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FACT SHEET: LANDSCAPE DESIGN 101

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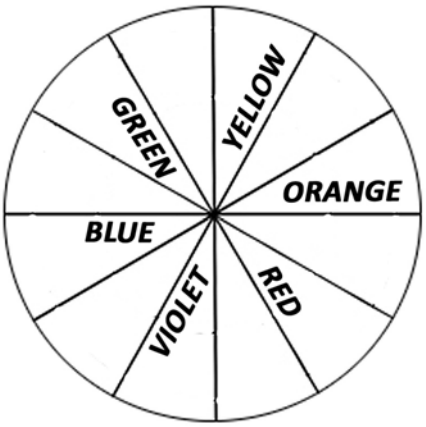
Landscaping combines elements of art and science to create a functional, aesthetically pleasing extension of indoor living to the outdoors.

ELEMENTS OF ART

Elements of art include but are not limited to color, line, form, texture and scale.



Color variation can best be explained by use of a color wheel. Three basic color schemes are monochromatic, analogous and complementary. A monochromatic color scheme consists of different tints and shades of one color. Analogous color schemes combine colors which are adjacent or side-by-side on the color wheel. Complementary color schemes combine colors directly across the color wheel.

Line is related to eye movement or flow. The concept and creation of line depends upon the purpose of the design and existing patterns. In the overall landscape, line is inferred by bed arrangement and the way these beds fit or flow together. Line is also created vertically by changes in plant height and the height of tree and shrub canopies.

Form and line are closely related. Line is considered usually in terms of the outline or edge of objects, whereas form is more encompassing. Form can be discussed in terms of individual plant growth habits or as the planting arrangement in a landscape. Plant forms include upright, oval, columnar, spreading, broad spreading, weeping, etc. Form is basically the shape and structure of a plant or mass of plants. Structures also have form and should be considered as such when designing the area around them.

Texture describes the surface quality of an object than can be seen or felt. Surfaces in the landscape include buildings, walks, patios, groundcovers and plants. The texture of plants differs as the relationships between the leaves, twigs and branches differ. Coarse, medium or fine could be used to describe texture but so could smooth, rough, glossy or dull.

Scale refers to the size of an object or objects in relation to the surroundings. Size refers to definite measurements while scale describes the size relationship between adjacent objects. The size of plantings and buildings compared on the human scale must be considered.

STEPS IN DEVELOPING A LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The benefits of an organized system in developing a landscape design are tremendous. As with most endeavors, the level of efficiency relative to time input is greatly increased with an organized approach. The game plan for the landscape designer should follow a sequence:

1. Develop a Plot Plan

The plot plan should consist of 1) accurate house placement on the lot, 2) accurate lot and house dimensions with window and door placement and 3) existing driveways and/or walks. Once the house position on the lot has been determined, this should be drawn to a predetermined scale on tracing paper placed over grid paper.

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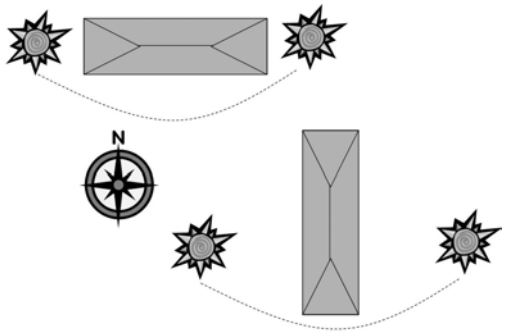
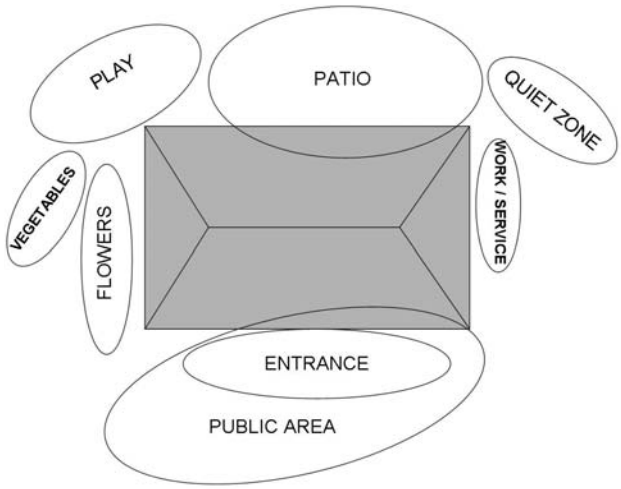
2. Conduct a Site Analysis
A thorough site analysis can save you time and money. Existing vegetation, natural factors and features, views, noise levels, utility placement, easements/setback lines and primary architectural features of the house should be noted.



Existing plants should be examined. Tree condition and placement should be recorded. Trees on adjoining property that would affect shade patterns on the customer's lot should also be surveyed. **Natural factors and features** of a landscape include house orientation, land form, soil conditions, rainfall distribution, seasonal wind pattern and micro-climatic conditions.

3. Assess Family Needs
A landscape should be an outdoor extension of indoor living areas. It should be functional and provide space for family activities. Before the designer can create such an environment, knowledge of certain family characteristics is essential.

4. Locate Activity Areas
Once the family needs have been determined, areas for these activities must be located on the property. Their placement should be considered in terms of the house plan and in relation to other activities in and adjacent to the property. These activity areas could include a public area, entrance, living area, quiet zone, service area, or vegetable or flower garden plots.



5. Design Activity Areas
A systematic approach should be taken in designing activity areas. First, determine the objectives of the design and establish the general type of plan -- formal or natural. Plan for structural needs, consider land form modifications, determine traffic flow, develop bed form and then specify plant materials.

6. Plant Selection and Placement
Plant selection is the last step in the design process. Up until this point, plant form, texture, color and size have been visualized, but now a name must be assigned to each plant. Plants are selected on the basis of climatic adaptability to the microclimate of the location, plant architecture and availability.

No matter how well a plant meets the physical characteristics for a location, if it is not adaptable to the conditions there, it will fail. These microclimate conditions include sun intensity and duration, soil conditions, rainfall, air circulation and temperature.

Plants should be spaced with consideration to their mature size. Plants should be spaced far enough from the house so that there is adequate air circulation near the house.