



Quick Tips To Think About When Landscaping

About This eBook

This book is intended to give you small tidbits of advice and information in regards to landscaping and making your design a success.

It is not meant to teach you how to be a landscaper, but rather learn a few tricks of the trade and provide some thoughts to think about when dreaming up your landscape design.

The Value of Landscaping

Think about how landscaping can affect the perceived value of land.

Like land, landscaping generally does not decrease or depreciate in value, but grows in value over time. Landscaping does offer a distinctive benefit over land and a house value in that it appreciates in value simply by existing over time...

Basically what I'm saying is that after you plant trees, plants, shrubs, etc., they grow (assuming they were planted correctly).

A small tree planted will in time have a growth period and can become much more than it was in the beginning. A house, on the other hand, can fall into disrepair and is likely to become less valuable over time if it's not maintained (some landscapes are self maintained).

For a landscape to be valuable, it needs to be somewhat attractive (functional helps, too).

A landscape design and installation must be a quality design.

The landscape must blend effortlessly with the design of the building(s) on the property to create a unified whole.

There is a biased aspect to quality, however, that involves the know-how, criteria, and expectations of the person who perceives the landscape.

If that person has a little experience and is generally not aware of the degree of professionalism to be expected, the expectations for the outcome of a given project may be lower.

Most Commonly Valued Elements in a Home Landscape

- annual flowers
- arbor and/or pergola
- birdhouse and feeders
- deck
- drainage
- dust-reducing elements
- fall color
- fences
- foundation plantings
- fragrance
- garages
- garden bench
- good view of the house from the street
- ground cover
- lawn

Quick Landscaping Tips

- lighting
- low maintenance garden
- parking
- patio
- porch
- shade creating trees
- spring flowering bulbs
- stone walls
- storage shed
- swimming pool
- visas
- walkways
- windbreaks

64 Landscaping Tips...

Learning to properly landscape your yard is a skill allowing you turn your home into the jewel of the neighborhood.

Everyone wants their home to look good, but it can be hard to know where to start.



You can use this quick tips guide to help you grow your knowledge and maybe do something a little different from your neighbor's house.

Even better, maybe save a little money down the road as well while also increasing the value add of your house.

So with that...

Let's get into some quick landscaping tips.

1. Multi-Seasonal Gardens

Making your garden multi-seasonal will allow you to take full advantage of your landscaping. You should mix in plants which bloom or have color in all seasons so that you can enjoy the garden year-round.

You can even choose trees that have beautiful leaves or evergreen trees that will keep your grounds looking beautiful all year.

2. Incorporate water when you are designing.

For example, it is not difficult to install a small pool and some pumps. If you feel uncomfortable with the equipment involved, you can hire a professional to do the installation for a nominal fee. Including water in your landscape will provide a focal point.



3. Talk to an expert before beginning your project.

Those of you looking to landscape your yard yourself should still consult with a professional. Since they have more experience, they can give you **advice on what not to do**. They are able to offer great tips or opinions that you may have missed and save you money in the long run.

For example, do you know how to calculate how much landscape rock you will need? Or how much fertilizer?

4. When you think of landscaping, consider your water needs based on the local climate.

If there are restrictions on water use, you need to realize that there will be restrictions on what plants you should use.

5. Plants are not the only thing to landscaping.

When you are landscaping a yard, it's easy to get sidetracked by only the plants that are going to bloom there.

Accent items can really go a long way in your landscaping design. Rocks, pottery, [hardscapes](#) or an arbor are other nice additions that can add character to your yard.

6. Time your purchases to save money.

The best time to buy [lumber is during the winter](#). Buy organic materials, like shrubs and mulch during the later part of the season. If new varieties of plants become available, wait until the price drops; this normally takes a couple of years.

7. Have the correct measurements.

Before you visit lawn or garden centers to get plants, [measure your landscaping area](#) first. Having exact measurements makes it easier to calculate the needed amounts of materials. This way you will buy the correct amount and are not making multiple trips to return or pick up items a second time.

8. Shop online to save money and get a larger selection.

There are many websites that sell quality products, often at a good price. Read a few user reviews to ensure that you invest in products that will satisfy your unique needs. Comparative shopping between websites may also save you a considerable amount of money.

The downside, of course, is that you don't get to inspect the plants yourself. If you're a trained landscaper or gardener, then you'll probably want to inspect them before buying them.

9. Don't always choose the most expensive landscaping products.

For supplies such as containers and popular perennials, there isn't a big difference between the economy version and the expensive version. Also, it's good to look your plants over well. Plants that are sold cheap may not have been given the proper care that they require.

10. Add Color

If you desire to add beauty to your landscape, add different plants and trees in order to add color.

You can find shrubs in a variety of colors. Add trees that contain bright seasonal flowers.



11. Don't fear the task of plant removal from the yard.

Sometimes, when a plant is fully mature, it won't look good in your garden. Don't be afraid to remove a large tree to allow you to add something that will transform your yard. You can always relocate the plant to another spot or give it to a friend.

12. Start with basic elements of design and add to them as you get more comfortable with landscaping.

[Anchor plants](#) will provide continuity for diverse areas. Planting certain shrubs over and over will add unity to the yard. Balance can be achieved by planting the same pattern of plants in single areas. Plants that differ in their leaf textures can offer a lot of variation.

13. Landscape Phases

Instead of buying everything at once, divide your project into phases and buy only the supplies you need for the phase you're working on.

Not many people can go out and buy thousands of dollars of supplies at once. Break your project down into steps and pay for what you need to complete each step. The savings in loan or credit interest will be beneficial, plus you can always change directions if you have a new, creative angle to follow.

14. Climate Considerations

Remember your climate when you begin to landscape your home. Some plants need [frost season](#), for example, so be sure to take that into account. Average sun exposure, rainfall, and prevailing winds are other climactic factors you need to take into consideration when you pick out plants.

If you're doing the job yourself, ask someone from the nursery about how plants you're thinking of buying will do during the different seasons.

Like I mentioned before, consider buying a multiplicity of plants which thrive in different seasons, that way you always have something blooming and looking healthy in your yard all year long.

15. Okay with the last point I made, let's look at it like this as well...

When planning your landscaping, experiment by planting a variety of plants. This will help maintain your landscape if a **disease** or a **pest** infects your design. If there is only one type of plant in your yard, you could lose them all with an outbreak of disease or an attack of insects.

Diversity in plant life is an important part of landscaping.

16. Other options for buying plants

Stores and catalogs are not the only places to look for resources when it comes to landscaping. If you have an [arboretum](#) or [botanical garden](#) nearby, you may be able to buy varieties of plants especially suited for your area. Many times, you cannot find these plants at your local nursery.

You should also check with friends and neighbors to see if they have any plants or items they want to get rid of that you can use.

17. Watch out for what is already in place

Consider the structures that are already in place before modifying your landscape. Check out where your gutters, cables, air conditioning units, and things of that sort are located; you want to make sure you don't interfere with where they're at. Call the city or county before you dig to make sure you do not damage any underground lines.

18. Don't mess with the neighbor

Learn where the property lines are between your neighbor's yard and your own before beginning any landscaping. This is vital if you don't have a fence. You don't want to anger your neighbors by accidentally planting in their yard. Look at property deeds to learn where the property lines are.



19. How will it look in the future?

Make sure to account for how big the plants will eventually be when planning your landscaping. A small tree might look great at the side of your house, but in just a few years time, it can get dangerously close to your home. So when planting things like trees, consider its full growth potential and plan accordingly.

20. Materials List

You should always make a [material list](#) before starting any landscaping project. It is quite discouraging to have to postpone your project until you go back to the store for a single tool.

21. Water Knowledge

Okay this one is not as much of a tip as it is just knowledge.

I'm sure you probably know that drinking water goes through a process to remove all the junk from it so we can drink it and not get sick. Well there's also some additives and this impure water typically slows growth down in trees and plants. The best water for plants, trees, shrubs, etc. would be rainwater, river water, and other natural sources.

22. Mulch

[Mulch](#) is a necessary foundation for most flower beds. Mulch will help your plants retain moisture--and that can be very useful if you are in a region where heat may be a major issue. Mulch allows plants to make use of the right amount of water.

23. Pruning a NEW tree...

This is a bit controversial and comes with many opinions.

My recommendations are as follows:

- When you plant, prune only dead or broken branches
- Be sure not to prune the central leader on a tree
- After a tree becomes established, you can see whether there is sufficient support from the root system for the amount of canopy; portions of the tree will die if there isn't.

24. Use a sense of depth.

Depth is relatively easy to impart to a landscape design. Depth in the garden is achieved by understanding and creating foreground, midground, and background. The background can act as the "stage" upon which the structures and plantings are set.

The foreground is the defining element that helps to set the limits of the space.

25. Do not rush to redo the landscaping if you purchase a home.

People often buy a house and want to entirely rip out the existing landscaping to just start from scratch. However, it is wise to delay any decisions for an entire season, in order to assess which plants might be

worth keeping. Plants change during the year and what may appear unsightly in the winter, may look beautiful in the summer or spring.

26. Ground Cover

If your yard has a big tree that provides quite a bit of shade, it can be hard to plant flowers beneath it. Instead of using flowers, consider adding a ground cover. This adds beauty to your landscaping with the added benefit that it is quite easy to maintain. [Hosta](#) and [sweet woodruff](#) are some ground covering options.

27. Shade

If you're planning to use larger plants in your yard, remember that they'll cast a shadow. This can be used to cool your patio or even help with privacy. Like mentioned above, just do not put small plants here unless they like lots of shade.

28. Create a visual flow.

Visual flow is the way that the eye will move when it is viewing a scene or an object. The eye should be led through the landscape in a natural and easy sequence.

29. Soil is a big factor in your landscaping efforts.

Certain plants won't like all kinds of soil. If you see that some plants aren't growing, consider changing soil; you might also consider wood chips or mulch.

If you visit your local nursery and let them know what kind of plant you have, they might be able to offer some suggestions.

30. Design the landscape with your lifestyle in mind.

For example, if your yard is susceptible to noise from traffic, some hedges are a great way to dull the sounds. Construct a play area if you are a parent. This is also a great area to have small gatherings and parties.

31. Mix It Up!

Mix up the types of plants you use, including their size, color, shape and texture. The larger plants should be the anchors, with the smaller ones arranged around them. Shorter plants positioned in front of higher-growing ones will help give your yard a filled-in, completed look.

Consider different themes to see which landscaping plan makes the best use of your space.

32. Proper Fertilization

Watering your plants is certainly important, but it is only one component in maintaining a healthy yard. The proper soil, nutrients and other things factor into the maintenance of your plants and flowers. It is extremely important to choose a good fertilizer. You must follow specific instructions for each type and what you're using it for, remember this.

33. Privacy Wanted?

If privacy is your priority when planting trees, then look for fast-growing species. Just like they sound, these trees grow at a higher rate than most normal trees. One popular fast-growing tree is the [weeping cherry](#). Here's a [list of some others](#).

34. Set and Create a Budget

When you create the plan for the look of your yard, also create a budget with estimated costs. Jot down all of the supplies that will be required. Then, consider where best to purchase all of those items. Remember, the costs of these items may differ quite a bit from area to area. Try to look for the lowest price available on good quality materials.

35. References

When hiring a professional of any kind, even a landscaper, make sure you ask for professional references. Although their cost estimate is an important factor, their prior customers will tell you a lot about their work ethic and whether they will be right for your job.

36. Add special touches like a water garden.

Shopping at a store which provides professional quality materials for such a build will help you to do it successfully. The extra help you receive from people who specialize in water gardens is worth the money because you can create a more successful and beautiful water garden with their guidance.

37. Curved Borders

Use curved borders around your plantings when you are landscaping your yard. The rounded shapes are more visually appealing than squared-off, straight borders. The curves help your yard look softer to people passing by on the street, despite the hard, straight borders your house or driveway create.



38. Varying Plant Textures

Choosing plants with varying leaf textures can really make a garden look amazing. Mixing textures can add interest and contrast to the overall design plan. Plant them as evenly as possible for the best visual effect.

39. Walkways and Paths



Walkways and paths can, and should, be integrated into your landscaping design.

Ugly sidewalks made of concrete can be look displeasing.

Spruce it up by putting in bricks or stepping stones.

Brick pavers, rocks and stepping stones come in various shapes and colors that can be specifically designed to your landscaping needs and are comparable in price to concrete.

40. Outdoor Kitchen Countertops

When building an outdoor kitchen, look to granite for your surfacing. Granite is a low maintenance material so while it might cost you more

during the initial install, it will be worth the money later on since you won't be faced with constant bills for replacements and repairs.

41. Wildflowers are cheap and add lots of color.

If you want lots of color in the yard or garden, but are a little low on funds, then consider using wildflowers.



Wildflower seeds can be bought in any home improvement store and scattered over large areas or where planting is difficult.

You will end up with a lush garden, full of flowering plants in a rainbow of colors! A mix of flowers makes for great bouquets.

42. Sculptures can add just the right "accent" in a yard.

Have you ever thought of purchasing a sculpture for your yard? It also makes a great focal point (if it's a good sculpture, that is).

43. Remember not to think about a plant as it looks today...

...but as it will look in the future at its final size! If you overcrowd the landscape, many plants won't get enough sunlight or water and will die. Learn each plant's full size before planting so that you can give all your plants the space they need in your landscape.

44. Add Structures

Landscaping isn't just putting grass into your yard and planting a few trees here and there. You can add visual interest by including structures of iron, cement, and wood.

Archways, decks, birdbaths and [pergolas](#) (pictured) all create beautiful and complex designs that are pleasing to the eye. You can purchase less expensive or



more expensive versions of these elements, depending on your budget.

45. Fill up empty spaces with ground cover.

Ground cover plants are very pretty and can be used to fill up empty space in your yard. Examples of good ground-cover landscaping plants include Vinca and Juniper. They help prevent weeds, spread out on your yard and help to reduce the amount of grass you need to mow. They add depth, height and even color to your garden.

46. Ever think about mailboxes?

Heck, the pole holding them up can also be an added visual feature to your yard.



Many companies offer a variety of painted designs, granite, and wrought iron types.

47. Sundials and Pots

A couple of other items for finishing off the yard with personal touches are sundials and planted pots.

Pots can be as simple as smooth red clay or be as complex as a granite pot with Greek Revivalist art carded on it.

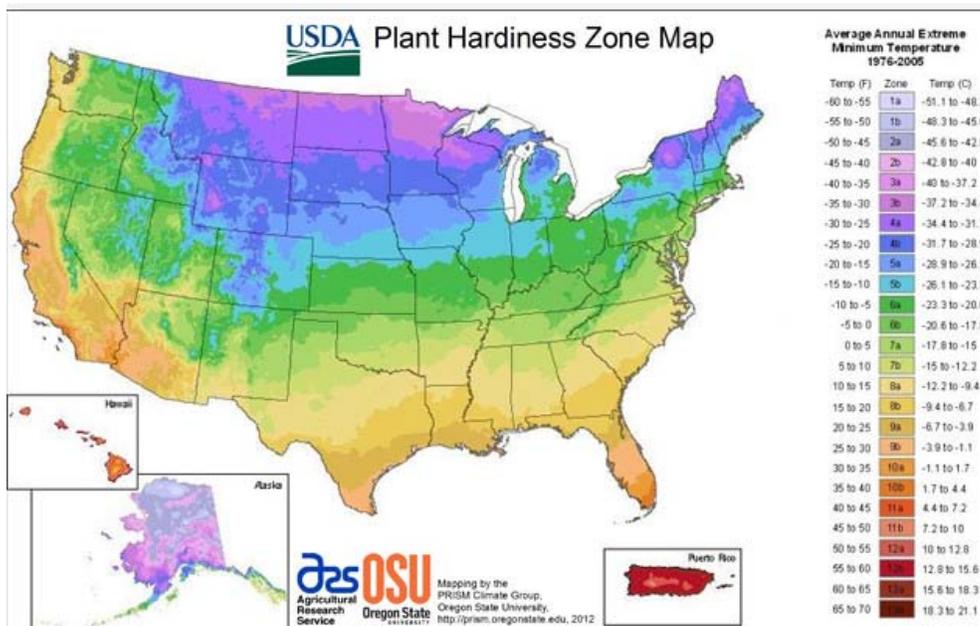
48. Think about value.

The value of all structures is largely based on the quality of the construction, the continued maintenance, and the overall appearance and usability of the structure itself.

A well-built gazebo that overlooks a beautiful scene, has an attractive path leading to it, and "beacons" you to visit is likely to have add considerable value to your home.

49. What's your location's Hardiness Zone?

Know what your area's hardiness zone is and buy plants which will thrive there. The [USDA hardiness zones](#) were updated in 2012, the first update in over two decades. The zone map is important in helping you choose plants that will be hardy for temperatures in your area.



50. Natural Looking or Created?

When designing your landscape, keep in mind that you have 2 options:

- make it look natural
- make it look like it was designed by a human

Humans tend to make things look uniform and symmetrical. In nature, that is rarely the case. If you want things to look natural, it might be was to work off of odd numbers rather than evens.

So say, 3 plants instead of 2.

51. Drip Systems

Consider investing in a drip style watering system. These irrigation systems are easy to install, and they allow you to give your plants a continuous stream of water.



The water is more efficient because it drips as opposed to having a stream, which would be the effect of a sprinkler system or a hose.

52. Divide and Conquer

You will find it daunting to try and landscape your whole yard at one time. Dividing your overall project into phases will make it much easier on both you and your budget. This also helps you change up your designs if you need to.

53. Choose a good fertilizer brand for your yard.

It's a good idea to use a single fertilizer in your garden as mixing chemicals can be quite dangerous.

Go to a user review site and see what others are saying about each popular fertilizer option (or visit your local nursery. You need to fertilize the whole yard prior to starting your landscaping project.

54. Look at resources past stores and catalogs.

Local nurseries often sell many different varieties of plants that will grow well where you live. Often, these are plants you may not even be able to find in a local store or garden center.

Also, chat with friends and neighbors to see if they have any plants that they are looking to divide or get rid of completely.

55. Are you planning on selling your home anytime soon?

In comparison with other projects, investing in the landscape of your home can easily generate returns of up to 200 percent. Making your backyard into an appealing and functional space will contribute to your home's value, while investing your time in beautifying your front yard can produce instant curb appeal.

56. Continuity

Plants, trees and foliage can give your landscape project a feeling of continuity. Many plants bloom for a short period of time, so it is important to include textures and colors into your design. Add these types of plants between beds to add a green accent to the landscape.

57. [Amending the soil.](#)

Two major schools of thought have developed for amending the soil used in planting.

The first approach is to use additives such as peat moss, manure, and lime (when appropriate) for an individual hole you dug for your plant or tree.

However, some people don't do this amending, because they feel that if the plant gets everything it needs in the small area of the dug hole it will not send roots out into the surrounding soils, and it will become susceptible to blow over.

If you do follow the amending method, I suggest that you look carefully at the solid structure where you are planting and try to match similar textures and organic content with that soil. Be sure you [know the soil's pH](#) before applying lime and sulfur.

58. Try filling your yard with native plants.

Native plants are a lot easier to take care of because they are used to the area's climate and soil. This also means they will be low-maintenance. Your local gardener probably has lots of great native plant information.

59. When designing your yard, think about fall colors.

A lot of people only think of summer and spring colors for their landscape and fail to realize that fall can give your yard a great look if planned correctly. You'll be glad with your decision come October and your yard looks wonderful.

60. Ornamental Grass

Add variety to your borders and flower beds by adding [ornamental grass](#). Tall grasses, such as purple fountain grass, can add color, texture and a nice visual break to your flower beds.

They also make nice accents when placed at either side of a front door or gate. You could even use them to create an



entire border. When you have many maintenance requirements, you will be able to located grass for your design.

61. Take care where you plant things.

Select plants wisely, because that could seriously affect the result of your overall landscaping project. Don't plant things in shady areas if they require much sunlight. You also don't want trees planted where they don't have enough room to grow. Proper planning will ensure that your landscape is successful.

62. How much water are you going to use?

Consider how much water you need to grow your plants and how the climate will affect your landscape before starting your project.

In many areas of the country, water restrictions have been put in place because of shortages, so try to choose plants that will not use a lot of water, and will grow in the temperatures that you live in.

63. It is okay to take plants out of your yard.

Sometimes you plant something that, when it is fully grown, just does not work in your space.

Taking out that plant might make your landscape much better to look at, while also giving you added room to put in something which fits better in that area. If you choose to relocate it within your design, that is great. If not, consider passing it on to a friend, or in some cases, for larger plants and trees, you might opt to sell it.

64. Don't overwater new plantings.

When watering a newly planted tree, be careful to not over water it. I recommend a method called "**deep watering**"...

That is, turning on the hose so that the water trickles out of the end. The idea is to water the plant deeply and slowly, because the ground absorbs water at a slow rate.



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