Introduction to Landscape Design

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Basic Principles of Landscape Design
Landscaping defines the space, sets the tone, and makes a home your own every bit as much as furniture, paint or wallpaper.
Principles of Design

1. Unity
2. Balance
3. Transition
4. Proportion
5. Rhythm
6. Focalization
7. Repetition
8. Simplicity
1. Unity

Unity...a main idea...everything fits together

– Consistent style

– A theme

– Harmony
  • Mass plantings
  • Repetition
  • Color
  • Style
2. Balance

Equilibrium
Equality of visual attraction
Pleasing to the eye…brain
symmetrical
asymmetrical
symmetrical
Asymmetrical Balance

Determine central axis and use form, color, and texture to achieve equal interest
Gradual change which allows slow movement of the viewer’s eye using size, color, form, and texture
Bad transition
• eye is not drawn into the distance
• the view is stopped
Good transition…the eye is drawn to the horizon
4. Proportion

Size of the parts in relation to each other
5. Rhythm

A feeling of motion leading the viewer through and beyond the design area
6. Focalization

Direct the attention toward a feature at the vanishing point...FOCUS
7. Repetition

- Repeated use of features like plants or color to achieve unity

Too much repetition = monotony
= clutter
= busy
= confusion
8. Simplicity

• Elimination of unnecessary detail
• Simplest functional form

Avoids unnecessary cost and maintenance
Developing a landscape design

1. Develop a plot plan
2. Conduct a site analysis
3. Assess family needs and desires
4. Locate activity areas
5. Design activity areas
6. Plant selection and placement
1. Develop a Plot Plan

Make a scale drawing

- House placement on lot
- Location of doors and windows
- Septic and well placement
- Driveway and walks
- Utility placement
- Easements and setbacks
2. Conduct a Site Analysis

• Existing plants...trees
• Natural factors and features
  – Land form (slope and elevation)
  – Soil characteristics...wet/dry
  – Rainfall patterns or irrigation system
• House orientation...sun and wind
  – Views to be accented or screened
  – Noise or traffic issues
3. Family Needs and Desires

• Landscape provides an outdoor extension of indoor living areas
  – Eating area
  – Entertaining area
  – Play ground
  – Clothesline
  – Vegetable garden
  – Pet area
4. Locate Activity Areas

Place related to indoor activity area and to each other
5. Design Activity Areas

• Formal vs. natural…neighborhood
• Structural needs…garage, swing set, patio
• Determine traffic patterns
• Consider adjoining properties
• DESIGN PRINCIPLES: Unity- Balance- Transition- Proportion- Rhythm- Focalization- Repetition- Simplicity
• Consider cost and maintenance requirements
6. Plant Selection and Placement

Right Plant – Right Place

- Appearance
- Texture
- Fragrance
- Hazards
  - Poisonous
  - Thorns
  - Bees
- Cost
- Maintenance
- Zone
- Space
- Soil characteristics
- Sun/shade
- Water
- Salt/wind tolerance