

# PREVENTING CRIME THROUGH LANDSCAPE DESIGN

A Guide For Crime Prevention though the  
Use of Landscape Design

## Sustainable Design + Consulting

Landscape Architecture  
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# INTRODUCTION

Personal and family safety is always a concern. In our day and age when the news is filled with stories of home invasions, car jacking's and robberies, we are ever weary. Some women are aware when they go shopping or to work and hold their purse closer to their bodies when they walk to the car through the parking lot. Some men exhibit extra caution when pumping gas. Some of us experience a heightened sense of situational awareness when we go out for the evening for dinner.

But all too often, we over look places of safety in obvious places.

Oftentimes, we overlook obvious other places when safety is concerned: work, school or our home. With crime ever prevalent and seemingly random, it is best to prepare our homes for crime prevention. One may conjure thoughts of a fortified castle with spotlights roaming and Doberman Pinschers snarling behind barbwire fencing.

The information presented in this brochure couldn't be farther from that image. This information will instruct you on how to aesthetically integrate security measures into your landscape.

Through inexpensive design and proper planning, a property can be less attractive to a criminal by reducing the opportunity for the crime to occur. The following pages gives directions on how to achieve this through principles of surveillance, access control, territoriality, maintenance and target hardening. Using these principles and specific strategies, one can better secure their house, family and belongings.



Landscaping for Crime Prevention  
is known also as  
“Crime Prevention Through  
Environmental Design”

# CPTED

Pronounced “sep-ted”

a crime prevention measure  
based on the theory that proper design  
and effective use of the built  
environment can lead to a reduction in  
crime

**Principles of C.P.T.E.D.**  
Surveillance  
Access Control  
Territoriality  
Maintenance  
Target Hardening

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and was first expressed by criminologist C. Ray Jeffery in his book by the same name. Concurrently, the architect Oscar Newman wrote “Defensible Space: Crime Prevention through Urban Design”. Both rely heavily on the use of strategies to influence the action and decisions of a potential criminal that precede the offensive lawless actions.



# Surveillance

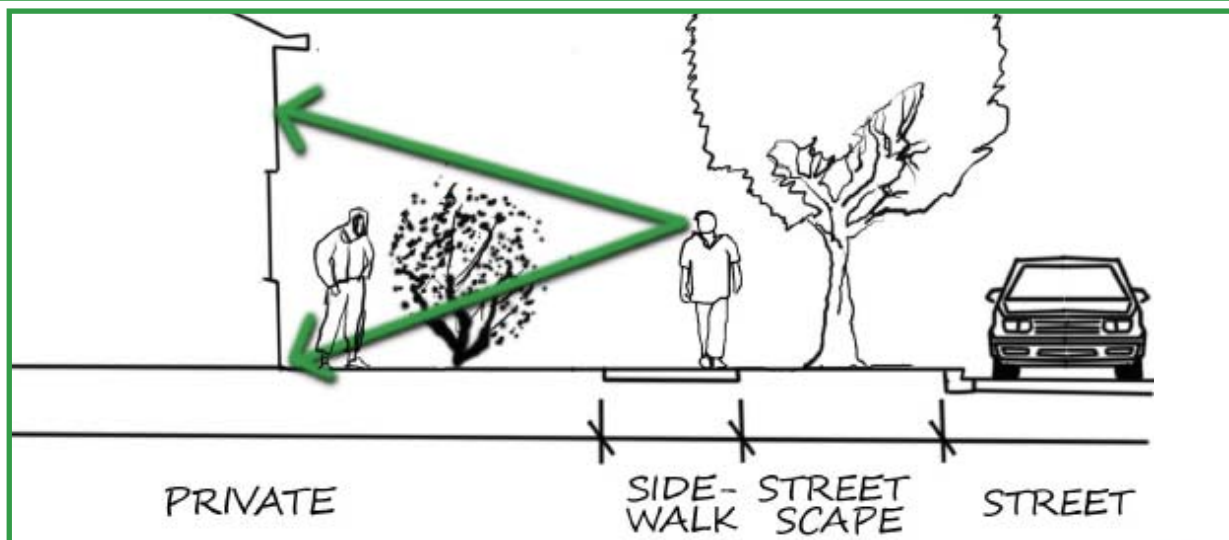
The ability of the property users to  
“see and be seen”.

A concept based on the fact that criminals  
do not want to be observed

**Surveillance** is act of observing individuals and their actions on one’s property. **Surveillance** is enacted by planning the precise placement of physical features of the site. Through proper planning and surveillance, the likelihood of detecting and observing a criminal is increased. Planning to allow for **surveillance** can be accomplished in any neighborhood, condominium/apartment, commercial or institutional setting.

## Don’t Block Views

Don’t design with large obstructive plants or elements that would block the view of observers, passer by’s or those observing from the house. Any view that is open and free of obstacles is best for observation.



## Blocked Views

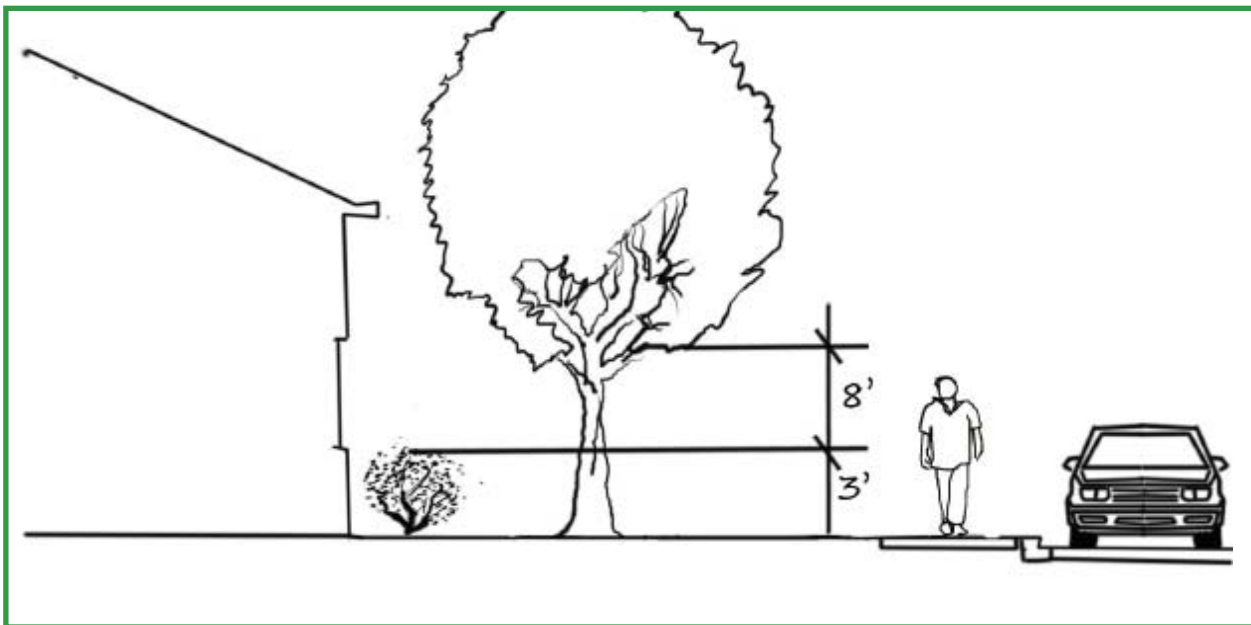


### Trim Trees

Trim tree limbs of large trees. Trim tree limbs 8' from the ground. This will allow clear visibility and prevent potential criminals from reaching up, hoisting themselves into the tree and using it as a hiding spot.

### Trim Shrubs

Don't allow shrubs to grow over 3 feet tall. This will discourage and prevent someone from hiding behind them.



Trimmed Trees and Bushes



# Access Control

**Allows owner to control ingress/egress of visitors to property .**

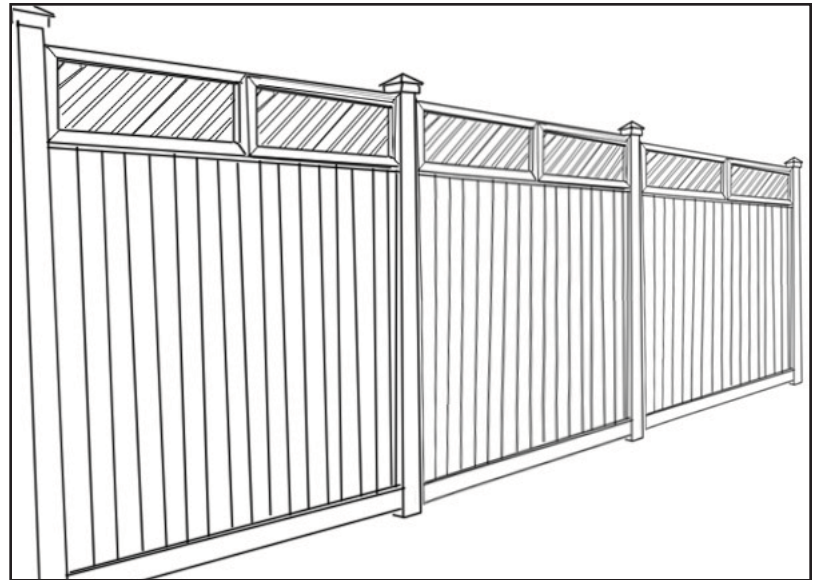
**Limits the number of entrances and exits on a property.  
Adding barriers like fencing, gates or landscape to control access may be used on the property**

**Access Control** is the use of design elements that controls access to your property. The idea is not to create impenetrable elements and create a moat and castle like environment, but rather to allow strict limited access to the property on a predetermined route and lessen the likelihood of someone from coming on the property through all but the allowable access.

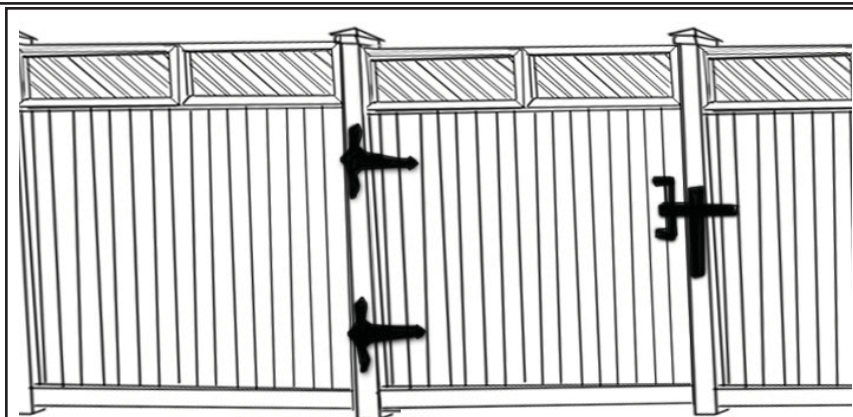
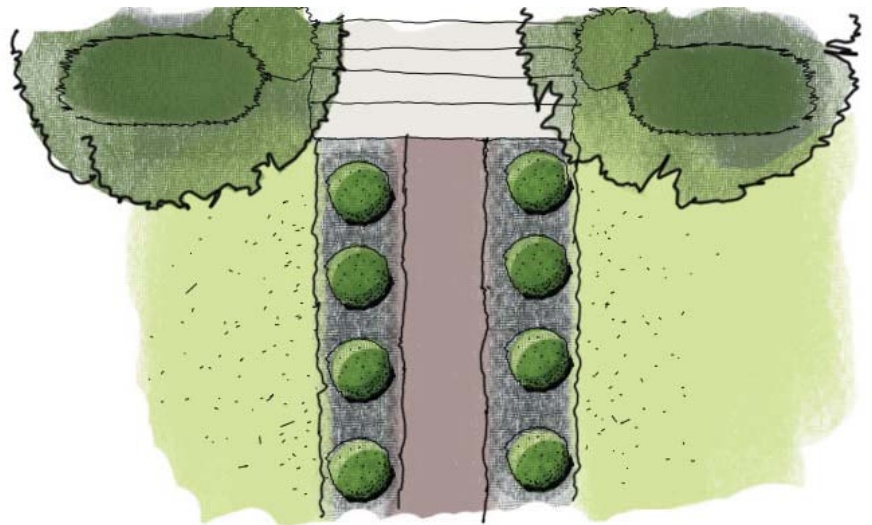
- Create one path to the front door.
- Remove design features that provide access to roofs, second stories and over fences. These include climbable trees, boulders, benches, trellis's, and any hardscape or architectural features that can be climbed.
- Use shoulder-level, open fencing along property lines between side and back yards.
- Lock gates on the fence to the backyard.
- Use impenetrable shrubs between property lines to disallow access from an adjacent property.
- Use thorny plants next to fences to discourage incursion over the fence.
- Plant low growing , thorny bushes under and around ground level windows.



## Proper Fencing



## Designated Access Path



Locked Gate





# Plants With Thorns

## Parsley Hawthorn, (*Crataegus marshallii*)

North Central Florida , Zone 7-9,  
15x25, any soil type, medium to wet soil  
sun to partial shade  
attracts birds, butterflies  
Native



<http://www.greennurseries.com/heirloom/crataegus-marshallii.gif>

## Bougainvillea (*Bougainvillea spectabilis*)

North Central Florida , Zone 9-11,  
30x20, any soil type, medium to wet soil  
sun



[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ed/Bougainvillea\\_spectabilis\\_in\\_Calella.JPG](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ed/Bougainvillea_spectabilis_in_Calella.JPG)

## Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)

North Central Florida , Zone 7-9,  
8x5 any soil type, medium soil  
sun to partial shade



[http://www.floridata.com/ref/b/berberis\\_thunbergii.cfm](http://www.floridata.com/ref/b/berberis_thunbergii.cfm)

## Crown of Thorns (*Euphorbia milii*)

North Central Florida , Zone 9-11,  
5x5, any soil type, medium to wet soil  
sun



[http://www.floridata.com/ref/e/euph\\_mil.cfm](http://www.floridata.com/ref/e/euph_mil.cfm)





# Plants With Thorns



[http://www.floridata.com/ref/r/rosa\\_radrazz.cfm](http://www.floridata.com/ref/r/rosa_radrazz.cfm)

## Knock Out Rose (*Rosa Radrazz*)

North Central South Florida , Zone 4-9  
4x6 , any soil type, well drained to medium sun



<http://my.opera.com/nguyenHCM/albums/show.dml?id=6134291>

## Cherokee Rose (*Rosa laevigata*)

North Central South Florida , Zone 7-9  
10x10, any soil type, wet to dry  
sun to partial shade  
Native



<http://atgrandmastable.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/blackberry-bush.jpg>

## Blackberries (*Rubus fruticosus*)

North Central South Florida , Zone 3-9  
6x6, any soil type, well drained to moist sun  
fruits, attracts birds



<http://www.msstate.edu/org/arbor-tum/pyracantha%20coccinea1.jpg>

## Firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*)

North Central South Florida , Zone 5-9  
12x12, any soil type, well drained to medium sun to partial shade  
attracts birds



# Territorial Reinforcement

**Defines an area or space as public, semi-public or private. It is also the use of design elements to give the perception and reinforce the boundary between ones yard and public access way.**

The perception of a boundary between ones yard and the public creates a sense of territoriality and is a statement to potential offenders that they should keep away and stay out.

## **Planting**

Proper plantings can reinforce the perception of space as public or private. Plantings establish boundaries indicating where certain people do and do not belong.

## **Maintain the Lawn**

A well maintained landscape indicates that the owner is active in maintenance and conveys the message that an owner is alert and aware of their immediate surroundings and what is going on in the yard.

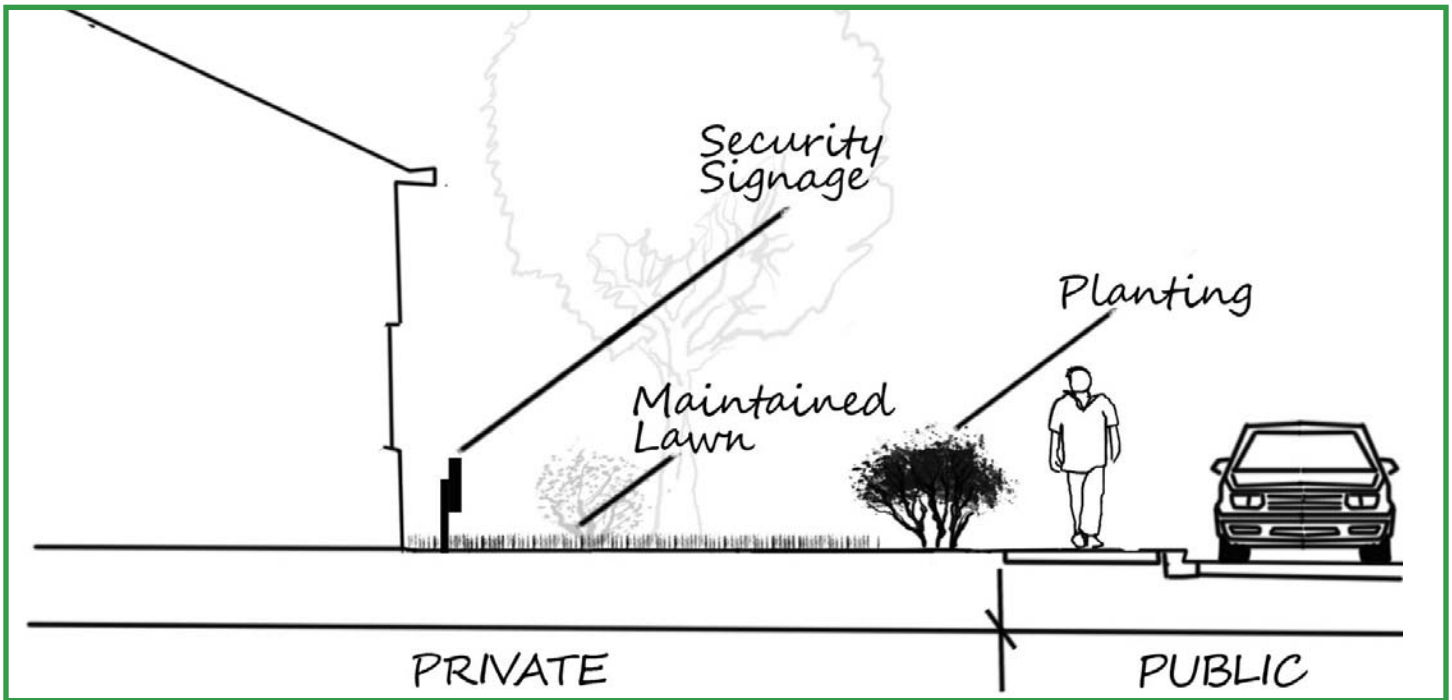
## **Display Security System Usage**

Display security system signage at access points. And place security system stickers on the windows.

## **Show Signs of Activity**

Signs of activity is an indication that the house is occupied and well used. Cars parked in the drive shows someone is home.





**Territorial Reinforcement Elements**

## Maintenance

Overlapping with Territorial Reinforcement, **Maintenance** is an expression of ownership of the property. Deterioration indicates less control by the owners of a site and a greater acceptance of low standards and disorder. It also suggest that owners situational awareness of the surroundings is minimal.

- Mow the lawn
- Trim the shrubs and bushes
- Edge driveway, sidewalks and beds
- Weed
- Remove dead plant material, replace



# Target Hardening

**Target Hardening** is accomplished by the use of physical features that prohibit access and makes getting to the property difficult, often overlapping with features of Access.

## **The use of shale gravel**

Shale gravel, light to dark gray in color, makes an obvious crunching loud noise when walked on. Used as a landscape element, gravel is typically used for walks or mulch, gravel also functions aesthetically, contrasting texture and color to grass. It can be placed strategically about the yard, in beds, under windows and by ingress and egress points.

## **Remove or relocate trellis and arbors**

If you have a decorative climbable trellises or arbors, remove or move it away from windows or porch roofs so they cannot be climbed for second-floor access.

## **No small rocks or garden elements**

Rocks and similar objects that can be held in the hand are an impromptu opportunity to be potentially used to break windows to access the house or used as a smashing weapon.

## **No overgrown mass planting**

Mass planting affords an opportunity for a potential criminal to conceal themselves.

## **Elimination of foliage outside of doors.**

Remove any trees or bushes located beside exterior doors. This foliage can hide a burglar from passer by's and hide intruders from your sight when you answer the door.

## **Install Lighting**

Illuminate possible problem areas. These include front entry, walks, corners and stairs.



## Other Non Landscape Crime Prevention Measures

- interior doors that connect a garage to the house should have a single cylinder dead bolt lock
- door locks should be located a minimum of 40 inches from adjacent windows
- exterior doors should be hinged on the inside and should have a single cylinder dead bolt lock with a minimum one-inch throw
- all windows should have locks
- windows in older houses should be renovated such that they can be effectively locked
- sliding glass doors should have one permanent door on the outside; the inside moving sliding glass door should have a locking device and a pin

## CONCLUSION

Home protection and security is typically not associated with the landscape and external elements. But through a few simple steps of prevention and maintenance, a homeowner can better protect their home, family and possessions. By delineating the ownership and territoriality of the home and placing a few strategic elements about, one can better rest assured that they are better secured.



# Resources

Below are links to helpful and useful resources.

## Websites Specializing in the Crime Prevention

### Creating Defensible Space

<http://www.defensiblespace.com/book.htm>

### Florida Attorney General's Office

<http://myfloridalegal.com/pages.nsf/4492d797dc0bd92f85256cb80055fb97/971a235dd60a295f85256cc70069be54!OpenDocument>

### Crime Prevention Tips

<http://www.crimepreventiontips.org/home-safety/index.html>

## Landscape Architect Ecological/Environmental Consultant

### Edward Crowley

FL RLA #6667183

### Sustainable Design+Consulting

[sustainabledesignandconsulting.com](http://sustainabledesignandconsulting.com)

Windermere, Florida, 352.494.0488

