



Garden Design

What do we mean?

Hardscape: existing “fixed” materials, could be a retaining wall, sidewalk, decorative rock pile, path, garden bed, deck, usually manmade/installed.

Water feature: pond, barrel, creekbed, may be manmade or natural, should have access to water and electricity if manmade

First Things First

Before you buy the first rock or plant to go into your new garden, you must understand where you are starting from.

1. A detailed plan off your property

Begin with your survey, lot measurements or you can even use internet mapping sites (i.e. Bing or Google). This “base plan” should include:

- all outside dimensions of your property lines
 - accurate placement of all structures (house, garage, shop, wood shed, etc.)
 - all existing hardscapes that you want to keep (remember that some of the biggest expenses of a new garden/yard are replacing or installing new hardscapes)
 - Service/utilities – electricity, gas, water, sewer
- Now that you have a good idea of what you have, make multiple copies of your drawing, so that you have lots to play with . . .

2. Note water patterns, drainage on at least one of your drawings. This should include location of downspouts. KEEP it close. You will want to refer to this information as you develop your future ideas for hardscape elements. You may need to adjust grades or improve drainage to protect your house or other buildings. Also, you may want to consider rainwater capture.

3. Slopes—do you have them, how will you deal with them? One of your base plan drawings should note any existing elements that deal with slope issues. One of your first considerations should be what you “want” to do with slopes as they can involve considerable expense.

4. Identify sun patterns—it is important to know where the sun shines on your property before you decide where you want to place fruit trees (hard to move) or plants.

5. Neighboring Yards/Plants/Trees—how do they affect your garden/yard area? Shade, roots, litter, invasive behavior



Now that you have a really good idea of what you have you can begin to imagine what you would like . . . Drawing in your new hardscapes first, with consideration given to electricity and water. Do you need to build a retaining wall? Start with the underground items first, then “add up”.

Once you have all your hardscapes placed with the design elements from the workshop considered—you can begin designing your garden beds and THEN the plants !! (you never thought you would get here, did you?)

Helpful Links

- <http://www.gardendesign.com/>
- <http://www.hgtv.com/landscaping/index.html>
- <https://www.bhg.com/gardening/design/nature-lovers/welcome-to-plan-a-garden/>
- <https://www.nchsoftware.com/design/index.html>
- <https://my-garden.gardena.com/uk>

Garden Design Questionnaire (check all that apply, please)

A. What style of landscaping do you wish to achieve? o

Formal (symmetrical with emphasis on shaped evergreens)

Natural (asymmetrical, mix of trees, shrubs, perennials, emphasis on native plants)

English cottage style (mix of colorful perennials)

Other (please describe)

B. What are your goals in creating, adding to or renovating your landscape/garden?

_____ to beautify my home / business. _____ to create a retreat from everyday life

_____ to engage in healthy outdoor exercise

_____ to have a creative outdoor outlet _____ to learn about and incorporate new plants

_____ to grow edibles

_____ to create an energy wise landscape (shade/cool the home, reducing water runoff)

_____ to create a wildlife habitat with mostly native plants and/or use native plants

others:

C. What season, if any in particular, would you like to place emphasis on?

_____ Spring _____ Summer _____ Fall colors _____ Winter _____ All season aspect

D. Which area of your garden would you like to place emphasis on?

_____ Front garden _____ Back yard _____ Others

E. Please check your preference

Low maintenance garden (spring and fall cleanups with mostly shrubs and evergreens)

Medium maintenance (mixed plants that need occasional care, some dividing/pruning)

Hobby gardener (don't mind dividing, staking, pruning, prefer seasonally changing gardens with lots of flowers)

F. Who is going to install the garden? _____ Myself _____ Professional and/or _____ both

G. What is the time frame for the installation? _____ Everything as soon as possible

_____ Everything within this coming season _____ Over the next years

H. What color or color scheme preferences, if any, do you have? I like: _____ I dislike: _____

I. What plant preferences/dislikes, if any, do you have? I like: _____ I dislike: _____

J. Small children in the house? _____ Yes (Please list the ages) _____ No

MUST HAVES in your garden (Your Wish List!)

Structures (i.e. lawn area, pergola, play structure, fence, retaining wall, paths, patio, water elements, etc)

Plants (trees, shrubs, perennials, vines, annuals, bulbs, etc)

WOULD LIKE to have:

Check List for Site Analysis Technical Features

1. Style of house and neighborhood

2. Room locations in the house (most frequented rooms like living room, kitchen)

3. Property lines

4. Location of service lines/Utilities (overhead wires, septic, sewer, gas)

5. Snow lines and Drip lines

6. House and property measurements (existing site plans?)

Site Properties 1. North-South exposure 2. Hardiness zone 3. Seasonal sun-shade patterns

4. Existing plant inventory 5. Views to open, screen and/or emphasize 6. Welcoming site

7. Soil type and conditions 8. Type and condition of existing gardens

9. Favorite areas in the garden 10. Existing garden rooms and their function

Existing Problem Areas 1. Screening from neighbors needed 2. Foundation screening needed

3. Water problems (seasonal wet spots?) 4. Steep slopes 5. Wildlife problems

6. Winter (snow plowing/mounding,salt) 7. Wind 8. Extreme microclimates (deep shade, cold air pockets) 9. Plants to be removed, replaced or replanted

10. Specific requirements for small children, elderly or disabled, etc.

GARDEN WISH LIST—Notes

Item	MUST have	WOULD like	Maybe
Herbaceous border			
Flowerbeds			
Shrub border			
Trees. Evergreen			
Trees, Deciduous			
Lawn			
Parking areas			
Graveled areas			
Patio, paved			
Deck, planked			
Built-in BBQ			
Garden Seating			
Dining area			
Entertainment area			
Rock garden			
Pond			
Other Water feature			
Wildlife area			
Greenhouse			
Summer house			
Tool shed			
Fruit/berry garden			
Herb garden			
Vegetable garden			
Winter gardening			
Trellis/arch			
Pergola/gazebo			
Sandpit/play area			
Garbage/recycling area			
Compost area			