



Landscape Design Basics



When it comes to landscape design, incorporating key concepts is crucial for creating a polished and professional outdoor space. Here are some essential considerations:

Contrast:

Contrast involves the strategic use of differences in elements such as color, texture, form, and size to create visual interest and enhance the overall aesthetic appeal of the landscape. For example, for a texture contrast, pair the large broad leaf of a Hosta with a finely textured leaf of a Fern. For a colour contrast, pair the deep red leaf of a Japanese Maple with a bright lime green leaf of the Japanese Forest Grass.

Focal Points:

Establish focal points strategically using distinctive elements like unique plant selections, (i.e. Japanese Maple) or architectural features. (i.e. water feature) Your design should encourage the eye to move through the space and stop to focus on the feature plants. Consider utilizing landscape lighting to highlight the focal points of the space.

Right Plant, in the Right Space

When selecting plants, consider the mature size of the plant and the amount of space you have available to allow the plant to grow. Choose a plant that will mature to fit the allowed space, with the correct sun and soil conditions. Choosing a plant that will grow too large for the space, requires too much pruning, and overcrowding makes for unhealthy growing conditions.

Plant in Odd Numbers

Planting in odd numbers is a common practice in landscape design because it creates visual balance, emphasizes focal points, and distributes plants more effectively within a space. This guideline helps achieve a naturalistic and dynamic look, as odd-numbered groupings mimic the irregular patterns found in nature. Planting one of something is reserved for focal points, and everything else should be planted in 3, 5, 7 etc. depending upon the available space.

Repetition:

Create a sense of rhythm using the repetition of selected elements such as plants, colors, or shapes. For example, the same plant that adds a punch of colour, used strategically throughout the design, will pull the eye through the design and tie the garden together.

Functionality & Accessibility:

How do you plan to use the space? Prioritize functionality by designing the landscape to meet practical needs, ensuring ease of movement and usability. Ensure universal accessibility, considering features like ramps, pathways, play areas, and seating arrangements to accommodate various needs. For example, if you really want a vegetable garden, be sure to save space for it, in the sunniest part of the garden.

Seasonal Interest:

Plan for year-round appeal with seasonal changes in color, texture, and plant blooming patterns. Choose some plants that will bloom in the spring, some in the summer, some that provide fall colour and others to provide winter interest.

Lighting:

Integrate well-planned outdoor lighting to enhance the ambiance, extend functionality into the evening, and highlight key features.

Water Features:

Consider the incorporation of water features such as ponds or fountains, to add a sophisticated and calming element to the landscape. Water features also attract birds and butterflies to a garden.

Wildlife Habitat:

Foster a welcoming environment for local wildlife by incorporating native plants and creating habitats that support biodiversity. Consider plants that produce flowers or berries to attract butterflies or birds, and plant evergreens to provide protection for birds in the winter.

Maintenance Considerations:

Design with maintenance in mind, selecting plants and features that align with the available resources for ongoing care and upkeep. New to gardening? Start out with low maintenance plants. Are you an avid gardener? Select more unique plants that will require a little more love and tender care. Just remember, there is no such thing as a “No maintenance” garden.

Our horticulturalists will be happy to make recommendations for your plant selection. When planning and designing your space, take note of the plants that are appealing to you to help narrow your choices when consulting with our team.