

Difficult Spaces

What can I do with difficult spaces in my planting area?
Turn problem areas into thriving habitats using native plants!

Difficult spaces in your planting area can become functional, beautiful habitats with the right native plants. By choosing species adapted to specific conditions, such as deep-rooted grasses for erosion control or shade-loving perennials for under trees, you can solve common landscaping challenges naturally.

How do I plant in dry, sunny slopes?

- Use deep-rooted and rhizomatous native plants to stabilize soil.
- Add groundcovers to reduce runoff.

How do I plant in sunny parking strips?

- Prepare the soil. Remove invasive plants and loosen compacted soil.
- Choose tough, drought tolerant plants like sedums.
- Mulch regularly and irrigate for at least 1 to 2 years.

How do I plant into a blasting western facing and south-facing sunny area?

- Prepare the soil. Remove invasive plants.
- Choose tough, drought tolerant plants adapted to full sun conditions.
- Mulch regularly and irrigate for at least 1 to 2 years.

What are some issues with steep slopes?

- Determine ownership and permissions.
- Remove invasive species, consider effects on slope stability.
- Plant and cover with mulch or erosion control mats to prevent soil and water slumping.
- Consider maintenance including irrigation.

How do I plant into an area with deep shade?

- Choose shade-tolerant native plants.
- Try layered plantings with shrubs and groundcovers.
- Consider adding a little soil.
- Consider removing low hanging limbs if under a cedar or full canopy near the ground.

Go Natives! Website

<https://gonativesnursery.com/>

[Surface Water and Groundwater on Coastal Bluffs, WA](#)
[Dept of Ecology](#)

[Pacific Northwest Native Plants for Erosion Control, West Multnomah SWCD](#)

[Steep Slope with Dry Sunny Conditions, King County](#)

Plants for Difficult Spaces



broadleaf stonecrop
Sedum spathulifolium
Full sun, dry soils



kinnikinnick
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi
Full sun, dry soils



madrone
Arbutus menziesii
Full sun, dry soils



oceanspray
Holodiscus discolor
Erosion control



beach strawberry
Fragaria chiloensis
Erosion control



asters
Symphyotrichum
Erosion control



sword fern
Polystichum munitum
Deep shade



vine maple
Acer circinatum
Deep shade



Oregon-grape
Mahonia nervosa
Deep shade