



THE LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS

Your design and installation team



Every Inch a Garden

To have a patch of lawn or not? That may be the question that you need to answer first if your gardening space is limited. If your yard is small, then having lawn is probably not necessary. Instead incorporate larger areas into patios or some type of decking. Of course if you live in an apartment then the question of lawn goes right out the window! When you have a small area then you must consider your site conditions – how much sun, shade or wind will the area receive? Plant the right plant in the right place and you should have a great garden.

Container Gardening

What are the soil conditions; if it is poor soil then it may be easier to just have container gardens. These can be large raised beds made from lumber or brick with assorted sized pots, tubs and barrels for accent containers placed on the patio area. By using every inch of the space that is available – ground, walls and over-head, you will be able to have an extensive garden that is not only beautiful but easy to maintain.

Purchase plants that are suitable for container gardening, ones that will not outgrow the container or the area in a short period of time.

There are a large number of dwarf evergreens that are perfect for small gardens, as well as shrubs, fruit trees and vegetables. Plant breeders and seed companies are now offering a wide variety of vegetables that are suitable for container growing. Any space that has ample light and access to water is appropriate for container growing. There are several advantages to container growing - the containers are movable so you can change the look of the garden, or move the container so that it is getting the greatest amount of sunlight all day long. You can easily change the soil in containers so they remain free of soil-borne disease, insects and nematodes. When planted properly most container remain weed free for the whole growing season.

When choosing containers they must be large enough to support fully-grown plants, have adequate drainage and be able to weather the elements. Containers that have poor drainage can mean the failure of a container garden. It is a good idea to raise the pot off the ground with pot feet, slats or bricks to allow excess water to drain freely. Consider investing in plant dollies for the larger pots as it will make moving them easier. Use potting soil that is mixed for containers, it has the right blend of soil, peat and perlite so it will not compact down in the pot and therefore hamper drainage and root growth.

Watering is very important as containers can dry out quickly in the heat of the summer. Pots should be watered thoroughly until water runs out the bottom of the pot. However never allow the pot to remain sitting in standing water. A slow release fertilizer should be incorporated into the soil in the spring, the plants have only the existing soil to live off, they rely on the additional food supplement to grow and flourish.

Garden Designs

Here are 12 ways to make a small garden appear to be larger.

1. Create a series of spaces; divide the garden into smaller rooms by using seat-walls or hedges.
2. Use mirrors, in the right place a mirror can reflect paths and plants and make the garden look like it goes forever. Reflect light and brighten a dark corner.
3. By painting a scene on a wall or fence of an open gate or arbor leading into a garden can give the illusion of more space.
4. Build a reflecting pond, as the sky and plants will be mirrored in the water and make the garden look larger.
5. By emphasizing diagonal lines you can make the garden seem deeper than it really is. Paving stones set on the diagonal or maybe the wood deck set on an angle.
6. Do not have everything on the same level, just by mounding the garden beds and having sunken or raised patios will visually expand the outdoor living space.
7. If you can, conceal part of the garden from the rest of the yard, this will give the expectation of more space just around the corner. Incorporating hedging, trellises or dense shrubbery can achieve this with pathways leading to the other areas.
8. When possible use an existing view of distant mountains or water. You may need to trim some trees and shrubs so they frame the view, but this will give the feeling of distance and not make the garden area seem small.
9. To create the feeling of depth, place large rocks and plants in the foreground with smaller ones in the back.
10. Playing with colour! Dark foliage recedes, while light foliage is prominent. A stand of dark evergreens seen through white birch trunks will create the illusion of depth.
11. By merging the indoor with the outdoors, both living areas will benefit from the illusion of being larger. By using the same floor tiles as the indoor flooring you will achieve the flow from one area to the other.
12. Details and focal points are important in a small garden, so make everyone count. Water accents, large urns or pots containing whole gardens – annuals, perennials and shrubs make large statements in little gardens so try different things.

Using your space wisely

Remember to use every inch wisely in your garden. If you have bench seating then incorporate storage under it, this is a great spot to keep your gardening tools and supplies. Grow vegetables and herbs mixed in with your flowers, this way you will have produce with beauty. Remember to keep your garden simple while still having variety. Repeat the same type of pot – clay or decorative ceramic, as well use the same landscape for decks or patios – lumber, rock or cement. This will let your eye travel around the garden easily as there is a common thread of colour or product (wood, rock, etc.).

By placing trellises just in front of a fence or wall, say 12-18" away, it will cast a shadow on the wall and give the illusion of space behind it. Use the walls and fences to hang wall baskets of annual colour as well as pieces of garden art. Again these items should reflect the interior décor, either in colour or being of the same theme. You could have outdoor cushions made of the same fabric as that covering the furniture inside and then place them on the chairs and benches on the patio. Another way of connecting the indoors with the outdoors is by using the same floor covering, if you have terra cotta tiles inside, use that look for the patio outside.