lines, you're now ready for plant placement.

DO NOT CONSIDER ANY PLANTS UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETED THIS STEP!

Remember, the graph defines space, allowing us to place plants properly. Most of the plants will be in one 3x3 space; i.e. foundation shrubs, larger plants will require more space because of their size requirements; i.e. over story trees, while smaller ones require less space; i.e. groundcovers.

We are using symbols to develop a geometric pattern. The plant names aren't important. It's the plant's growth characteristics that need to be considered.

To start place large accent plants on the sheet, follow with the foundation area working out toward the edge of the flower beds. Establish a pattern using groups of same plants, to fill in the space. You can explore by marking spaces for ground cover areas also.

Use plant groups where appropriate. The screening group wouldn't make a good foundation choice, as the foundation group is not used for background or skyline plantings.

Look for ways to use vertical dimension by using small over story accents (such as a standard form) faced down with lower plantings to give the landscaping a three dimensional layered look.

Remember the largest plants don't always have to be against the back with smaller plants in front, this leads to two dimensional landscaping which looks ok but can be boring. Large plants can be prominently displayed toward the front, with lower material surrounding, featured as an accent plant, offering dimension to the overall design.

PLANT

BY

NUMBER

1 - 3 - 5 - 7 - 9

one three five seven nine
uno tres cinco siete nueve
un trois cinq sept neuf
Eine drei fünf sieben neun

un tre cinque sette nove
Een drie vijf zeven negen
um tres cinco sete nove

**“DIFFERENT
BY
DESIGN”**

The Art of Landscaping

Different By Design

“The Art of Landscaping”

1. Proper Planning

“You never plan to fail, You fail to plan”

2. Development *Circles, Curves, Color*

3. What **Three** Things Everybody Wants? and should expect.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

4. Curve Appeal

5. Hardscapes *Walks and Drives*

6. Architectural Details

7. Dimension *Vertical Horizontal*

8. Accents

9. Focus on the ?

10. Color *75% / 25% Rule*

11. Public Private Service

12. Screening *Fence Vs Hedge*

13. Plant Selection *Sun Vs Shade*

14. “Back To Nature” with Birds and Butterflies

15. Budget *An investment opportunity*

16. Estimate Vs Design

The Art of Landscaping

1. Proper Planning

Landscaping should be viewed as art. Creating a design uses the same components used in a picture or painting; line, balance rhythm, form etc. In effect you are creating a picture, one that is living not static, taking on function as a bonus. Color is achieved by using plants of different forms and textures, flowers and foliage, and materials such as mulch or rock depending on the intent of the garden. These become your media, the colors found on a painters palette. Mixing them in a pleasing combination, telling a story, or using them to create a living habitat is the goal of every gardener. The first step in the process is proper planning.

An old Boy Scout saying is,
“You never plan to fail, You fail to plan”.

Not properly planning can spell doom from the start. The problem is generally realized only after time has passed, perhaps months or even years. The benefit of proper planning is that it almost guarantees long term success, instead of a short time mistake.

Proper Planning Principals

- Evaluating the situation, considering all possibilities.
- Developing a set of attainable goals by defining needs.
- Avoiding purchases until plan is developed.
- Understanding use of space.
- Know plant requirements: light, soil condition, moisture needs, etc.

2. Development

The development process involves **planning**, thinking before acting. Laying out your project first, allows you to consider different possibilities without making a permanent commitment. You can make mistakes on paper, keeping from making financial mistakes, that waste precious funds. It allows you to consider the space you have to work with, thereby not over planting, causing future problems, that might prove costly.

Proper Planning

- Helps avoid mistakes.
- Saves money, by prescribing the proper amount to purchase.
- Allows for phasing in a project.
- Assists in developing a budget.
- Creates an environment for success.

3. THREE THINGS

EVERYBODY WANTS AND SHOULD EXPECT!

Color Cold Hardy Low Maintenance

COLOR can be achieved in many ways, from flowers, foliage and/or fruit. It can be seasonal or permanent. It can be as simple as shades of green (monochromatic) or bright enough to attract comments both positive and negative. Even with negative comments it means that the situation was noted and elicited a response. Style is in the eye of the beholder. Take chances, do what makes you feel satisfied. Color can express emotion and temperature, bright colors are warm evoking heat and dark colors are cooler and more subdued.

Color should be based on permanent elements in the garden not strictly on annuals. If annuals are used in large areas as the primary color, it can lead to voids in the landscaping during the season, due to replacement issues. This is also the most expensive way to bring color to the garden because of replacement costs.

Color can be achieved in shady areas with several plant varieties featuring variegated foliage; shades of white or yellow, splashed naturally on the leaves. When searching for plants always try to find plants in the same light conditions as you intend for them to grow in; full sun for full sun areas in your garden, shade or partial shade for those plants you intend for those areas with reduced light.

Color can be introduced from structures or objects located in the garden example the colorful gazing ball was a mainstay in Victorian Gardens where it was used to ward off evil spirits, it was thought upon seeing their reflection, they would be scared away.

Color also can come from inert material in the garden from dark mulch to colorful stones, used as groundcover or accents.

COLD HARDY plantings can be achieved by understanding plant requirements. Certain plants such as evergreens can take extreme cold but aren't happy in excessive heat. Other plants hardiness may depend on placement in the landscaping, some plants can survive better depending on their location around a structure. Cold sensitive plants should be placed on the south or east side of a home, enjoying some protection for the wind. Plants that are hardy can be placed on the north or west side. Remember to take in account the plants relationship to sun or shade respectably.

N : Shade, S : Full Sun, E : Morning Sun, W : Afternoon Sun

LOW MAINTENANCE is achieved by understanding the plant's growth habits and characteristics, avoid over planting and plan for future growth. Understand maintenance requirements; try to avoid high maintenance plants. Use size appropriate plants in the right places, example; If you have a low window, three feet off the ground, don't place a plant under it that wants to grow six feet, find one that stays under three feet, so that you don't have to spend time pruning it. If a four foot hedge is expected, the same principals apply, find a plant that only grows to that height, or is extremely slow growing. Consider hedges as informal screening and plant accordingly. Don't over fertilize or provide excessive water, causing unnecessary growth.

4. Curve Appeal

A play on words from the name of a popular home show on HGTV, Curve Appeal, invokes the idea of long flowing smooth lines. Lines that help establish a flow through the garden. This allows you to get away from straight lines that characterize most architecture. The straight lines of a roof, the foundation footprint, and many times the sidewalk or drive, shouldn't be continued when laying out your planting beds.

A great example is the sides of many homes, the property line parallels the home at the same distance, forming a long straight rectangle. Think of this space as water, the form resembles a ditch. Bring a long dominant curve along one side and follow it equal distance away, with a line on the opposite side, You now have a river, but instead of water there is grass, or maybe in a smaller space a gently curving walkway with the grass eliminated.

Long flowing curves are more pleasing to the eye than straight lines; they evoke movement and beckon the eye to follow. Be careful too many curves in a short distance can cause disruption.

5. Hard-Scapes

Walks and Drives

These are surface areas that we drive on, park on and walk on, they are referred to as hard-scapes, because they are hard surface areas made from various materials; concrete, pavers (concrete), bricks, asphalt etc. By keeping traffic to these areas, whether by vehicle or foot, keeps our lawn areas from being worn out. Walking on these surfaces also is safer as we have firmer footing on a hard level surface.

These areas need to be developed first, because the construction process can damage existing landscaping. The grading process becomes more complicated when these components are added as an after thought. In the construction process a rough grade is completed, the project is installed followed by a finish grade that allows the ground level to be adjusted accordingly.

6. Architectural Details

Windows, Columns, Doors, Coins, Bands, etc.

When planning for landscaping, be sure to locate all pertinent architectural details. Show them on the worksheet you've developed. Their locations will be critical to the design process. You want to highlight the architecture of a building not cover it up. Enhancing architecture should be the goal.

The view from windows should be taken into account also. Is there a pleasant scene to view or is it garbage cans or an air conditioning unit, maybe a busy street or a carport across the way. Privacy can be achieved by placing taller specimens out in front of a window to block sight lines. Use the plant as an over story accent with lower plantings below.

Some safety experts warn about covering windows because of break-in opportunities, they recommend spiny plants as an obstacle. Generally speaking you want to create an atmosphere that allows access to the foundation along the building for exterior maintenance. Giving the plants space will allow for airflow helping to prevent potential disease conditions.

7. Dimension

Vertical versus Horizontal

Landscaping is more interesting when it provides depth. It's the difference in viewing a scene from a two dimensional perspective and a three dimensional one. Think of your yard as viewing a scene on an Analog TV versus the new HDTV, where picture quality is enhanced and literally makes you think your part of the scene.

The general thought process has been to line up taller plants as a background and adding multiple lower layers away from the foundation. This is called stacking; each level is used to face the former one down. Plants don't have to be presented in this fashion; it's perfectly alright to place larger plants in front sometimes, creating a multidimensional level. Using standard plants (a bush on a stick) or multiple forms with lower facers below provides vertical dimension. You always have more than one view of the landscaping; no one only looks at their yard, from the angle that is straight out from the point of origin.

Horizontal landscaping is important when we're trying to develop a plane, a flat contour, trying not to interrupt a line of sight. This principle comes into play with the prairie style landscape intent, where lower profiles are necessary for effect. It becomes important, where there is a low narrow porch. Keeping the landscaping flatter by using groundcover and widening the planting bed gives the illusion the porch is larger.

8. Accents

Accents are items such as plants or objects that bring attention to or distract from, other less desirable elements in the landscape. Single plants that offer a special bloom or structure are used in the landscape to enhance the scene. They can provide movement through eye contact, as they're replicated in the garden. They can direct your view from areas that you don't want to feature.

Different plant forms can be used to create the theme intended by the designer, i.e. topiaries to present a "modern/formal" garden.

They can be objects like statuary or a bird bath that provide an artistic dimension to the landscaping. They are especially useful when identifying the design intent of the garden, i.e. an oriental lantern for an Asian theme garden. They can feature movement or sound, to enhance the experience of exploring the garden.

9. Focus on the? FRONT DOOR

When people come to your home, you want them to feel comfortable. One of the easiest ways to accomplish this goal is to show them exactly where they should enter. Make it obvious by bringing attention to the entrance, Make sure you can see the entrance; use low profile planting around the door, Portal plants can be used to soften the lines around an entrance.

Portal plants have soft foliage, and don't give an implied threat from thorns or spiky foliage. The area around the entrance needs to open and inviting. A bright color door helps with identity also.

Walkways play an important part also. Avoid straight lines if possible, a gently curving walk will add interest, leading visitors to the proper location. The shortest distance is not always desired, but don't make someone go way out of their way, because they will find a shortcut.

10. Color

75% / 25% Rule

When choosing plants for your landscaping keep in mind the fact we do have weather issues. Plants can suffer cold damage, diminishing the look of the garden for several months. When developing your plant try to follow this rule, 75% Cold Hardy balanced with 25% Tropical (or potentially tender). Using tender plants such as succulent, herbaceous perennials, does give us a wider variety of color than using all cold hardy varieties.

Careful consideration of plant placement can help. Place tender plants on the South or East side of the house. Try to limit their permanent use in the front yard. Be aware of overhead canopy for frost protection, such as building roof lines or tree branches. Place them in areas where hardier plants would screen them in case of damage.

11. Public, Private & Service

Your yard is divided into three main areas:
The **Public** area is generally your front yard. This is the area of your property continually viewed by the public. This is the first impression people have of you. It's important to have this area looking good all the time. You could have a fabulous house inside but if the yard is not presentable, someone has already made a decision about you before entering. This is especially true if you want to sell your home.

The **Private** area is generally the back yard, an area you probably see and use more than any other part of your yard. Most people once they enter their home, don't interact with the front yard. Their view is toward the back yard, from the kitchen, lanai, family room, bedrooms, etc.,. This is the area where screening for privacy is important. This is where most of your outdoor activities take place, where patios and pools are located. In this area plant choice is more dependent on plant preference, colors etc. This is the area of the garden that can look like the family room instead of the living room. The **Service** area comprises the rest of the yard that has the driveway and garage. This is also along side the home where utilities are located and where air conditioners and pool equipment are found. The landscaping in these locations requires screening to hide or diminish view of these items. Placing accent material here would only bring attention to the objects you wish to distract from, if accent plants were used, the purpose would be to draw attention from an unpleasant view.

12. Screening

Fence vs. Hedge

Privacy is important to many, with today's life styles. Houses are larger and yards are smaller. People tend to spend more time in their yards, as relaxation and recreation become part of the daily schedule. More people are taking an interest in gardening as an leisure time activity.

Fencing helps to define property boundaries; it allows selective entrance through gates. It can provide low maintenance privacy, but it contributes to the "straight line syndrome" prevalent in the urban landscape setting. Many times landscaping is used in addition to a fence to help soften the defined lines.

If a fence is not required, hedges can substitute as a reasonable alternative. When selecting a plant variety to comprise the hedge, make sure you're choosing the plant form and growth size necessary, for the least amount of maintenance. Hedges should be treated as informal screening. To achieve quicker privacy results consider the option of a multilayer planting. Place larger plants at spaced intervals, especially ones with standard forms or multi trunks, variety's serving as over-story accents, then filling in underneath with denser foliage.

13. Plant Selection

Sun vs. Shade

When choosing your plant palette, consider the available light for your landscape situation. Most of the time the sun shade relationships with landscaping around the house are not greatly affected by the compass direction. Large tree canopies generally have a greater influence on sun or shade than the structure of a home. (Refer to three things everybody wants and should expect: Cold Hardy, for compass direction).

Sometimes plants requiring more light (full sun) can be acclimated to accept less light, unlike shade plants, when exposed to more direct sun, their leaves will burn. Certain plants have more light requirements, than others; do your research when choosing plants and spending money.

When visiting a nursery to find plants, look for ones in the same light situations as you have at home, full sun plants will be in open sunny areas, shade plants will be under canopy in the shade. Light affects plant structure, foliage, flowering and color.

MORE LIGHT

Denser
Short Wider
More
Bright

Foliage
Leaves
Flowers
Color

LESS LIGHT

Thinner
Long Narrow
Less
Dull

14. “Back To Nature” with Birds and Butterflies

Attracting birds and butterflies to the garden creates a living healthy environment for everybody. Planting plants that provide food, shelter and a place to raise their young will attract them bringing an array of color and movement to the garden. Many of the plants used in landscaping do provide opportunities to attract wildlife through their foliage, flowers or fruit.

Adding water features, such as a small pond, waterfall, or a simple bird bath provides additional sights and sounds that are pleasing to the senses.

Consider a bird feeder to attract our feathered friends; squirrel proof feeders are available. Birdhouses and bat houses can also provide focal points of interest especially when in use.

Limiting chemical controls allows for natural control of insect populations thus eliminating the need for harmful elements that are exposing us and our environment to potential danger.

15. Budget

An investment opportunity!

Proper landscape planning will allow for a successful landscape experience. When designing your landscaping you should expect your investment to last long term, instead of being a short time mistake. Lasting a minimum of eight to ten years. Certain plants such as annuals are used to enhance the garden and are added when needed. Plants such as trees are expected to go beyond a decade perhaps into the next century. When the proper accent plants are used and future growth is anticipated, they are valuable elements in future renovations. Plants such as palm trees are actually an investment for the future, as their value grows with time. They are easily relocated if necessary. Many of the specimen palms found in today's landscaping started in someone else's garden.

16. Estimate vs. Design

When you've designed your own landscaping you'll realize how much time it takes to accomplish this task. Most people mistake an estimate for a design. An estimate is based on a design.

Every design carries

- It's own intent
- Plant palette
- Value
- Creativity
- Successful elements
- Degree of long term viability
- Experience of the designer

The best way to insure your investment, if you're going to hire a professional to assist you is, find a designer who'll provide the opportunity for you to experience the fore mentioned items. Compensate the designer for their time spent, creating your original composition.

Seek estimates for your project. Develop a plant list based on size requirements, so that you will be able to compare "estimates" on an equal basis, thus insuring you have the best price available. If the designer is independent from the landscape company hired to install the project, consider hiring that person to oversee the job installation as your representative.



LANDSCAPING “YOUR” HOME

LANDSCAPING “YOUR” HOME

1. Consideration

Gardening Knowledge and Interest

2. Family Needs: The 6 P’s

Patio, Pool, Parking, Play Area, Privacy, Pets

3. Landscape Areas

Public Private Service

4. Role turf plays in the landscape

‘To Sod or not to Sod’

5. Sun versus Shade

6. Walks & Drives

Stepping Stones, Pavers, Bricks, Concrete, Mulch

7. Plant Considerations *Color, Cold Hardy, Low Maintenance*

Foliage, Flowers, Fruit

8. Fencing vs. Hedges (Informal Screening)

9. Curve Appeal

Straight vs. Curves

River of Grass

10. The Role of Maintenance

Proper spacing with size recognition

11. Relocation vs. Removal

Considerations: Age, Value, Size

LANDSCAPING “YOUR” HOME

We are now going to consider the possibilities for our own home or project.

1. Consideration

Gardening Knowledge and Interest

Do you like to work in the yard? Is gardening your hobby. Are you interested in a specific area of gardening; collecting certain varieties of plants? Are there issues that keep you out of the sun? Do you just want to come home and enjoy the yard. Did you hate pushing that lawnmower as a child

2. Family Needs: The 6 P’s

Parking, Patio, Privacy, Pool, Play Area, Pets

When considering your landscape project, think about the needs of your family. What areas need to be addressed.

PARKING

Driveway space; how many cars does the family have? Does there need to be offset parking. Is on street parking a viable option. Is there room for a circular drive. How will the drive connect to the front door. What material should it be constructed from? concrete, pavers, brick etc.

A good rule of thumb is to start the front walk closer to the road than the garage. The closer to the garage the walk is placed, the more likely someone will block the garage door from ready access.

PATIO

Outdoor living has become an important part of our daily lives. The back yard has become a place for relaxation. Many people have turned to the outdoor kitchen for entertaining. This area in our “private space” should reflect your personal needs. Is sound from a soothing water feature or gentle wind chime, important. How about fragrance, which can be accomplished with many varieties of plants. Consider night lighting for after dark enjoyment.

PRIVACY

People enjoy sharing their outdoor living spaces with invited guests, but don't necessarily want to share their activities with the surrounding community. Most people enjoy a bit of privacy that's why curtains were invented. Screening can be accomplished in a variety of ways; from fencing to hedges. Options include channeled lattice panels mounted between posts, covered with flowering vines. Instead of high maintenance hedges look at alternatives such as over story specimens with under plantings. Fences and/or screen plantings help to define boundaries. Proper placement of gates can provide access and direction for visitors.

POOL

Considering a pool? Location is important; is there access for construction and future maintenance needs? "To screen or not to screen", if screening is not desired; a fence for security is a requirement. The pool area becomes very transitional over the life time of the family, starting with recreational needs, then more adult entertainment, finally an architectural feature, that enhances the garden's atmosphere.

PLAY AREA

Like the aforementioned pool, the play area is transitional too. A young families' needs differ from that of older adults. Children need open areas for playtime and exercise. Perhaps a play structure is desired but it should be placed accordingly, to accommodate views from the living areas of the home.

A garden needs to be designed to give children a sense of wonder and appreciation. Including plants that attract wildlife such as birds and butterflies, leaves life long impressions of nature.

If a formal garden is desired, perhaps find a way of separation, so your worry is not what flowers the kids, or grandchildren pick.

As the garden and family matures, maybe the play structure could be converted into a potting shed or green house.

PETS

These family members have their own needs, from recreation to bathroom facilities, a safe environment is necessary for their health and safety.

Consideration must be given to the plant palette insuring poisonous plants aren't included in the plant inventory.

3. Landscape Areas

Public Private Service

Your yard, as previously mentioned in the “Art of Landscaping” is divided into three main areas. Let’s explore how the areas relate to your yard.

PUBLIC

Landscaping is view from inside the house also. When you are planning your design, go to the windows of your home and check out the view; what do you see? From your front windows you’re looking across the front yard generally toward the street. Is there a busy road that needs some screening or noise abatement. Do you look down a neighbor's driveway into their service area?

Is the neighborhood environment friendly; where people when taking a stroll are interactive when spotting people relaxing on a front porch? Is the front porch at ground level, requiring low profile plants to invoke a feeling of space, or elevated needing some facer planting.

PRIVATE

The back yard is usually the private area; what is your view in this direction. Creating pleasant views is central to success in this area. Placing children’s play areas are best places at the sides of the yard and not serving as the central focal point. Privacy should start at the front of the home by creating blocks for sight lines Overlapping larger accents set in a triangulated pattern will contribute to the screening process.

4. Role turf plays in the landscape

‘To Sod or not to Sod’

Grass is an integral part of most landscaping. It provides open spaces for recreation, exercise opportunities for pets and flow for tying yard spaces together. Think of grass as carpet in your home, it connects the rooms together, providing transition between separate areas of the home.

It is not the evil, wicked water using monster, that it’s made out to be in these “Green” times. It requires the same amount of water as most other plants, 1” per week when established properly. The main problems with turf, is it’s caretakers; when too much water, over fertilization and under cutting occur, trouble starts.

Lawn areas can be effectively reduced. Consider long, slightly curving strips along the sides of the home (about four feet) between the foundation and property line, giving the illusion of a river, instead of a wide ditch. Planting beds can be enlarged to create walkways, constructed from contrasting organic materials (pine bark) or stepping stones, to allow movement through the garden; avoiding foot traffic on the grass areas.

5. Sun versus Shade

Both these conditions contribute to the unique settings provided in your landscape space. Contributing factors are direction of placement of the home, surrounding architecture and over story trees or shrubs. Understanding the needs of your plants will help contribute to the success of your gardening efforts. When choosing plants at a nursery pay attention to the areas where they are located at. Be sure to replicate the same light conditions they are in as with your yard.

SUN

Plants that have been grown in full sun, can generally be used in less light areas, than shade plants can be used in fuller light conditions. Some plants through the acclimation process (exposed to more light through successive generations) have been successfully introduced into full sun conditions, i.e. many azalea varieties. The south side of the home provides the most direct sunlight all day; the east exposure is morning sun, with the west exposed to afternoon sun, which is generally more intense. Full sun helps plants develop more colorful foliage, and more flowers. Leaves tend to be more compact and broader.

SHADE

Plants grown in shade can accept plenty of light, but direct sun will cause sunburn (brown spots on the leaves). Foliage is generally thinner. Leaves are usually longer and narrower. Colors are softer and not as vibrant. Plants with broad, darker green foliage tend to do better in the lowest light situations. The north side of the home tends to be the shadiest area throughout the day. Over story plants will play an important role in reducing sun burn with more tender plants, also helping with limited frost protection also.

6. Walks & Drives

Stepping Stones, Pavers, Bricks, Concrete, Mulch

With some many materials to choose from today, you have many options to create a wide variety of surfaces to walk, drive or park on.

Stepping Stones

These are good for creating walkways through the garden, They are perhaps a little too informal for entrance walks as they are normally spaced apart (the users walking stride would determine spacing). They come in a variety of shapes and colors and sizes; from natural shapes to geometric forms. They could be used to create a patio space; some styles have an interlocking pattern. They reduce the need for contrasting mulches for walkways.

Pavers

This media is fast replacing concrete for a more fashionable style with flexibility for better drainage opportunities, root control options and color. Made from concrete, and colored in the manufacturing process; they offer a long term investment opportunity that will pay dividends over the life of the project. They can be recycled by relocation, if the needs of the homeowner change. They help create design intent, through different available styles.

Concrete

It continues to be the most widely used building material for the functions we are addressing. It can be formed to accommodate different shapes. It can have colored added or the surface stained. It can be stamped to provide patterns. It's drawbacks include cracking from poor installation; or outside sources, including settling or root expansion. It requires more preparation than paver installation, making it more difficult for a do-it-yourself application.

Mulch

This material is used when a more natural look is desired. It is generally used for walks and in some cases, for commercial applications such drives or parking, i.e. rural areas such as parks or recreation sites.

When used for walk ways in the home environment, a contrasting mulch such a pine bark nuggets makes a good choice, when used in conjunction with a lighter product such as cypress mulch; as the ground cover material, throughout the flower bed. The darker mulch with thicker texture, makes a good traveling surface. The pathway is laid out first, then the landscaping is completed; the bed is mulched leaving the pathway to be filled in at the end of the process.

7. Plant Considerations *Color, Cold Hardy, Low Maintenance* Foliage, Flowers, Fruit

When choosing your plant selection, most of the choices will be based on the three things everybody wants, mentioned in the introduction of this segment,

Color, Cold Hardy, and Low Maintenance. To meet these goals an array of choices will be available in each criteria.

Color can be obtained through colorful foliage; beautiful flowers, and interesting fruit. Leaves can display bright colors, variegation or unique shades of green. Flowers come in an array of shapes and sizes featuring many tones and contrasts. Fruits are common to most plant varieties; changing colors as they mature. Properly planned you should expect color to be on display everyday of the year.

Cold Hardy evokes the thoughts of evergreens and hollies, but there are many more plant choices available in this criteria. Plants with thick stems and woody branches. Plants that go dormant, shedding foliage during the cooler months, usually provide a beautiful display when emerging in the spring.

Placing certain plants in protected areas; using the foundation of the building for blocking cold winds, or overhead canopy for frost protection, will enable some tender plants to withstand lower temperatures.

Low Maintenance comes when establishing your design criteria, the proper plants is put in the proper place, or size appropriate plants are used as necessary. Remember if you have a low window, three feet off the ground, then use a plant that only grows to about three feet, not one that has the potential to grow six feet and must be continually pruned to remain under three feet.

When creating your design it's better to establish plant criteria than to commit to a plant choice and have to find away to use that plant. This design process will give you multiple choices when you are ready.

8. Fencing vs. Hedges (Informal Screening)

Fencing for privacy is generally confined to the back yard although fencing for security can extend beyond the backyard sometimes enclosing the front yard also.

If you're planning a fence several things must be considered:

1. You might need a permit from your city or county government. Fencing above a certain size might require special permission (a variance with neighbors approval).
2. You might need permission from your homeowners association, if applicable.
3. If installation is performed by a Fence Company and/or professional installer, a survey of your property will be required.
4. Certain fencing might not be allowed in a residential neighborhood, i.e. farm fencing such as barbed wire or security fencing such a razor ribbon; two types of fencing reserved for commercial areas only.
5. If cost is a factor then consider using a different fence to act a "Face", especially when the fence has only a frontal view from a road and the sides are not visible. Use a wood or vinyl panel to achieve this look, the sides and back could be chain link or a less expensive alternative.

Always set the fence back a little bit so it doesn't connect to the corner of the house, continuing the line of the building. This set back will allow for more dimension.

The exciting thing about fencing today, is that it comes in a variety of styles, colors, textures and materials. Even the old, gray chain link comes in colors; green, brown, white and even black. Using black allows the fence to disappear into the background.

Remember to include access on both sides of the property with placement of gates corresponding with the type of traffic. Use walk gates (or combination of) where necessary to allow access for maintenance of the property, i.e. lawnmowers. Drive gates are used when vehicular traffic needs access, with grass lanes disguised as open lawn areas.

Hedges when used for privacy, should be considered as informal screens, allowing for less rigid maintenance standards. Choosing the height and width requirement is more important at this stage of the design process. choosing a specific variety comes later in the "Plant Selection" stage.

9. Curve Appeal

Straight vs. Curves

While you have been taking measurements of your project and doing the layout; applying those measurements to your work sheet, you have been drawing straight lines. Think how boring your project would be if the only lines in the garden, were straight (an exception would be a formal design intent) When you are taking the next step in the design process you will be using a compass to create lines. From those lines you will explore curves, ultimately creating your flower bed areas.

Curves are easier to maintain as there is less need for backing in and out of tight spaces, which are eliminated through the design initiative; continued forward movement is encouraged.

River of Grass

This concept allows access and movement of lawn equipment through the yard in a motion much like a vacuum cleaner (with operator) waltzing from room to room, as the carpet beckons movement, from one space to another.

10. The Role of Maintenance

Proper spacing with size recognition

As previously mentioned preplanning and layout requires proper measurements which will allow consideration of the space available for planting. The graphing system was created as a shortcut to allow the designer to accurately predict the number of plants needed for a chosen space, i.e. the foundation of a home. Choosing a plant, with the profile (height and width) that fits the space allowed by the grid, will insure future success.

11. Relocation vs. Removal

Considerations: Age, Value, Size

A dilemma faced by many homeowners is to move and reuse, or remove and destroy plants that are not compatible with the new design. Many people take the position that plants are living organisms that need to be given another chance at life; unfortunately the wrong plant in the wrong place, is generally considered a weed.

The designer needs to consider existing plantings when creating the new concept, so here is a list of ten things to consider when making decisions:

1. Are there plants that could be used as accents in their current location?
2. Do the plants to be relocated, fit into the proposed project via site considerations, i.e. sun/shade requirements, soil issues, water needs?
3. Is the plant something that someone else would like to have?
4. Are they healthy, or will they create a problem when introduced to another location, i.e. weed contamination, insect or disease carrier.
5. Is this a treasured heirloom passed down for generations?
6. Is this plant a senior citizen, whose delicate state wouldn't survive transplanting. Some plants can not be transplanted because of root issues. It generally requires a fibrous root ball to be a successful transplant candidate.
7. Is this a valuable specimen that is worth saving; example a Ligustrum or palm, etc?
8. If a large specimen, is there access to safely relocate?
9. Is the cost to relocate reasonable? Many times it's actually less expensive to replace than relocate.
10. Will the plant fit into the current design and be compatible to the design intent?

Defining Your Outdoor Living Space

A very important part of our lifestyle is recreational time, the space somewhere between work and sleep. It's a time for family interaction, social activity, relaxation etc.. We seem to have so little time in our busy lives that these moments become cherished.

One of the best places to spend the limited amount of time you have each day is your own backyard, in a space that allows you to fulfill your needs, somewhere to recharge your batteries.

Making an investment here returns a far bigger dividend than any other home improvement.

When considering creating an outdoor living area consider the following while making a list of your needs:

- Patio
- Pool
- Privacy
- Play Area
- Pets

Do you have a hobby? Cooking, gardening, sports, nature activities, i.e. bird watching, etc.. If you like to travel to exotic locations, why not create your own special retreat. Have you ever thought of creating your own outdoor art gallery or sculpture garden? Do you have a passion for collecting specimen plants like orchids? Would you like to have a wildlife sanctuary?

What ever interest or dreams you have can be fulfilled in your own private space with proper planning.

To start identify the space you have available. Take a survey of your property with the foot print of your home and hardscaping (walks and drives) and enlarge (most start at 1" = 30') it to a readable scale, I think 1"=4' is the best. Don't have a survey? you can take your own measurements to create one.

Your yard is divided into three spaces:

1. Public
2. Private
3. Service

The Public Area is normally the front yard. This is where visitors get their first impression of you if they've never met you. This is the "face" of the house.

The Private Area is your retreat. It's an area of the yard usually defined by fencing or hedges.

The Service Area is generally the garage side of the home. This is the side where garbage cans, air conditioning units, etc. are located. This is an area generally screened from even your view.

A properly planned landscape subdivides these spaces and connects them like rooms in a house. You have a formal living room which is usually the front yard, a place you normally keep looking good for company. The private area is generally the backyard, representing the family room, kitchen and maybe a bedroom where quiet time and solitude are important. This is a space where things can be a bit messy, looking as it should, lived in!

Just as in your home each of these rooms will have a floor, which can be soft-scapes material, i.e. like grass or mulch to hard-scapes, consisting of concrete, brick or pavers. The rooms are connected with the same material or a combination there of. Walkways provide direction and create movement.

Walls are added using plants or fencing, creating privacy or screening. Spaces are left for doorways to provide entrance and exit. Openings form windows to provide outside views and showcase vistas.

Ceilings are created with overhead structures, like pergolas and arbors. Tree branches provide overhead canopy also.

Think about grass as water and treat it as such; channeling it, creating soft flowing curves like a river instead of a long straight ditch, thus creating a sense of movement drawing visitors through the garden.

Proper planning will allow you to create a long term investment that will return dividends for many years to come, providing entertainment for life.

Outdoor Living Spaces, Functional Considerations!

Floors

Walls

Ceilings

Windows

Circulation and Seating

Temperature and Ventilation

Lighting

Defining Your Outdoor Living Space

1. Lifestyle

Recreational Time between Work and Sleep

Family Interaction, Social Activity, Relaxation

2. Best Place - Back Yard

3. Best Investment

4. 5 P's Patio, Pool, Privacy, Play Area, Pets

5. Hobbies

Cooking, Gardening, Sports, Travel to Exotic Locations, Passion for Plant Collecting, Wild Life Sanctuary , Nature Activities

6. Public, Private, Service

7. Space Identity

THINKING
OUTSIDE
THE
SIDEWALK

Thinking Outside The Sidewalk

Sidewalks provide a solid surface allowing people to travel from one place to the other without having to walk through dirt or grass. Sidewalks provide transportation corridors for commercial venues like the one along the street in your front yard, or as with private venues allowing access from your driveway to your front door.

Traditionally sidewalks were formed in straight lines that followed the linear dimensions of the house. These lines formed long rectangles with ninety degree angles, turning sharply toward the destination point when negotiating a corner. The long straight stretches allowed only minimal space between the walk and foundation, further accenting the long straight lines of the architecture.

At some point in time, walk ways were allowed to meander. Materials like bender boards were used to form gentle curves that softened the straight lines of a building's architecture. This change provided wider spaces for planting allowing for more dimension.

Your personal walk way provides another function also, it provides an edge for your planting space between the walk and the foundation of house, but confining the garden just to one side of the walk can be a boring mistake also.

Think about allowing the walk meander through the planting area or allow the grass to cross the walk toward the foundation allowing for a long soft curve. The sidewalk and the grass are basically at the same level allowing for the mower to cross if necessary. Consider the grass a meandering river with the sidewalk serving as a bridge.

Walks don't have to be made from poured cement, they can be created from other materials including brick, interlocking concrete pavers, natural stone or even concrete stepping stones for a more informal look.

If you're looking for the rustic touch, meandering walks through the garden can be created with pine bark nuggets, use the pine bark as a contrast to cypress mulch used for cover in the planting beds. To meet a particular theme application, wood can be used creating a board walk effect especially for a simulated beach side design intent.

Materials for hard surface sidewalks and driveways:

Concrete

Grey formable material created by mixing sand, water and lime. It ultimately forms a hard surface when it dries. Can be stained or painted.

Stamped Concrete Created by stamping a pattern in wet concrete.

Colored Concrete Created by adding color to the concrete mix.

Salted Concrete Unusual patterns are formed using rock salt added to the top layer of the setting concrete to form depressions by melting after application. Care must be taken to insure only a small size salt crystals are used!

Concrete Pavers

Colored concrete is formed into shapes that form interlocking patterns. They come in a variety of colors; solid and mixes. Laid on recycled crushed concrete with concrete border.

Brick

A natural product formed from clay, limited to 4x8 shapes. Available in a variety of colors. Used for a more traditional look.

Laid on sand (or as above).

Travertine

A quarried stone product presented in tile form. Best for floor applications not *recommended for driving on. Generally laid on a concrete surface.

Key Stone

Quarried natural coral showcasing the actual animals that formed this hard product, *(same recommendation as above).

Natural Stone

Quarried natural product that comes in random shapes or can be cut to certain standards including width, depending on usage. Can be laid as an overlay on concrete or with a sand base or directly on the ground.

Concrete Stepping Stones

Colored concrete is compressed into defined shapes either with a plain finish or stamped surface. Comes in a variety of shapes.

Popcorn Stone

Colored concrete aggregate stamped in molds to create various shapes and sizes generally round or square. Losing popularity because of more choices now than when first introduced. Has a rough surface and dirties easily. Originally offered in several colors now just white.

Design Intent

From

“Tropical To Traditional”

**How to create your personal
landscape look!**

DESIGN INTENT

Landscape Design Ideas Based on Personal Preference and/or Architecture, etc.

When planning for a landscape design, keep in mind the possibility of creating a design theme for the project. When you go to a major theme park the architecture blends with the plant choices, creating the illusion that you're visiting a faraway land, an enchanted place that conjures excitement, pleasure, relaxation and/or a sense of adventure.

The elements have been carefully planned to help you enjoy your experience during the visit. Sometimes these features are obvious, other times they are subtle. They tell a story; instead of words they use visual cues of color and movement. Through touch, sound, and sometimes scent, the senses are stimulated also.

The following ten items are "Design Intent Ideas" created through discussions with a group of college students involved in a landscape class, learning the design process. Each one is a basic concept (with accents), that will help achieve the goal of recognition, for your efforts.

There are probably many more styles, than the ones listed below, as there are as many different ideas as designers, but these will give you plenty of ideas when creating your garden. Some styles may overlap, as some of the design principles might be shared, but it's the accents which will give a distinct separation for your visual enjoyment.

1. Oriental (Symbolic)
2. Formal (Form)
3. Cottage Style (Color)
4. Flora-Tropical (Jungle)
5. Shades of Green (Monochromatic)
6. Florida Natives (Natural)
7. L A Style (Mediterranean)
8. Southwest (Desert)
9. Midwest (Prairie Style)
10. Traditional South (Classic)

GARDEN STYLES

1. **Oriental (Symbolic)**

Sand, Stone and Water

There are sub styles in this category, the Japanese and Chinese have subtle differences between their gardens. The Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis showcases both. For more information go to **www.mobot.org**

In the Chinese Garden, plants are used sparingly and are chosen to represent symbolic meanings. Architecture is more prevalent and includes walls and courtyards. The plants take a minor role in the design. This is a garden of function whereas the Japanese garden is more of style. The generic style combines both, celebrating nature by using these elements! Nature plays an important role in influencing the garden's design.

Sand used to represent the ocean, It is raked to provide ridges that simulate waves, creating peace and tranquility; commonly used in a Zen Garden.

Stone provide structure in the garden. They are symbolic and represent many ideas, from geologic structures to masculinity and femininity.

Water can be existing in the form of an aquatic feature, i.e. waterfall and/or pond. It can be simulated with a swale (a sloping hole in the ground) lined with short grasses. Water provides life and sound. Fountains are not found in nature, so they wouldn't be part of the oriental style.

Scale is important to the garden; along with simplistic plantings. Architectural features such a lanterns and bridges, are effective in portraying the theme. Paths are important as they reflect life's journeys.

Plants that help portray the theme include, Nandina, Bamboo, Grasses, Chrysanthemums, Pines, Lotus, Flowering Plum, Juniper spp., Magnolia Soulangeriana and Bonsai Specimens, etc..

2. **Formal (Form)**

Topiary, Meatballs and Lollipops, Hedges

This style is used where it is necessary to convey a feeling of order and symmetry. Straight lines are created with geometric precision. Nature is controlled. This style is form over content. Formal gardens started in Europe, the parterres (pattern gardens), the stylized ornamental hedges found at Versailles, are based on symmetry. The English “Gardenesque” style was created to showcase planting design as an art form. Surrounding plants were removed to highlight the perfect form of the plant. Intensive maintenance practices were employed. Plants were maintained in geometrical beds.

European topiary began in Roman Gardens, the plants were pruned into formal shapes representing geometric symbols and animals.

The oriental art of topiary differs from the European style as it practices a different esthetic form, a natural one that celebrates the character of a plant influenced by wind and weather.

The terms “meatballs and lollipops” are suggestive of the plant forms, created by excessive pruning. The plants are never allowed to develop a natural look. Continual pruning is necessary to keep the plane of the plant from being disrupted by excess growth.

Plants that help convey this style are Boxwood, Podocarpus, Viburnum spp., Holly spp. Standard plant forms (plants with a single trunk) such as Azaleas, Hibiscus, Ligustrum (standards only), Fejoia, Juniper spp.. Some plants are espaliered, attached in a flat vertical plane to a wall or grown freestanding flattened against the wall, plants include Pyracantha and Little Gem Magnolia. Architectural accents include fountains, benches, pergolas, etc.

3. Cottage Style (Color)

Perennials, Mass Plantings, Roses

This style sometimes referred as the English Garden, comes from the Romantic period where art and literature were blossoming. There was a revolt against the Classic movement emphasizing order and discipline (see above). Plants were now used to inspire our emotions, instead of intellectually. This style was born from the peasant gardens which were practical as well as esthetically pleasing. Herbs were part of this style based on their cooking and medicinal uses. Claude Monet the French Impressionist, promoted this informal style with his paintings. The plantings feature a diverse number of plant varieties seemingly presented in a haphazard pattern, but conveying a sense of nature.

Plants used in this style are garden roses, annuals and perennials; anything that is relatively low growing and provides continuous color. Architectural features include vine draped arbors.

4. Flora-Tropical (Jungle)

Palms, Foliage, Flowers, Variegation, Large Leaves

This design intent represents Florida and the tropics; colorful flowers, palm fronds waving in a gentle tropical breeze, landscaping that evokes an island lifestyle. The caveat of this style is that many times the plants used, are too tropical for the zone they're used in resulting from yearly destruction due to cold temperatures or the hassle of continually covering them each year for protection. Be aware when choosing your plant palette, the plants' sensitivity to temperatures in the zone you're landscaping in. Other factors which can moderate temperature are:

- Overhead canopy, i.e. large shade tree or building presence.
- Placement in relationship to building position, i.e. planted on a south face.
- Elevation (cold air, pockets in low areas).
- Location in relationship to a large body of water (lake); specifically the southern side, warm air radiates off of open water at night (the wind generally comes from the north west moving toward the south, slightly increasing temperatures in it's path.)
- Placement in relationship to a paved surface, i.e. roadway or large parking lot. The heat from the sun will be absorbed during the day and reflected back in the evening.

Using plants with variegated (varied in appearance or color) foliage conveys dappled sunlight through the jungle canopy, i.e. Variegated Ginger, Bromeliads etc.. Plants with large leaves suggest lush tropical foliage. Plant forms such as clumps of bamboo, bananas and palms represent the design intent.

Foliage plants include Philodendron Selloum, Monstera, Gingers, Surinam Cherry, Dianella, Crotons, Bird of Paradise etc..

Featured flowering plants include Hibiscus, Ixora, Allamanda, Frangipani, Duranta, Nun's Orchid, Brunfelsia Gardenia (grafted only), Flamingo Flower, Cordyline spp. , etc.

Tropical fruits like Avocado, Mango, Papaya, Lychee, Citrus (Lemons and Limes) provide visual treats which can be eaten.

Hardy plants used for effect include Awabuki Viburnum (Mirror Leaf), Loquat, Dwarf Bottle Brush, Nagi Podocarpus, etc..

Plants with scent include Tea Olive, Gardenias, Night Blooming Jasmine, Cereus, etc.

5. **Shades of Green** (Monochromatic)

Minimal Flowers, Texture and Foliage

Sometimes flowers are not desired for the primary focal points in the garden.

Plants without noticeable flowers tend to be hardier. Flowers with scent can be offensive to people with allergies.

There are many plants featuring interesting textures and leaf forms that include:

- Needle like foliage - Junipers, Pines, Dwarf Podocarpus. etc.

- Shiny leaves - Hollies, Little Gem Magnolia, etc.

- Fuzzy leaves - Texas Olive, Tibouchina spp., etc.

- Small leaves - Boxwood, Dwarf Walter's Viburnum, Shilling Holly, etc.

- Rough Leaves - Viburnum Suspensum, etc.

- Spiked foliage - Iris, Sanseveria, Spineless Yucca, Dwarf Oyster, etc.

- Feather like leaves - Ferns including Macho, Sword, etc.

- Plants with foliage color include - Crotons, Blue Pacific Juniper, Sea Green Pfitizer, Plum Loropetalum, Jack Frost and Howardii Ligustrum, Variegated Pittosporum, Nandina (winter color), Gold Mound Duranta, etc.

Plant forms include

Weeping - Weeping Yaupon, Willow, Podocarpus Gracillior

Multiple (several trunks) Ligustrum, Crape Myrtle

Bush - Red Cluster Bottle Brush, Nellie Stevens Holly

Standard (single trunk) - Azalea, Fejoia, Majestic Beauty

Raphiolepis, Rose, Hibiscus, Ficus

Prostrate - Procumbens, Parsonii, Dwarf Shore and Blue Rug

Juniper

6. Florida Natives (Natural)

Native Plants

Using native plants in the landscaping is the latest trend in gardening. However care must be taken to understand the needs of the plants you intend to use; soil conditions should be taken into consideration when choosing native varieties. Many of the recommended plants might be “crossover varieties”, ornamentals already for sale in the retail nursery/garden center before the word “Native” became fashionable, these include Coontie, Live Oak, Fire bush, Native Viburnum, Beauty Berry, etc. Natives play a great role when landscaping for wildlife. This style encourages wildlife, by providing shelter and food. Many of the popular native plants have flowers or berries that are important food sources for birds, and butterflies.

This style of landscaping is very informal. Multiple layers of foliage with open lawn areas attract birds with shelter and protection from predators. A small pond or bird bath will provide water for birds; for butterflies place a shallow container filled with rocks (and water) on the ground.

Meandering walkways through the garden encourage exploration. For walkways use dark organic materials, i.e. pine bark for contrast; for the planting beds use cypress mulch or pine straw. If only one type of mulch is preferred, use stepping stones for the pathway. Stepping stones should be spaced to mimic the gait of the intended user.

Plants for this style include Palmettos, Sabal Palms, Needle Palms, Lantana,

Black Haw Viburnum, Pawpaw, Bear Grass, Pine spp., Dahoon Holly, Wax Myrtle, Anise, Red Cedar.

Remember most “Native” plants (with the exception of evergreens) have a seasonal nature, meaning there are times because of weather or temperature they may go dormant (defoliate); perhaps not looking presentable in mass plantings.

For more information go to

www.nsis.org/garden/index.html

7. L A Style (Mediterranean)

Hidden Gardens, Screen Front Yards,
Groundcover vs. Lawn Grass,
Layered Plantings, Lot of Variety

This style conjures visions of lush gardens with a kaleidoscope of color; Fusion, would be a good word to describe the intent.

You walk through one room to the next, with hedges or fencing for walls to give a sense of privacy through out the garden. To create a hedge choose plants that provide the size and width required for the project, saving time and labor, with future maintenance.

Plantings toward the street away from the house, in the easement zone, will help screen the front yard, serving to enhance the intimacy of a porch and/or entrance to the home. Smaller defined areas can be developed around the front door, giving the illusion of a courtyard. This concept works well with a circle driveway.

Lawns areas are reduced and replaced with alternative ground covers. Plants are layered with upper story material, giving vertical accent. Color can be introduced with foliage, flowers and fruit. The plant list should include, Palms such as Mediterranean Fan, Windmill, Washingtonia and Sylvester Date. Popular accents include European Olive, Citrus, Grapes (on an arbor), Italian Cypress, Topiary plant forms , i.e. such as columns, spirals, balls, etc.. Groundcovers should include Dwarf Mondo Grass, Dwarf Confederate Jasmine i.e. Minima (green) or Bronze Beauty a beautiful tri-color variety.

Hardscaping should be accomplished with pavers, or stamped concrete. The “European Cobble” style of paver enhances walks and drives, introducing old world elegance. Night Lights can provide illumination, creating a romantic feeling after dark.

Highlighting accents can provide a sense of movement, as one’s vision is drawn from one object to another. Illumination also gives a totally different prospective after daylight hours, by providing a sense of peace and tranquility. Screening is provided also, as some things noticeable in the daylight disappear in the darkness, i.e. weeds, and other undesirable sights. Containers are also used to enhance the garden experience, from simple clay pots and jars to colorful ceramics and plastics. When these are added with the right plantings they create mini gardens within the gardens; herbs, roses and dwarf citrus are popular specimens.

8. Southwest (Desert)

Cactus, Succulents, Rocks

This style evokes images of the coyote and the road runner, sparse landscapes that require little or no water, but even in the desert there is beauty as plants and animals have evolved to adapt to the harsh conditions. Leaves have been replaced with stems, thick and waxy to avoid excess water loss, thorns were developed for defense. There are seasons where flowers are present, generally in the spring when temperatures are moderate and sparse rainfall is prevalent. The secret to this garden is well drained soil, plants that have survived for centuries in dry conditions can not be expected to thrive with wet feet. This is the only time when organic mulch is replaced by gravel or rocks; an underlayment (ground cover) is recommended to prevent contamination and weed development. There are many varieties of Cactus and Succulents available in the local nursery and/or garden center. The spiky foliage of plants like Yucca and Agaves help enhance the theme.

This design intent works well with a Southwest style house that features a stucco appearance, with arched windows and a barrel tile roof. The “Rock” garden could also stand alone. The gravel/rock used for the groundcover should be in shades of brown, red or orange, avoid white or black. Larger rocks used for accents should also reflect these colors; avoid using native limestone boulders (Cap rock).

9. **Midwest (Prairie Style)**

Grasses, Horizontal layers, Low profile

Reminiscent of the Great Plains this landscape effect mimics the wide-open spaces of the west, where the skyline is unbroken with vertical accents. The prairie style of architecture was named after a design by Architect Frank Lloyd Wright, published in the Ladies Home Journal (1901). Lawn areas would be wide open spaces flanked with low plantings. Ornamental Grasses are the dominant plants massed in large groupings. Plantings of wildflowers are used for groundcover. Low profile trees should be planted in groups resembling widely spaced thickets. The trees chosen should be deciduous, losing their leaves for effect in the colder times of the year, Dwarf Crape Myrtles and native Plums would be good choices. Plants with prostrate profiles, i.e. Parsonii Juniper would be appropriate to use; their low profile gives a wind-swept appearance. Any plants that could be easily maintained less than three feet, in a mass planting would be appropriate.

10. Traditional South (Classic)

Camellia, Azalea, Pines

The classic plants of the traditional southern landscape define an earlier era. The relaxed feeling of the garden allows for a slower pace, beckoning visitors to take their time exploring the sight and sounds which change with the seasons. From early fall through spring, azaleas are a riot of color, with the dwarf varieties, i.e. Red Ruffle (red), Happy Days (purple) and Madonna (white), Pink Ruffle (pink), etc., blooming first. The semi-dwarf to medium growers, i.e. Duc de Rohn (salmon) Duchess of Cypress (apple blossom), White Duc (white), Fashion (orange-red), Pride of Dorking (magenta), etc., are the next to bloom.

The parade of color ends with the larger Indica varieties rounding out the show, i.e. Formosa (purple), Red Formosa (red violet), G.G. Gerbing (white), Judge Solomon (salmon), George Tabor, (light orchid) followed by Sublanceolata (orange-red). Little John, also a large grower features Burgundy Foliage and maroon flowers. Depending on weather conditions, moisture and temperature, blooming seasons will overlap. The dwarf varieties, semi-dwarf and medium cultivars may bloom several times throughout the year.

Camellias are a traditional plant of the south, showcasing their blooms from early fall through late spring depending on the variety. The two main types are Japonica, a fuller upright bush form, and the Sasanqua, a more open form with sweeping branches.

The Pine is a traditional tree of southern culture, it's a renewable resource providing pines needles and bark for mulch, turpentine, and lumber. It's evergreen foliage, soft green needles, whisper when wind the blows.

Other notable plants include Hydrangea, whose flower color depends on the soil, acid for blue, base for pink. The Crape Myrtle, multi color flowers and trunk(s) with exfoliating bark (peeling to reveal multiple colors of soft gray and brown). The Tea Olive provides fragrance from tiny white blossoms. The Magnolia Cultivars “Little Gem” (dwarf) Bracken Beauty and D. D. Blanchard; larger growing species. The copper color on the backs of the leaves is OK! The Oak Leaf Hydrangea resembles lilacs from the north. This deciduous shrub grows large and has many showy white flowers on it during the summer months. In the fall it’s foliage turns crimson before shedding. Roses are a traditional southern favorite especially the new “Knock Out” varieties, bred to require less care. Roses are best displayed in a formal setting. Kitchen gardens, at the back door are popular also as they produce fresh herbs and vegetables for home use.

Eleven more design styles can be found detailed in Volume I, of Solving the Landscape Puzzle.

Chapter 34

More Landscape Styles:

*Low Country, Tuscan, French provincial,
Townhouse, Spanish, Craftsman Style,
South Pacific, Coastal, Victorian and Art Deco*

Landscaping by the Shore

Sights, Sounds, Smells, Taste and Touch

“Enhancing the Senses”

Resources

http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/giam/planning_your_garden/theme_and_specialty_gardens/sensory_gardens.html

http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/giam/planning_your_garden/theme_and_specialty_gardens/fragrance_g.html

http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/giam/planning_your_garden/theme_and_specialty_gardens/touch_gardens.html

The garden has many dimensions to considered, beyond plant choices or placement!

1. Design Intent

The theme on which the garden can be created. Everyone doesn't necessarily approach their gardening efforts with this in mind, sometimes the garden dictates the theme by the elements used. It is a fun way of expression.

2. Artistic Expression

This is the way to personalize your garden, branding it with a look that expresses your unique style. Be careful not to over “Ornament”, try to keep to a minimum the number of gnomes and garden fairies that inhabit gardens and tend to multiply when left unsupervised. Generally the garden itself is a work of art, and doesn't need a lot of kitsch for support. Consideration should be given to certain garden elements such as Fountains, Statuary, Arbors, as they help enhance the design intent, and provide visual interest to the landscaping.

3. Secret Garden

This is a way to provide interest. Winding walkways that wander out of sight, leave visitors to wonder what they'll encounter next; providing a sense of excitement and anticipation. Gardens are rooms connected by hallways that allow movement through out the entire yard. Some rooms provide open vistas, others are restricted allowing only the occupant to view the content. Screening provides the privacy needed to maintain the surprise.

4. Gardenesque

A unique style of gardening introduced by John Claudius Loudon (1832), where emphasis was placed on the individual plant and placement; allowing the plant to reach it's potential without competition from others. Until then the idea was to mimic nature (the Picturesque Style). Gardenesque emphasizes botanical curiosities that suggest a collectors approach.

5. Night Time Observations

The garden has two faces, one that is a glow with bright light during daylight hours, the other a mysterious place shrouded in darkness, a place that doesn't welcome the casual visitor. It gives a sense of danger, hiding potential hazards.

The best way to enjoy the garden at night is through illumination. Creating a pattern of soft light that beckons entrance, highlights specimens and sets a relaxing mood, bringing the garden back to life after the sun goes down. Soft shadows hide things that are otherwise unsightly, i.e. weeds, etc. When properly lit, there is a sense of movement but care should be taken when lighting pathways that a runway effect is not created.

6. Bark With No Bite

Exfoliating Bark is a characteristic of several plants, including Crape Myrtle, Rainbow Eucalyptus, and the Sycamore Tree. This beautiful display comes when trees naturally shed their bark exposing an array of colors from soft white to shades of brown and gray. The illusion mimics a rendering from a paint-by-number set.

7. Sounds To Silence

Noise is a factor in our daily existence, creating pleasant distractions helps to mitigate it's existence. The gentle splash of a water feature is preferable to traffic noise. The soft whisper of a gentle breeze as it ruffles pine needles, or the click-clack of giant bamboo rubbing when disturbed, masks unwanted intrusions into our consciousness. These sounds can take us to far away places giving us the illusion for if only a few minutes, that we're traveling in some distant land.

8. The Orchestra

Have you ever listened to a cricket on a hot summer night or the spring peepers as the first rains of the season fall, or the toad chorus as they celebrate centuries old rituals of looking for a mate. The song of the Mockingbird as he announces his presence to a street lamp keeping him awake, lets us know that Nature approves of our gardening efforts. Providing food, water and shelter for our friends will insure a chorus of delightful noises, as they say Thank You! for your efforts.

9. Musical Notes

Wind Chimes make great additions to a garden, stirred by breezes they play melodious tunes from a soft tinkle to a substantial performance; sounds that seem they come from a Carillon Concert, randomly played depending on wind speed. Hang them from a Shepard's hook if a limb is not available.

10. Common Scents

The garden can feature sensory delights for the discriminating Nose to enjoy (be careful if you're designing for someone else, they might not appreciate your sense of smell). Scents can be introduced in a variety of ways, from flowers such as Tea Olive, Gardenia, Brunfelsia, Arenga, 'Dwarf Sugar Palm', Jasmine (including Confederate, Lakeview, Star, Sambac) and Banana Shrub, to leaves like Anise (smells like licorice when crushed), Silver Dollar Eucalyptus, Penny Royale, a mint that can be walked on (the crushed leaves emit a fragrance); other mints include Chocolate, Spearmint, Peppermint and Lemon Balm, etc. One unique plant in a group formerly called Cassia, now known as Sienna, is the Pop-corn Plant; when its leaves are crushed, they smell like popcorn. Many plants give off their fragrance at night to attract insects for pollination, like the Cereus Cactus, Night Blooming Jasmine, and Brugmansia; the 'Angels Trumpet'.

11. What's that Smell?

There is a unique group of plants called Amorphallus, their claim to fame is the odor they emit when they bloom. The Plant is nicknamed the corpse plant, because the malodorous odor it emits, attracting pollinating insects to the stench; not for every garden, but sought by some collectors.

12. Taste of The Garden

Including seasonal fruits and vegetables in your garden, will provide another dimension to your experience. Choosing plants with edible fruits (sometimes flowers) extends the pleasure outside the gardens boundaries. Consider using pineapples as a groundcover or blueberries for a foundation planting. Adding a dwarf citrus tree allows for color and taste. Create a vegetable garden that blends in with the surroundings, by using certain vegetables for accents. Herbs can be planted in decorative containers making them easier to control and harvest. Dwarf bananas fit well into a tropical themed planting.

12. A Touching Experience

Many commercial gardens don't want interaction with their plants; signs abound, "Look but Don't Touch", "Don't Walk in the Grass", "Don't Pick the Flowers", sound like Adult rules for Children.

The flower rule is funny because, picking flowers generally stimulates the plant to produce more, especially annuals. Perhaps with a lot of visitors, damage would occur, but a garden should be a place where all the senses are invoked. It should welcome everyone, and be used as a place to teach respect and develop an appreciation for beauty and Nature. There are many unusual leaf surfaces that are interesting to touch; from Fuzzy to Prickly, Soft to Rough, Thin to Thick, etc.

Fuzzy: Texas Olive, Tibouchina

Prickly: Holly, Juniper

Soft: Lambs Quarters, Weeping Podocarpus

Rough: Petrea 'Sandpaper Vine', Dwarf Viburnum

Thin: Iris, Mondo Grass

Thick: Cactus, Aloe

A GARDEN

**To a Horticulturist,
a place for growing plants.**

**To a Poet, a place that suggests rest
and meditation.**

**To a Landscape Architect,
a definite unit of design
with certain aesthetic and
utilitarian functions.**

**“Garden Design Illustrated”
by John & Carol Grant**

Enhancing the Senses With Plants!

Nighttime Observations

Angels Trumpet, Night Blooming Water Lilies,
Cereus Cactus

Bark with no Bite

Exfoliating Bark (Peeling) - Crape Myrtle,
Rainbow Eucalyptus, Sycamore

Sounds to Silence

Background Screening - Bamboo spp.
Viburnum: "Odoratissum", "Mirror Leaf",
Fejoia, Holly: "Oak Leaf", Red Cedar,
Little Gem Magnolia, Silverthorn

The Orchestra

Attracting Birds - Holly: "Weeping Yaupon", "Nellie
Stevens", Dahoon, "East Palatka",
Beauty Berry, Bird Peppers, Coontie

Common Scents

Tea Olive, Gardenia, Brunfelsia, Arenga, 'Dwarf Sugar
Palm', Jasmine (including Confederate, Lakeview, Star,
Sambac, Night Blooming) Banana Shrub, Anise (smells like
licorice when crushed), Silver Dollar Eucalyptus, Roses,
Lemon Balm, Mints: Penny Royale, a mint that can be
walked on (the crushed leaves emit a fragrance); other mints
are Chocolate, Spearmint, Peppermint, etc.

Taste of the Garden

Dwarf Banana, Blue Berries, Citrus, Mango, Avocado,
Loquat, Pineapple, Vegetables (Warm and Cool Season),
Monstera, Strawberries

PLANTS

FORM

AND

FUNCTION

Plant Forms

Bush

Standard

Multiple

Columnar

Pyramidal

Plants - Form and Function

When creating your ultimate landscape fantasy landscape, plants are the main media you incorporate together to create the living picture you desire.

Understanding their form and function will help you find the right combination to fulfill your design intent.

“Planning before Planting” is the best way to insure you’ll be making a successful long term investment. Short term mistakes waste valuable assets, like time and money, tending to discourage continued efforts. One of the many benefits of Gardening is a sense of fulfillment from being successful and watching your efforts continue to provide pleasure and purpose for many years to come.

After you’ve laid out your space (preferably on paper) and you’ve marked out a graph that will identify the proper spacing, and decided on your bed lines, the fun really begins. Unfortunately this is the part people find most tedious, but following the proper steps will speed the process and insure a successful conclusion for your efforts.

The interesting part of the design process is that the names of plants ultimately chosen are not important at this juncture, but their form is including height, width and function. By concentrating on form and function alone allows you to create a flexible design that allows for multiple plant choices without compromising the design intent.

Ground Cover

A low growing plant that requires minimal maintenance. It is usually chosen for its aesthetic qualities. It is generally a plant that grows less than two feet, Spacing will depend on how fast coverage is desired, Uses include: low profile for a low window, substitute for lawn, facing down a low foundation planting, etc..

Foundation

Plants that typically grow between three and four feet high (maintained height). Maintained height refers to the optimum height the plant can be sustained at with only minimal pruning required! These plants provide a pleasing break along a straight wall of stucco or siding, helping to soften the hard lines of architecture

Background

These shrubs give dimension to objects in the foreground whether plants or architectural forms.

Screening

Size and density are important for this criteria. Choose the plant that most fits the need for the required results.

Sky line

As with background these plants provide definition and dimension for a building. These plants would be placed in the back of the property behind the structure being landscaped rising behind and over the roof line allowing the eye to focus on the house and not beyond toward the horizon.

Portal

Plants meeting this criteria, are used to help bring focus to the front door. Their characteristics include color and soft non-threatening foliage. They are generally have a low profile with compact growth so as not to overpower the entrance.

Accent

Single plants that add interest to the garden drawing attention to themselves or away from an undesirable view. They lead us through the yard visually. They can be triangulated in groups of three, pointing us in a particular direction. They have influence on design intent.

Border / Facer

Plants that are used to border a planting bed, or face down a larger plant providing a layered look for a formal design intent.

PICKING the RIGHT PLANT for Your Garden.

What to know before you grow!

You never plan to fail, you fail to plan!

1. What's in a name?
2. Size Appropriate!
Architectural Awareness
3. Maintenance Considerations
“Meatballs and Lollipops”*
4. Requirements
Water Use, Sun or Shade,
Cold Hardy vs. Tender
5. Landscape Styles
Formal, Informal or Natural
6. Dimension
Horizontal vs. Vertical
7. Definitions
groundcover, foundation, background,
screening, sky line, portal, facer, accent
8. Foliage, Flowers, and Fruit
9. Price Comparison
10. New Plant Introductions

Right Plant For Your Garden

What to know before you grow!

1. What's in a Name

Many times a plants common name will be based on a description of the flower or some other plant characteristic, however numerous plants share the same common names or are known by different names so when you go exploring for plants, either in a nursery or on-line make sure you check on the scientific name to make sure you find the plant you actually want and expect.

Bird of Paradise is an example; there are two varieties of the same general name with quite a size difference between them; the smaller growing size (3-4') is *Strelitzia reginae*, also referred to as the Orange Bird of Paradise and larger size (up to 20') is *Strelitzia nicolai*, the White or Giant Bird of Paradise.

Some plants have names that describe their ultimate size, i.e. Dwarf Magnolia 'Little Gem' or Pygmy Date Palm; these plants are in comparison, smaller than larger cultivars, but they are not diminutive in size; Little Gem Magnolias grow up to twenty feet tall while larger varieties can top out at fifty feet or more and Pygmy Date Palms can grow to ten feet or more while the larger varieties in the Phoenix family do actually dwarf them.

2. Size Appropriate

This refers to finding the right plant to fit the area to be planted. When you are thinking about the design it's important to consider plant characteristics, i.e. the height and width requirements for the space, by doing so you will have several plant options to choose from when that time comes.

If you have windows three feet off of the ground, understand you'll want plants that only grow under that height, helping to reduce future maintenance. Plants that would be appropriate for this application would be Dwarf Bottle Brush, Dwarf Podocarpus, Boxwood, Parsonii Juniper, Semi-dwarf Azalea or any lower growing foundation plant.

Certain plants seem like a good deal at the time, but in the long term they cause problems, for instance the Washingtonia Palm, many people like the plant form and the prices are low for the size, but they don't realize this palm can grow to more than fifty feet tall dwarfing a one story house.

Plant Choices for Central Florida

- **Ground Cover**

Dwarf Confederate Jasmine; 'Minima', 'Bronze Beauty' 'Texas Long Leaf', Agapanthus, Daylily, Wedelia, Dianella, Liriope; 'Aztec Grass', 'Muscari', 'Super Blue', Mondo Grass, Dwarf Mondo Grass, Red Velvet, Joseph Coat, Dwarf Oyster, Purple Queen, Bromeliads, Perennial Peanut, Aspidistra, Grasses; 'Pink Muhley', White Fountain, Juniper; 'Blue Pacific', 'Parsonii', Ferns; spp.

- **Foundation**

Azalea; Semi Dwarf/Medium, Large spp., Indian Hawthorn, Dwarf Podocarpus 'Pringle', Dwarf Philodendron 'Xanadu', Arbutus, Trine, Serissa, Plumbago, Thyrsalis, Allamanda; 'Bush', 'Dwarf', Jasmine; 'Star', 'Downy', Ixora; spp., Walter's Dwarf Viburnum, Croton; spp., Dwarf Oleander, Schilling Holly, Dwarf Viburnum 'Suspensum', Loropetalum 'Plum', Japanese Boxwood, Pfitzer Juniper, Pin wheel Jasmine, Dwarf Fire Bush, Ligustrum 'Jack Frost'

- **Accent**
Bird of Paradise, Nandina, Gardenia (Grafted) spp., Hibiscus; spp. Jatropha, Hydrangea, Dwarf Crape Myrtle, Camellia; ‘Sasanqua’, ‘Japonica’; spp., Iris, Copper Leaf, Torulosa Juniper, Coontie, Cardboard Palm, Nellie Stevens Holly, Little Gem Magnolia, Cassia, Tibouchina, Red Cluster Bottle Brush, Buddleia, Crinum (**See Palms**)
- **Background/Skyline (See Trees/Palms)**
Washingtonia Palms, Red Cedar, Blue Cypress, Leyland Cypress,
Weeping Yaupon, White Bird of Paradise, Travelers Palm
- **Hedge/Screen**
Podocarpus, Viburnum; Awabuki, Suspensum, Odoratissum, Wax Myrtle, Surinam Cherry, Oleander, Cape Jasmine, Philodendron Selloum, Fejoia, Anise
- **Portal (Doorway)**
Nandina, Dianella, Dwarf Gardenia ‘Radicans’
- **Facer (See Ground Cover/Foundation Lists)**
- **Vines:**
Dipladenia, Woodbine (Red Honeysuckle), Honey Suckle, Mexican Flame, Confederate Jasmine, Carolina Jessamine, Petrea ‘Sand Paper’ Passion; spp., Dutchman’s Pipe, Sky, Pandora, Bougainvillea
Plant Choices (cont.)
- **Trees**
Flowering : Tabebuia spp., Florida Dog Wood, Red Bud, Plum ‘Thunder Cloud’, Chickasaw Plum, Flatwoods Plum, Silk Floss, Dwarf Magnolia; ‘Little Gem’, ‘D. D. Blanchard’, Texas Olive, Jacaranda, Peltoporum, Ligustrum, Red Cluster Bottle Brush, Crape Myrtle spp., Golden Rain Tree, Mimosa, Loblolly Bay, Loquat, Holly spp.
Fruit: Loquat, Citrus spp. Mango, Avocado,
Foliage Color: Red Bud ‘Forest Pansy’, Red Maple ‘Florida Flame’, Bald Cypress, Sweet Gum, Silver Dollar Eucalyptus

- Shade:** Oak; Live, Shumard, Sand Live, Elm; Winged, Drake, Pine; Slash, Long Leaf, Loblolly. River Birch, Weeping Willow
- **Palms (Fronde Designation)**
 - Pinnate:** Queen Palm, Fox Tail, Pindo, Canary Island, Sylvester, Reclinata, Pygmy, Arenga,
 - Palmate:** European Fan, Chinese Fan, Ribbon Palm, Windmill, Washingtonia
 - **Perennials**
 - Heather, Straw Flower, Bush Daisy, Lantana; spp., Flamingo Flower, Coreopsis, Kalenchoe, Mona Lavender, Pentas, Milkweed, Geraniums, Ruellia, Scarlet Sage
 - **Annuals**
 - Spring /Summer :** Melepodium, Coleus, Wax Begonia, Marigold, Vinca, Salvia, Zinnia, Portulaca, Moss Rose, Impatiens, Sun Flowers
 - Fall /Winter :** Pansy, Petunia, Salvia, Snapdragons, Calendula, Alyssum, Lobelia, Nasturtium, Wax Begonia

This list represents some of the many options you will have when choosing plants for your garden.

HAVE FUN!

My Plant Choices

Ground Cover

Foundation

Accent

Background/Skyline

Hedge/Screen

Portal

Facer

Vine

Trees/Palms

Volume II, Solving the Landscape Puzzle

Introduces you to the **maintenance** techniques from proper pruning, fertilizing, insect and disease control, things you'll need to know and use to keep your garden growing successfully.

It also gives you insight into a wide world of wonderful *plant profiles* for your garden outside and in. Allowing you a multitude of choices from **foliage** to **flowers** and **fruit**. Your landscape will offer you a year round palette of a kaleidoscope of seasonal color for your inevitable enjoyment and ultimate satisfaction.

You'll end up with a beautiful, colorful, low-maintenance garden and the satisfaction of knowing you completed it yourself.

The time, energy and money you invest in your landscape will pay dividends for years to come. Best of all-you'll do all of this on your schedule and within your budget (no design fees, no retail mark ups or ground preparation costs and no installation charges, literally saving you hundreds of dollars.)

Proper planning before planting assures a successful outcome of your project, the satisfaction of a job well done, and years of enjoyment.

As you work out the solution to your "landscape puzzle," you'll be adding value to your home for many years.

(Volume II, Solving the Landscape Puzzle to be published soon!)