

All Yards and Gardens Are Not Created Equal: Various Types of Landscaping

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Patio Landscaping

Patio landscaping can be redone every year if you like. If you are planning a new landscape for a brand new patio or making over an old patio, it is important to start with fresh clean concrete, stone, or brick. The foundation for your patio is the most important factor and one that will make your patio landscaping a place for your whole family to enjoy.

Hard scaping your patio

When it comes to the materials that you use for your patio, the decision is entirely up to you. Any hard material will do, it just depends on your preference. You can choose from stone, rock, concrete, brick or even get fancy with tile. Choose a material that best describes your space and suits your family's style and needs. All of the above materials make a great looking and durable patio for any family to relax in.

The first step to your new patio

The first thing that you want to do when getting started on your new patio, is building forms to add height to the perimeter of the patio. The additional height to your patio will help give the support your foundation needs. Just make sure that you are even with a doorway or entrance to your home. Make sure that your edges are smooth and that there are no nails sticking out from the sides of your patio.

Once you have the forms for your patio done, you are ready to add some movement to your patio. If you are looking to achieve a curved look, you will need to use some bender board. This is made from plastic and moves easily. Make sure that you add stakes in at about every 12 to 18 inches around the board to help keep its shape. This will add fun and creativity to your design.

Placing your Materials for the Floor

Now it is time add your choice of flooring materials. By this time you would have decided on stone, cement, rock or even a decorative tile. Follow the direction for the materials and put them carefully in their place. You want to take your time and make sure that your patio looks like a professional finished it. You can be as creative as you want with the design. Just make sure that they are secure.

Final Touches

You may want to add a burst of color for a warm, inviting feeling with flowers and shrubs around your new patio landscape. There are many different plants and flowers that can be used to line your patio with. You can do a clean line of greenery around the border of the

patio, or go with a fun patch of wild flowers surrounding your creation.

Potted Plants

Remember if you do not want to plant flowers around your new patio, you can use potted plants to decorate your new family space. Potted plants are easy to take care of and add fun and beauty along with flexibility. Choose simple plants in fun, unique pots. Whatever you decide on, make it a place your whole family will can enjoy and treasure.

Pond Landscaping

Pond landscaping is a fun hobby that can be enjoyed by all ages. Ponds can be a beautiful focal point for any backyard. Whether you have a small backyard to a large one, a pond will be a fun landscaping addition. Pond landscaping is an easy project for anyone to take on. Adding fish and plants to the pond will add a dramatic and soothing focal point to any yard.

Planning your pond

You may decide to buy a pond kit that contains all the supplies you will need, or you can make the decision to create and build you own. There are some very important considerations to think about before you start the digging process. The most important thing is to find the right location.

Choose a site with at least four to six hours of sunlight each day. Most of the water plants that you add to your water landscape will require full sun. You will also want to keep the pond away from trees to eliminate leaves and debris. You will want to pick a spot that will not interfere with electrical sources.

The view

When you are deciding where to locate your pond landscaping, make sure that you choose a site that you can view from the inside of your home. This is so that you can enjoy your creation from indoors or outdoors.

Shape is important

Consider the shape of your pond landscape design. Make sure that it will fit in your area and suit your personality. If you are after a more formal look, then rectangular and square features are best. Curving and unusual shapes are more for the informal look.

Around your water landscape

When you are finished with your pond installation, then it is time to figure out what you are going to do around it. There are many different ways to decorate your pond landscape. You can choose brick, stone, or even line your pond with flowers. It depends on the look you want to achieve.

Final touches to your pond

Fish and plants are wonderful ways to add a soothing and attractive look to your pond. It is important not to overload your pond with too many fish or plants. Water plants will grow quickly and spread out and the fish will most likely reproduce.

This is a big project, but with a little planning and some help, it is going to be well worth all the hard work. This will be a feature that you will be able to enjoy for many years.

Get the Best Around the Pool Landscaping

It is a great idea to get your pool looking its best by making use of around the pool landscaping. This kind of pool landscaping can turn your boring old backyard into the backyard of the stars. You can have a Hollywood looking backyard in no time if you play your cards right.

A good pool landscaping design will make your pool the focal attraction and bring out so much more in your yard. If your yard is large you can consider adding gorgeous brick walkways to your yard around the pool. This kind of pool landscaping can lead to other parts of the yard as well. You can have a larger grouping of brick on which you can place your patio furniture, a table and chairs can look fabulous.

Breaking up the brick in the pool landscaping with some patches of greenery is a good touch. These bits of green will breathe life into the whole picture and take out the hard stone look. Brick is a good choice of stone because it is a softer looking stone. The red brick color is warm and inviting it will not leave your yard looking cold and unwelcoming. The green plants will only add to the beauty of the brick as a pool landscaping tool.

You can throw in some landscaping stones around the plants and the edges of the patio. Light colored stones will add so much to the entire pool landscaping design. Choose small and sharp stones and you have just added a whole other layer of texture to the landscape and this on its own will make your yard look fabulous.

You can also think about putting in some colorful flowers. If you spend a lot of time by the pool at night add some night blooming flowers as well. This way you will be surrounded by some fabulous blooms and scents all day (and night) long. Combined all of these ideas will make your pool landscaping design the best ever seen.

Start looking into the way to go about this kind of pool landscaping today. Some of it you may be able to do on your own while other aspects you may need some professional help with. Your pool landscaping is going to impress all of your friends when you are done so get started today and it will be done in no time.

Pool Landscaping

Pools lights give your pool a whole new look of life. If you are someone who is lucky enough to enjoy the pleasure of having their very own backyard pool, then take advantage of the opportunity to decorate it. There are many different pool landscaping ideas that you can come up with to make your pool and patio area your very own sanctuary, right in your backyard.

For around the outside of the pool

For some pools, the landscape around the pool may seem boring or messy. There are a few things you can do to dress it up a little. Add some plants and flowers around the pool. Place some decorative stones or rocks in between the flowers. Mulch is another great way to camouflage the disturbed dirt around your pool.

If you are someone who absolutely loves the outdoors and spends as much time there as indoors, then there is no reason why you cannot decorate it just like you would a room in your home.

Positioning your furniture

It does not seem like much, but just by carefully placing every piece of furniture just perfectly can make a huge difference in your pool landscape. Accessories are very important also. Garden statues, potted plants, candles, and even pillows on your pool furniture will create a warm and inviting space.

Canopy for the pool

If your pool is in an open area, you may decide to add a canopy over the patio or deck to create a better space for outdoor entertaining. By doing a simple tent or canopy, you can ensure that all of your outdoor plans will not be ruined by bad weather.

Fences and gates

One very important thing when you have a pool in your backyard is safety. It is always a good idea to have a fence with a locking gate around an in ground pool. This is especially true if you have small children. There are lots of different choices you can make when it comes to a fence. There are different styles and colors so that you can match your home décor.

Privacy is essential for pools

Privacy plays an important role when it comes to having a pool. Fences that are high and have slats that are close together will create a feeling of privacy for you and your family when you are lounging around and enjoying your backyard pool.

Storage units

Anyone who has a pool knows that there are plenty of chemicals and accessories to store. You

will need a place to keep your loungers and inner tubes. You do not have to go with the normal plastic storage units. There are plenty of designs that you can come with to make your pool area look better.

Tropical Landscaping

If you wish that you lived in a paradise like Florida or Hawaii, then maybe you can design your landscape to look like your own tropical getaway. All you need to do this is a little creativity and some time. A beautiful tropical landscape will impress all your friends and neighbors and leave them green with envy.

Plants make all the difference

When you are planning a tropical backyard, you will want to include a lot of plants. Lots of greenery and wild colors will enhance your tropical illusion. There are plenty of plants and flowers that will grow in any weather conditions. If you are not sure what to use and what plants and flowers are best, then ask someone at your home and garden center.

Add a water feature

What is a better way to feel like you are in a tropical getaway then having a beautiful water feature in your backyard. You can design something small or if you have the space go for the gold and design something magnificent. Make sure that you have enough space and do not make it look gaudy or overbearing.

You can add rocks and stones around your yard along with the plants and flowers. This will add to the tropical feel and bring a more natural look to your landscape.

Ponds and fish

One great way to bring a tropical feel to your backyard is adding a pond. Even if you do not have a large area, you can make a great looking small pond just the same. To add to the whole tropical theme, add some tropical fish and plants. This will create a soothing and peaceful atmosphere.

Furniture

Another important factor in designing a tropical landscape is the furniture that you choose. There are plenty of stores that offer great wicker and tropical themed furniture. You will be sure to find something that matches your theme with the same style and also add comfort to your backyard.

Accessories are the final touch

Picking the perfect tropical accessories will accent any tropical paradise just right. You will want to choose items that compliment you look and also add a calm peaceful look to your design.

Candles and lights are great choices. Citrus and fruit scents are a great choice for this design. String lights across the patio and lie back and enjoy your own personal paradise.

Xeriscaping

Xeriscaping is an attractive landscaping that conserves water and is based on good horticultural practices. There are a few important practices to know before you start your new landscape project.

Reading and learning

If you are new to the xeriscaping process, then it is important to read and discover all information that goes along with the project. The more you know about what you are doing will give you the tools that you will need to make your landscape a success. There are plenty of places to get the facts and directions to xeriscaping.

Plan and think out your design

Make sure that you have a plan. Find out where things are and consider the view, the slope and the sun exposure. Take into consideration the existing vegetation and the site that you are intending to design.

Improve the conditions if necessary

Soils will vary at every given site. If you have poor soil, you will want to give it the nutrients that it needs to get in shape for your xeriscaping process. Adding compost to your soil will bet it into top shape for your plans.

Picking your plants

Most plants are fine to use with xeriscaping. Selecting the plants should be based on the intended use in your landscape design. Use plants with lower watering needs and this will allow the maximum water conservation for you.

Irrigation systems

You should plan out your irrigation system well. Irrigate turf areas separately. Group the plants that have the same needs together. Not all plants have the same watering needs. Irrigation needs will change with the season and the weather. You will need to irrigate according to the condition of the plants instead of on a maintenance schedule.

Organic Mulches

Mulches minimize evaporation and reduce the amount of weed growth. By using mulch, it will make your xeriscaping a success. Organic mulches such as wood chips or bark are the best choice. Never use any solid plastic under the mulch or anywhere else in the landscape.

Good pruning, weeding and fertilization will preserve and enhance the quality of the xeriscaping that you do. All the prospects of xeriscaping will ensure a healthy and attractive landscape with the use of the proper amount of water.

Concrete Landscaping Can Add So Much to Your Yard

To hear the word concrete you may not think that it would be something to want in your yard but in fact, concrete landscaping has come along way in the last 10 years or so. Now concrete landscaping is all the rage and it is very pretty too.

You can use concrete landscaping for many different parts of your yard. Most people use concrete landscaping ideas and designs for the walkways and paths that wind through their gardens. This is more for those with larger yards but even if your yard is small it could do with some concrete landscaping. You could put down a lively patio that you and your friends could it at to have drinks or tea. There is nothing more fun than a little party out on the patio on a nice day.

Stone walls are another form of concrete landscaping that has really caught on like wildfire. Walls are what will frame the whole home. They are the gorgeous and steely frame to the glorious painting that is your front and back yard. There are many other reasons to have concrete landscaping such as walls as well.

These walls are perfect for keeping your pet in the yard. If you have a dog that is prone to run away then look into this kind of concrete landscaping. These walls are also very good for keeping intruders out. The harder your home is to get into the less likely burglars will be to bother trying. So look into this type of concrete landscaping today and talk to a professional about it.

You can also use concrete landscaping to keep your soil in place. If there is a part of your yard that is prone to slipping then you can build a retention wall expressly for this purpose. The best thing about concrete landscaping is that while it can be functional you can make it look as if it is just there for looks.

There is so much that you can do with concrete landscaping because concrete is so easy to work with. You can use concrete landscaping bricks or you can use whole solid slabs. You can even get custom-made concrete landscaping stones that are in unique and creative shapes and patters. Take some time and see what all is out there in terms of concrete landscaping, you might just be surprised.

Container Gardening

One of the most effective ways to save money in your landscape is to engage in the practice of container gardening. Container gardening is making use of different containers to hold your

plants. These work for flowers, herbs, and even for vegetables. Container garden requires less maintenance than more conventional flowerbeds and gardens because there is less amendment to the soil and because there are fewer weed problems. Additionally, the costs associated with preparing an area for planting can be avoided when one uses carefully considered containers and planters for their landscaping.

One of the great things about container gardening is the wide variety of items that can be used as containers. Many of the items can be found around the house or even purchased from thrift stores. Old washtubs, and even filing cabinets laid on their sides and removed of their drawers (which can also be used as containers) make great containers. You can even cut the tops off of milk cartons and use the bottom sections as planters. These everyday items can be attractively decorated to look nice.

In addition to converting things like coffee cans and old shoes into fun and cute flower and herb holders, there are plenty of more traditional planters and containers that can be incorporated into an attractive landscape design. Clay pots and large urns make attractive holders, and the urns can even be used to hold vegetables. Additionally, container gardening is not limited to the ground. Hanging baskets bought at the store make excellent additions to any landscape.

Plus, they can be hanged from the house, the porch, and even from tree branches and along fences. These baskets create little bursts of color no matter where they are. Window boxes are also attractive variations on container gardening and can add a great deal to the look of a home.

Containers make great accents as well as being practical and money saving. They can be just as beautiful to look at as the rest of the landscape design elements. Indeed, container gardening is a great way to enjoy the benefits of having a garden without as much backbreaking labor.

Weeds cannot work their way into the containers, and if you have the right depth of container it is possible to have very healthy plants with strong roots, making them resistant to disease and pests. Additionally, flowers in containers are well protected from cutworms and from rodents who may burrow into the root system. Containers are excellent sources of protection for many plants.

In order to ensure that your container-based landscape is a success, it is important that you make sure that your plants do not need an extensive root system. Most flowers, even perennials, are fine in most containers. Even many vegetables are fine in coffee tins and washtubs. Corn can easily be planted in the filing cabinet lying down, and most drawers are plenty deep for tomatoes.

Lettuce is a vegetable with a fairly shallow root system, and peppers have requirements that are very easy to meet with containers. Make sure, before planting, that your container is adequate for the needs of your plants. Herbs, of course, can thrive in just about any size of container, and many of them can even be grown inside the house (near a sunny window, of course).

Fill the containers with potting soil or garden soil. These soils are rich in nutrients and can provide your plants with the food they need. It is even possible to mix in a little organic compost for added nutrition. You will need to water your plants occasionally, but because your plants are enclosed in the container, there is no need to water them as often as plants in the ground. This is because the container will help retain moisture, and there is no drainage. Rather, you need to be careful not to over water your container garden.

Making use of a container garden is a great way to save time and money in your landscaping. It is also a creative way to display your plants and even to grow your food. And, if you have a small amount of space, container gardening can allow you to have a variety of plants that you might not otherwise have room for.

Planning for Desert Landscaping

If you live in a dry and arid climate then your desert landscaping is going to take a little more planning than some other parts of the country. desert landscaping will have to work with a plan that includes only plants and trees that can survive with much less water than some other plants. There is no point in planting something if it cannot sustain itself afterwards. So take some time with your desert landscaping plan and make sure that you have done everything suited to the climate.

You could spend the money to get better irrigation put in but the money will be great and the time will be all consuming. It is much simpler for your desert landscaping plan to just include plants that will thrive even in the hot sun all day.

What makes using desert landscaping friendly plants so great is that not only will these plants do well even in the hot sun they will also be able to thrive in poor quality soil. This is a much needed quality because places that have so much sun tend to have poor soil as well. So in essence you are killing two birds with one stone as they say.

Here are some wonderful plants that you can use in your desert landscaping:

Longwood Blue bluebeard

This is a shrub, it is deciduous and it will grow back each and every spring. It will always come back healthy and happy and this makes it perfect for desert landscaping. It is not a tiny shrub, it will grow to be anywhere between 3 and 4 feet high with a width of about 2 feet. This is a lovely plant to use in your desert landscaping as it is not only beautiful with its pretty blue flower clusters and silver foliage, it is also very fragrant.

Autumn Joy

This is a wonderful perennial that you can plant for your desert landscaping. With this choice you will have great leaves in pretty whorls. These leaves can be any number of different colors and can be bought to go with any desert landscaping design. This plant is the ultimate for desert landscaping because it can grow in rock gardens with ease.

This lovely desert landscaping plant also has a unique and interesting flower unlike any other I have ever seen. These small flowers grow in clusters and they can be a few different colors and shades. The most common are yellow, orange and red and pink. If you plant these in your garden you will have butterflies around all of the time and they make for lovely entertainment on their own.

Desert Landscaping

If you live where plant growth in your backyard is rare and green grass is hard to find, then do not worry, there is help for your desert landscape. When your back yard is full of boulders and sand, it is hard to imagine a peaceful getaway. You can add a few things to make you yard softer and more comfortable for you and guests.

Design your landscape

Think about the look that you want to create. Read through magazines and look at lots of pictures to get ideas of what you want for your backyard. Coming up with the design could be the hardest part of the whole landscaping process. Keep in mind how much space you have and the amount of time and money you want to put into your project.

Bring the desert into the landscape

Instead of having plain rocks and boulders in your yard, add some fun colored rocks with different shapes and styles. You can add original desert plants around the rocks to soften them up.

Gardens in the desert

It is possible to have a garden in your desert. You can add flowers as long as they are suitable for the climate and location. Add some texture with plants and flowers will give your desert landscape a whole new look. Remember to keep the lower plants in the front and the higher ones to the back.

The view from indoor

You want to place your garden of beauty where it can be enjoyed from the windows in your house. This way all you have to do is look out and see your paradise waiting for you. This is good also for guest to appreciate your new landscape even from indoors.

Bringing water to your desert landscape

If you live in a climate that is hot and dry, then you may want to think about adding a water feature to your landscape. This is not only fun and creative, but may also offer relief from the heat for you. You can add water gardens or ponds to your landscape. You can also go bigger and design the perfect pool for you and your family. This will defiantly bring more people over for entertaining.

Do not forget the lights at night

One great idea for your landscape is lighting. This is important to show off your new and improved landscape at night. The lights on the rocks will create different shadows and bring your new design alive at night.

With a few fun and creative ideas, you can enjoy your desert landscape with a whole new and improved feel, comfort and style.

Driveway Landscaping

Landscaping driveways does not necessarily mean the driveway itself, although the design of your driveway can impact the look and feel of your landscape. Rather, many people neglect to landscape their driveways to look attractive. This includes adding landscaping elements to the sides of the driveway, as well as at the bottom and the top of the driveway. There are many softscape and hardscape elements that can be added to make the area surrounding the driveway more attractive.

Your driveway landscape is the entrance to your property. If you ignore it, the driveway can look more like an ugly scar than a part of your landscape. If properly incorporated, however, it is possible to create a nice looking element in your landscape, tying it in to the rest of your design and looking as though it truly belongs.

It is very worth your while to make an attempt at landscaping around your driveway. You need not spend a great deal of money to landscape your driveway, but if you carefully choose features and elements that are attractive and creative, you can have a fairly low-cost driveway landscape that is inviting to visitors as well as to those who live inside the house.

Before landscaping the driveway, however, there are a few things to take into account. First of all, you need to make sure that what you are doing will not be so much wasted work. Take into account your neighborhood. If there are a great deal of children, a flower bed at the entrance, near the street, may not be a wise decision. It may be trampled carelessly by children, or the flowers may be picked.

While these actions do not usually result in malice, they can result in a ragged and disheveled looking driveway entrance. In such a neighborhood one might consider accenting the entrance with an attractive fence, rock wall, or even a small rock garden. Also determine the footpaths traveled by those who live in the house. Make sure that any elements you add to the sides or ends of the driveway are not interfering in established walkways.

Some of the common hardscape options are walls and fences. These are projects that can add distinction and accent to your driveway area. A rock wall can be especially interesting if you use different colored rocks. It is also possible to plant grasses and small, hardy flowers in the cracks between the stones used to construct the wall. This can be decorative and it can add a more interesting aspect to your rock wall.

Short, attractive fences, and even some of higher height, can also accent the driveway and give it a little more color and character. Small hanging baskets or lanterns can be used with either a fence or a wall to add more beauty.

There are plenty of softscape options for dressing up the area around the driveway. The first thing you need to decide (and this goes for hardscape accents as well) is whether you plan to use the landscape elements to run the length of the driveway or to simply accent the entrance to the driveway. If you are working with a very small budget, simply accenting either side of the driveway, near the bottom, is a good idea.

It will cost much less, but add a great deal to the look of your over all landscape. Some of the softscape ideas that work well either to follow the driveway up or simply to add character to the entrance, include beds of colorful annuals, groundcover along the drive to create a natural and interesting border with the lawn, ornamental trees, and shrubs. The shrubs can even be cut to be topiary and have interesting designs.

A curved driveway is interesting of itself, and can be made even more so if a focal point is added to nestle in the curve. This focal point should be something of beauty. It can be as simple as a stately oak, or a specially designed flowerbed or rock garden. Or, instead of being something simple, the focal point can be something else entirely. Landscape bridges, wishing wells, garden arbors, and water gardens all make excellent focal points that can be exceptionally attractive.

Layering Garden Landscaping

Could your home do with a little more garden landscaping? Probably so, and that is a good thing. In fact you should be very excited about it because there is nothing more fun than garden landscaping, it will get your imagination working overtime and you will have a ball planting and rearranging your plants and flowers.

By layering your garden landscaping beds you will be able to add a whole other level of beauty to your landscaping design. Your yard is the first thing that people will see when they come to your house and giving a grand tour that includes a fabulous garden is always fun and exciting. You will be the talk of the neighborhood, and for all the right reasons this time, when you do some really good garden landscaping.

Layering your garden landscaping design is easy to do. You need to know the flowers that you are going to plant first however. The choices that you make as far as the flowers and other plants will affect just how your garden landscaping is laid out. For example you do not want to have the taller plants in front of the shorter ones.

This is obvious but you should still make a rough sketch of where you want things laid out for your garden landscaping before you begin. This will help you to keep things as simple as possible. Your garden landscaping will go a lot faster this way and you will run into fewer problems as you go.

When layering you should have about three layers. Your back row should face north, if it can, and the back row should have the tallest plants and as the rows descend so should the heights of the plants and flowers. The trick of this kind of garden landscaping is that oftentimes the plants we buy are baby plants.

So you will need to talk to those working at your local gardening store about how large the plants will grow to be. This is key to successful garden landscaping. If the front or middle row of your garden landscaping design is going to grow much higher than the last row, then you will have to do some rearranging.

The layering affect of your garden landscaping design will add depth and make your garden much more interesting to look at. This is what will make your garden landscaping a success.

Garden Landscaping

Garden landscaping is a great way to update a backyard. Giving your backyard a makeover will certainly improve your homes appearance and add value at the same time. Planting new flowers and updating your landscape will add beauty to your home and make a better place for you and your family to spend time in.

Fixing up the hard stuff

There is a way to keep the old stuff and still have a new and improved look. Adding features to your landscape is a good way to update and combine the old with the new. Give you patio or sidewalk a facelift. You can add extensions to your patio or deck. Clean up a fence or repaint it. Add fresh colors and new designs to focal points in your garden. Adding statues and ornaments is an inexpensive way to bring a new look to a landscape.

Adding flowers and plants to your garden

When it comes to a great garden, it is all about the flowers and plants. Choosing these items is the best part about creating a garden landscape. Pick flowers that compliment your home and your personality. There are many different types of flowers that you may want to consider.

Choosing the right flowers

Remember to think about a few things before you purchase the flowers for your garden. Think about your location and what types of soil you have. You want to make sure that is you do not have good, fertile soil then you will either pick flowers and plants that will do well in these conditions or help the existing soil. You can add soil and compost to any soil to make it better for growing certain plants and flowers.

Adding Shrubs

Shrubs are the perfect fit to any garden landscaping idea. You can use them for bordering your lot or separating one feature from another. Shrubs come in different varieties and shapes. You

can get shrubs that blossom with flowers or berries. There are also shrubs that stay green with the warm months and change colors with the seasons.

Finishing touches

Make sure that you add comfortable furniture to your garden. This is a place that you will want to enjoy and sit in to take in all the beauty of your new garden sanctuary. Add in any feature that makes you feel more at home and peaceful. If your garden has a covered roof, think about adding candles or accent pieces like throw rugs, or pillows. This will give any atmosphere a soft, warm feeling and make anyone feel welcome.

Grass Landscaping

If you enjoy the look and feel of grassy lawns, then there are some important things you should now when it comes to choosing the perfect grass for your landscape. By learning a few things, you will be able to create a lawn that is low maintenance, energy efficient and makes your lawn look the best in town.

Colors of grass to choose

The most popular color of grass is dark green. Everyone wants a deep shade of green for his or her landscape. The only problem with this is that some of your new grass will be invaded with other lighter shades of green. If you prefer dark grass but have light green grass now, choose a turf that blends well because over time, the grass you did not plant will take over the new grass. Lighter shades of green are just as pretty.

Types of grass

Native or exotic grasses will come in all sizes and shapes with a variety made from every landscape idea and location. It does not matter if you have hot or cold weather, moist or dry, you will be able to find the right grass for you. There are grasses that grow better in the shade as well as grasses that do best in the hot sun. The key is to choose the best one for your situation.

Get down to the roots

Before you get started on planting your new grass, remember some important factors. Determine the size of the area that you are planting, along with the location, and the soil conditions. You can go to any home and garden center and ask them what the best types of grass are best for you.

Ready to plant your grass

Once you are ready to plant, there are many different methods to choose from including sowing the seed, and laying down sod.

Caring for your new lawn

Taking care of your new investment is up to you. You should maintain a good maintenance schedule which includes watering regularly, mowing twice a week, edging every 7 to 10 days, fertilizing four times a year, and maybe applying lime and thatching once a year.

Fertilizing and watering

You want to keep your grass looking its best all the time. Watering and fertilizing will encourage good grass growth. Determine the best plan for you and for your lawn and then stick to it.

Turf grasses provide outstanding erosion control; absorb the noise and many harmful toxins. Your grass provides oxygen for your family and keeps the environment healthy. Be good to your grass and it will benefit you for years to come.

Hardscape Projects

No landscape is all greenspace. In fact, hardscape is as much a part of the landscape as plants (known as softscape). There are many projects that can contribute to your landscape design, and make your home environment more pleasant. Additionally, it is also interesting to note that most hardscape landscape features are actually very useful and serve functions other than simply being nice to look at.

The most common hardscape features of most landscapes are the driveway and the walkways. These elements are almost necessary. The driveway provides a place for the homeowner to park his or her car, and the walkways are important in providing a place to walk without damaging the rest of the landscape. There are many different types of projects that can be accomplished when putting in a driveway or walkway.

However, many people simply choose to use concrete. Other surfaces can be just as useful, and more attractive, though. For a driveway, gravel is a low cost alternative to concrete. It can be annoying, however, as the small rocks tend to be transferred to other parts of the property. Asphalt can be used if you have a bigger budget. It will not wear as quickly as concrete, and it has more give. For walkways, you can create a very attractive walk by laying down flat stones. These look more natural, and they are less of an eyesore than are concrete sidewalks.

Other common hardscape features include decks and patios. These are great projects that serve a number of purposes, most notably being places where the home's inmates can sit and enjoy their landscape. They also make great platforms for entertaining and outdoor cooking. Most patios are simply squares of concrete in the back yard. Decks, of course, come in all shapes and sizes. Some are built low and in the front, serving as porches, and others are built in the back and high, like a terrace.

In any case, these projects can be tailored to fit the needs of the homeowner, and they also serve another purpose: to decrease the amount of lawn that needs to be maintained. A square

shaped deck or patio element is easy to mow around, and it creates less maintenance work. Oddly shaped patios and decks may be more attractive and interesting, but they can also cause hassles in caring for the edges. When building these features, it is important to carefully consider the implications of the structure you build. Decks and patios are desirable also because they can be decorated in a number of ways, and according to the seasons. Lights, hanging baskets, and seasonal decorations all adorn decks and patios and make them more inviting.

Water features are often considered hardscape elements in the landscape. These are things like waterfalls and ponds. Even small ponds and waterfalls can make beautiful additions to any landscape. These can be professionally installed, or even installed one self. Not only do water features look beautiful and inviting, but they also offer soothing and cooling sounds. These features contribute to more than just the sense of sight; a water feature also creates beauty for the sense of sound.

Rock gardens are also often included in the category of hardscape. Even though many rock gardens incorporate softscape elements, they are mostly and distinctly hard. Rock gardens need less attention than flowerbeds and other types of garden. Additionally, the plants usually planted in a rock garden are hardier varieties that are designed for survival in more challenging conditions.

Rock gardens also create an interesting part of the landscape and can even be augmented with addition of a water feature. These hardscape features are also very useful in odd corners and entryways. These are places that may be too small for grass, but that need a little dressing-up. A small rock garden can be just the thing.

Hardscape projects are an essential part of the landscaping. They are often very utilitarian, and they can be made to be quite attractive. Additionally, hardscape elements decrease the amount of space in the landscape that needs active and frequent care, allowing you more time to enjoy your yard. In addition to this, carefully planned and placed hardscape features can also save you money in maintenance costs.

Hillside Landscaping

Designing the perfect landscape for your home can be a challenge. This is true especially if your backyard is a steep hillside. If this is the case for your yard, then prepare yourself for some added work. Do not be afraid to experiment with new ideas and have fun creating your own design.

Preparing your area first

Do the preparations for the new landscape is the first obstacle in the hillside landscaping process. If there is any debris or growth that needs to be cleared, do that first. Make sure all the rocks, brush, and weeds are gone to make space for your new design.

Erosion can be a problem

To reduce potential erosion problems, plant lots of shrubs and cover your ground with heavy mulch. The mulch will help to insulate plants from the cold and it will also help keep them from sprouting too quickly when warm airs moves in unexpectedly.

In addition to fighting erosion, you may also have to deal with the challenge of maintaining a good moisture level in the garden. This is due to the steep slope and because it makes it difficult for the ground to retain water.

A wonderful entrance is so inviting

You will want to make sure that your hillside is full of color. In designing your garden, make sure that it is an eye catcher. Make sure that it can be seen from a distance. This way people who are passing by will be able to admire the garden from far away.

Bring interest to your design

One of the best ways to get someone's attention is to bring interesting features to your landscape. Bring fun and originality to your landscaped idea. This will be a reflection of your personality and what you want as a private getaway.

Retaining walls

If a good part of your landscape is hillside, then you may need to install a retaining wall. This will not only add security but it will also add beauty and style. There are many different materials that you can choose from for your retaining wall. It is important that you have the proper materials and added help if necessary. Make a list of all the things that you will need and get them before you start your project.

Will a little creativity and some time, you will be able to turn any rough terrain into a beautiful sanctuary for you and your family to enjoy spending time together. It will also be an added value to your home for years to come.

Is Home Landscaping Different Than Other Landscaping?

Home landscaping is no different than any other kind of landscaping. It is natural for people to want their home to look as fab as it possibly can, who does not want the kind of yard that the whole neighborhood is envious of? And he beauty of home landscaping is that it does not have to be hard and much of it can be done by you. All it will take a it a little elbow grease and some time to spare and you can design your own home landscaping design quickly and easily.

There are even products on the market that will help you to find the best home landscaping idea out there. You can choose to use home landscaping software for one. These programs can be a great help to you as you are trying to figure out what will suit your home and yard the best. With these types of programs you will get to see a few different layouts and options are always good when trying to narrow down your choices.

If home landscaping software programs are not for you, then you can try doing a search online for some wonderful home landscaping ideas. The Internet is full of great sites that you can use to get everything done the right way. It is important to do plenty of research before you start your own home landscaping so that you keep the number of mistakes made down to a minimum. If you do make a boo-boo, don't worry about it, any thing can be fixed.

Before you start your home landscaping you will need to also look into any gas lines and electrical lines that may be running through your yard. This is very important if you are planning to be doing a lot of digging. You cannot afford to hit any of these things, not only can it cost you a bundle to fix, it can also be very dangerous. Hitting an electrical line with a metal shovel could put an end to all of your work, your life too.

You will also need to find out about zoning restrictions that could affect your home landscaping. In some places you cannot have trees too high and even some fences are not allowed. Find out these kinds of things before you start your home landscaping work and you could save a lot of time and money.

Organic Landscaping

Many people are becoming more interested in using landscape tactics that do not harm the earth. In addition to being great for the environment, organic landscaping can also provide benefits for your wallet and for your health. One of the most alarming things to many people is the fact that some pesticides and fertilizers can harm their children. When you have children or grandchildren, it seems kind of a waste if they cannot play on the lawn because there is fertilizer all over it.

Likewise, the improper use of pesticides, or sometimes even the proper use of these chemicals, can result in sickness. Another benefit of organic gardening can also be felt in the wallet. If you make use of the resources that you have at hand, you can actually save money with do-it-yourself organic landscaping, rather than paying money for chemicals to unnaturally enhance your plants.

One of the best ways to practice organic landscape is to make use of native plants. It is much easier to naturally promote the health of your landscape when the plants you use thrive in your area. Bringing in exotic plants or non-native plants from areas with very different conditions only results in frustration and the possible reliance on chemicals to help you take care of them.

If you want to keep a landscape that works with the natural setting, native plants, or plants from areas with similar conditions, can help you accomplish this.

The lawn is most often the most visible part of a landscape. It seems as though many people think it is necessary to use a great deal of chemicals to keep pests from ruining the lawn or to help the lawn grow well. The truth, however, is that by actively caring for the soil in your lawn as well as the grass, you can create a healthier lawn. This can be done in a number of ways that do not involve chemicals that can be harmful to the environment and to your health.

One of these ways is the use of organic fertilizer. There are compositions of fertilizer made entirely of organic materials. These fertilizers do cost more up front, but as they are used regularly reduce long run costs. They decrease the need for chemicals that can become expensive (and if applied wrong can actually damage your lawn more than help it), and they do not need to be applied as often. So, the cost often evens out eventually, as you have to apply the synthetic fertilizer much more often.

Another way to take care of the lawn is to use practices that promote healthy soil and better grass roots. One of these practices is aeration. Aeration relieves soil compaction by punching holes in the ground. This helps by making the soil easier to go through. This means that the roots have more room to go deeper, and organisms, like earthworms, that actually help the health of your grass, have more room to move about and make their homes. This results in naturally healthy grass that withstands pests better and keeps weeds out on its own.

Top dressing and over seeding are other organic practices that improve the health of the lawn. Top dressing is the act of taking composted organic matter and mixing it half and half with sand. A thin layer is then spread over the lawn. This actually improves the lawn rooting, creating healthier, hardier grass, without fertilizer.

Over seeding is a method that makes use of more than the recommended amount of grass seed--about one and a half times more than the recommended amount. Over seeding promotes quicker germination and results in a thicker lawn that fights weeds.

Fertilizer, organic or otherwise, is not even necessary if you practice common sense in using organic gardening techniques. You can even create your own compost and mulch by using grass clippings from the lawn mower and leftovers from the garden. Raked leaves and pine needles and weeds can also be used.

By leaving them to decompose, you are creating nutrient-rich organic matter that can be used to, in turn, improve the health of all the plants in your landscape, not just grass. Organic gardening can be a very rewarding and money saving effort when you do it yourself.

The Advantages of Edible Landscaping

There are many advantages to participating in the practice of edible landscaping. As one might imagine, edible landscape elements are those that can be used for food, as well as for ornamental beauty. Vegetables, herbs, and fruits can add variety and color to the landscape, and if well maintained, they can also look very attractive and even elegant in many cases. Most people prefer to keep the edible elements of their landscape to the back portions of their property.

While this may be reasonable for a more conventional garden plot, a well placed squash patch in the front yard or beautiful raspberry bushes against a fence can look very attractive anywhere on a piece of property, and fruit trees are always welcome. Strawberries and herbs make excellent ground cover, and peppers and tomato plants make excellent accents in flower gardens. Here are some of the advantages of incorporating edible landscape elements into your

environment.

Less effort on the lawn. If trying to keep a manicured lawn is a daunting task, you can reduce the amount of lawn that you do have by adding more edible elements. If you pay someone to keep your lawn for you, it can become quite expensive. Edible elements are excellent ways to reduce you're the area of your lawn, making the upkeep easier, without having to spend a great deal of money.

Increased quality of life. You can experience a better quality of life as taking care of these edible elements in your landscape leads you to more exercise and more time in the fresh air. Inside of offices and homes the air does not circulate as well.

Sick building syndrome is an actual condition that results in respiratory problems associated with being indoors too much. Sometimes, with all of the dust, and other small particles constantly floating through the house, the air inside a home can be more polluted than the air outside the home. Being outside can help alleviate much of the problems of this nature.

Experts agree that exercise is important, and tending your edibles can be an enjoyable way to get some physical activity. You feel better when you exercise, and your body is healthier. Increased physical wellness also results from the fact that you can choose not to use pesticides and thus grow food that is better for you. There are also mental health benefits associated with tending plants. Additionally, the satisfaction one feels from growing something for one's consumption adds to feelings of self worth.

Quality family time. Taking care of an edible landscape makes a great family activity. A family can spend time together, and children can learn the value of hard work as well as learning to respect and enjoy nature. These days, with so many distractions tempting the family in all different directions (or even to just sit in separate rooms watching TV or playing on the computer), working together for a common goal can really help family members discover each other.

Environmental benefits. You can help the environment by growing edible elements in your landscape. When you eat what you grow, you decrease demand for factory farming and processed foods, which in turn helps the environment. Additionally, if you choose to shun harmful chemicals like pesticides, you are decreasing dependence upon harmful products. Additionally, you are also helping reduce the demand for transporting produce to stores, thus affecting truck emissions.

Financial benefits. And one cannot forget the pocketbook. Edible landscaping provides food for your family, allowing you to save money at the grocery store. If you have enough room, it is even possible to grow enough food to freeze or can some of your food for winter. This can result in great savings. With berries, apples, and crabapples, it is also possible for you to rather inexpensively make your own jellies and jams.

During summer months, it is possible to purchase almost none of your produce at the store if you have properly planned your edible elements. Although items like citrus fruits and melons may not grow in your climate, most vegetables and berries grow almost anywhere. This means that you can buy a very few items of desire, and grow most of the rest of your produce.

The great thing about edible landscaping is that you do not need everything in the same area. There is no reason to put all of your vegetables in the same place, like a traditional block garden. You can spread a great many of them throughout the landscape for more dramatic and aesthetic effect.

The Principles Behind Japanese Gardens

Japanese gardens are becoming more and more popular as landscaping features. This is because Japanese gardens seem to have an inherent feeling of peace and calm attached to them. Additionally, if properly planned and maintained, they do not need to be expensive, nor do they need to be time consuming to take care of. One of the biggest misconceptions that many people have is that a Japanese garden is supposed to have exotic flowers.

This is not true, as most Japanese gardens actually make more use of structures and plants to give them their distinctive look. It is a good idea to understand the principles behind Japanese gardens in order to have one that is truly authentic and one that is not hard to take care of because of high maintenance exotic flowers.

One of the first principles in planning a Japanese garden is to take into account nature. Square ponds are not natural, but round ones are. Also, using shapes that occur in nature, such as rounded edges, complements the feeling of nature and peace. Also inherent in the principles of Japanese gardens is the elements of space. Many people feel that there are "empty" portions of such gardens and the impulse is to fill them in.

Leaving some attractive empty space accents the other portions of the landscape. Also understanding the concept of size is important. Do not put something large in a small space. It looks out of place and is not in balance with its surroundings. Try to create a garden space that complements the rest of the landscape, and use elements that complement each other.

Enclosures are also part of the basic design of a Japanese garden. Fences and gates create a feeling of seclusion, and also of retreat. Entrance and exit are important, not only to seal the garden away (often symbolically) from the outside, but also because it indicates moving in and moving out. Additionally, fences offer a barrier from the world, where the garden can be enjoyed fully without reference to the cares that exist outside the garden.

There is no singular design in a Japanese garden, and many people prefer to take elements and aspects of the garden and incorporate them in unique ways. Some elements of Japanese gardens include rock, water, plantings, ornaments, and borrowed scenery. Each of these has a specific purpose.

Rock is the main foundation of the garden. After properly laying out the stones, the rest of the garden practically builds itself. Stone elements include tall vertical stones, short vertical stones, horizontal stones, arched stones, and reclining stones. Stepping stones and rock pathways are also used. Placement of the rock is important, as the rocks have meanings. However, if you are more about aesthetics, you can simply place the rocks where you feel they best complement

the look and feel of the garden.

Water can be literal, as in a built water feature, or simulated, as with raked gravel or sand. You can even make symbolic water by fitting river stones tightly together. The sound of actual water is calming and soothing, and it adds to the serenity of the garden. The Japanese also view water as the symbol of the passage of time.

Plantings are secondary to the role of stones in a Japanese garden. However, they are important and a main concern of the design. Placement of the plantings, as with the stones, is important to the harmony of the landscape design. You need not use bamboo trees or maples for your garden if you do not find them pleasing. Ornamental grasses, evergreens, and a variety of deciduous trees can be very attractive in your garden, and still fulfill the basic principles of the Japanese garden.

Ornaments are things that serve to enhance the garden. They should not be main focuses. They are simply accents and not to be treated as main architectural elements in the garden. Some ornaments include lanterns, basins, stupas, and even some sculpture. Borrowed scenery consists of element that can be seen from within the garden, but that are not actually located inside the confines of the garden. Different elements can be placed to accent a distant mountain or to reveal a beautiful tree on someone else's property.

Landscaping to Attract Birds

Many people enjoy the dulcet sounds of birds singing and chirping in their yards. Birds are beautiful to look at, and they provide many with an appreciation for nature. There are many benefits associated with attracting birds to the landscape, but in order to experience these benefits, the birds first need to be attracted. It is possible to attract birds to your property by following a few simple design principles, and by choosing plants for your landscape that naturally attract birds.

Birdfeeders are old staples for those who wish to see birds in their yards. When using feeders, they should be placed conveniently, and they should also be large enough to hold two to three days' worth of food. Placing birdfeeders in various parts of the yard can help attract more birds into your landscape. However, the birdfeeders should serve as supplements to the various plants in your yard that provide food and shelter to encourage birds to think of your yard as home.

The first thing to remember when designing a landscape to attract birds is that your design should provide shelter to protect birds from the elements or from predators. Evergreens are great in this role, as they often provide plenty of space for a bird to crawl into, but they are very difficult for predators to penetrate.

Additionally, they can be thick enough to provide adequate and desirable shelter. Evergreen trees and bushes, moreover, look nice with just about any home, and they are fairly hardy and easy to take care of. Other plants that provide good shelter to birds include other woody plants. Features like decks and birdhouses also provide nice places for birds to shelter.

The next thing that should be done is to provide plants that offer a consistent food supply. These plantings should offer a great deal of food, and produce enough food to meet the birds' needs, with the help of birdfeeders. Additionally, there should be a variety of plants that offer seeds and fruits at various times so that the food supply lasts for an extended period of time.

Holly plants (if you use blue holly, you will need both a blue boy and a blue girl in order for there to be any berries), crabapple trees, sunflowers, and other plants that produce berries and seed are excellent choices. Many of these plants are very attractive and can be made to look good in any design, besides being a source of food for winged creatures.

Another landscape principle to keep in mind while selecting plants that attract birds is to select plants that attract insects. Most scented flowers attract insects, and this means that your yard will attract birds that eat insects. Not only are there many beautiful flowers, like the gumbo-limbo and roses, that attract insects, but these also in turn smell very nice.

You can have a fragrant yard, as well as one that is really for the birds. Among your choices for insect-attracting flowers, choose some that bloom during the spring migrations. Then you will be sure to get birds on their way through town, headed north.

Finally, there are landscape features that are not plant-related. These features, other than birdfeeders and birdhouses, can also mean the difference between a yard bursting with birdsong and one that is depressingly quiet. These features are water features. Birds like to have places where they can bathe and drink. There is no need for a big water feature; a small birdbath or basin is often more than sufficient. Birds do prefer moving water, so small features that circulate water, or even water in gently sloping basins or troughs can be very attractive to birds.

It does not need to cost a lot of extra money to attract birds to your landscape. There are plenty of discount stores that offer acceptable birdhouses, feeders, and water features at low costs. Additionally, if you buy seeds or starts, you can get your plants for less. Birds do not require anything really special. For the most part you just need to keep them in mind if you want them part of your landscape. Much of the time attractive plants and features that you would likely have purchased anyway can be incorporated to make your landscape more pleasing to the ear.

Benefits Associated with Attracting Birds to Your Landscape

There are fond memories of finding birds' nests in the yard, and watching eggs hatch. Additionally, the sounds of birds chirping in the morning can provide a great natural alarm clock. There are many pleasing benefits associated with birds in the landscape, and with careful planning, it is possible to attract birds to the landscape, providing you with many obvious benefits, and with some that may not seem so easy to see.

Attracting birds with trees that provide shelter, offering food through feeders and through certain plants, and by making the landscape an altogether inviting place, is a fairly easy thing to

do, and with a little planning, you can reap all the benefits that grow out of actively inviting birds to be a part of your landscape.

Increased wildlife population. Biodiversity has been shown to be a very important part of our ecology. By inviting bird populations into your yard, you are encouraging this necessary part of our ecosystem. If you have a good landscaping plan to attract birds, you are likely to double the number of birds on your property.

Soil conservation. Landscape plants that birds like, such as trees, shrubs, and some flowers, actually help retain soil. Additionally, when birds cause some fruits to fall to the ground, they provide organic sources of compost and mulch. These things help reduce soil erosion and increase the number of nutrients in the soil.

Energy conservation. Conserving energy results directly in savings in the pocketbook. When you conserve energy with well thought out landscaping, you will save money in costs to heat and cool your home. Birds are attracted to large trees, and so if you carefully plan where to place trees like large evergreens and hardwoods, you can provide shelter for the birds and keep your home better protected from the elements.

Birdwatching. Birding is fast becoming one of the more popular hobbies in the United States. This is because it can be very relaxing to watch birds. Additionally, it can be a lot of fun to identify species and check off the species you see in the yard. Birdwatching also makes a great family activity. You can spend quality time with your family, while teaching your children to appreciate and enjoy nature. Some birdwatchers report a count of over 190 different species visiting their yards.

Wildlife photography. This is another great hobby that allows people time to enjoy nature. Studies have been done that prove the efficacy of nature in helping mental health and helping people feel more connected and a better sense of self. There is no need for professional equipment. Most of the fun is just snapping pictures. Then a scrapbook can be made of bird pictures, and this can result in a great sense of accomplishment.

Natural insect control. Insects can be somewhat annoying, and birds eat insects. By designing a landscape that attracts birds, you will find that they come and quite often eat the insects that plague your enjoyment in your yard. Without resorting to possibly harmful pesticides, you can control the insect populations in your yard.

Natural beauty. Birds are a part of the natural habitat. This means that when you create a natural landscape design that attracts birds, you are enjoying a more natural state. As mentioned before, many studies find a correlation to feelings of wellbeing and exposure to nature. You can improve your quality of life by creating a nature-filled landscape that includes birds.

Increased property value. Your carefully designed landscape provides more than just value for birds and intrinsic value for you. Property values go up when attractive landscaping is present. When you have an attractive home, it is worth more in hard cash. This means that carefully chosen plants can not only enhance your enjoyment of a home by attracting birds, but can cause an increase in the amount of money you can expect to get when you decide to sell.

Child development. Having a natural-looking habitat that attracts birds can also attract children. It makes an interesting place for children to play. Plus, it can help them develop a lifelong love of nature, conservation, and wildlife. This betters the world for the future and is part of helping your children become a more rounded people who enjoy doing more than just sitting in front of the TV or computer.