

# **How To Grow A Breathtaking Backyard Landscaping Garden**

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## Chapter 1

### **Planning A Backyard landscaping garden** **"Failing To plan is Planning To Fail"**

Planning a backyard garden is relatively easy. It involves simple steps that when carried out, gives rise to new interesting ideas that will shape your future garden.

I am not claiming any magic here but a simple process that works every time and with any kind of design. Let's get straight to designing a backyard-landscaping garden.

I am going to make this easier by giving numbers to various steps.

1) First have a look at the backyard area and write down simple existing elements in your plot. For example

- A big tree in the center
- Sloping or flat land
- Presence of any other influential element such as railway track passing by.
- Busy street outside
- Tall buildings around

2) After this step write down your requirements in your garden. These are the things that you would like to add in your garden.

- Swimming pool
- Ponds
- Waterfalls
- Walkways
- Outdoor patios

- Sculptures and statues
- Lawn
- Flowering plants

3) Next go into the interiors of your house building. Visit rooms that have windows/doors looking towards the backyard. Note down areas that you can see from interiors. These are the "hot spots" of your garden. We are going make use of them while executing the landscaping garden.

4) After this get back to the list of requirements you made in step 2. Now is the time to look into the costing part of these things. For example if you have write down "Swimming Pool" in your backyard it is a good idea to actually look for "yellow pages directory" for a few swimming pool consultants and call them over phone for a quotation.

Do this with every requirement. Of course for some, you won't require consulting agencies. For example you can visit a local nursery and have a look at some good flowering shrubs, medium height plants, containers of various sizes, paving blocks etc and take notes on their costing. It won't take longer to do this.

Also include landscaping execution costs by making a contact with landscaping contractors". These are the people who will layout the garden in your backyard and built it from scratch.

This is important to get a hag of where your budget is heading. If you think that a swimming pool is going to cost you an arm and a leg, you can easily delete it fro your list at this stage itself. This will save your design time a lot

5) Now you have the raw data ready with you. All you have to do is draw a sketch plan of your backyard on a plain white paper and start placing your requirements on it with locations. Don't forget your "hot spots" mentioned in step 3. You can have a fountain in that hot spot (if you want to), so that you can view it from inside of your house as well.

But remember while placing every element think about the profitability also. What this means is if you plan a fountain in the deepest corner of your plot, just because it can be seen from interiors, you will also require a lengthy plumbing line from your water supply till the fountain spot.

So try being creative at the same time cost effective, of course without compromising your dreams, though. Create more than one alternative and show them to your family members, friends, their opinion counts as well.

6) When you have finished sketching 5 to 6 plans calculate a rough costing of the project by making use of the raw data collected in step 4.

7) Finalize the plan that is

- Cost effective
- Easy to execute
- Easy to maintain (very important)
- The one that satisfies you..(Most important. This is why you are designing it in the first place, right?)

8) Hand over this whole thing to a "landscaping contractor" so that he can execute it. You can always do-it-yourself if you have the knowledge and experience. It will be a great experience and fun. You can even teach your kids a few things in the going.

## Chapter 2

### **Small backyard? Simple Solutions!** **How To Landscape A Small Backyard**

Small backyards do create a landscaping design challenge. Because of scarcity of space there are limitations as far as requirements are concerned. However there are some techniques that you can use to design a landscaping garden that can show wonderful results.

1) The perception of small or big for human eyes is always related to dimensions and in a small backyard the compound wall defines the boundary of the backyard.

So there is a simple solution to this. You can hide the boundary by taking the texture of the earth near the compound wall on the compound wall, either by using same texture or faking it by using murals or paintings etc..

2) The second method is to play with levels. For example in a small backyard the ground and the surrounding walls create a perception of "small space". By creating extra and free flowing horizontal planes, the vision gets a new way to look for and the perception of small slightly changes to "more". More horizontal planes equals to more space.

3) The third method is to use curved elements in your design. Such as curved pathways, circular ponds and lawn areas, etc. A circle always creates an illusion of more length than a straight line. That's why instead of using straight lines, curved pathways can create an illusion of more space and length in a small backyard.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Backyard Landscaping With Flower Garden**

A garden full of flowering plants is every homeowners dream. Surely, flowers can add great amount of excitement in any landscaping garden. Fortunately there are plenty of ways to use flowers in a garden I am going to discuss a few methods here.

#### **1) A flowerbed**

The most common method of using flowers in backyard is growing a flowerbed.

A plan of the flowerbed is first laid out on the ground. It can be in any shape and then flowering bushes are planted at a distance of approximately 9 inches.

When they grow up an effect of flowerbed is achieved. Hundreds of flowers blooming on top create a dramatic effect giving life to your garden

#### **2) Ground covers**

As the name suggests a ground cover flowering plant, spreads horizontally. These can also be used on hillside slopes so that the roots of these plants help to retain the soil and look beautiful too.

Here are a few alternatives to using flowering ground covers

a) *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* – [Click Here](#) To View Images



b) *Campanula poscharskyana* - [Click Here](#) To View Images

c) *Chrysosplenium alternifolium* - [Click Here](#) To View Images

d) *Montia sibirica* - [Click Here](#) To View Images

### **3) Container flowering plants**

These are great tiny little flowering wonders and can be used outdoors as well as indoors. If you have an outdoor patio, container gardening is the best option. Small lightweight containers can also be hanged using a chain in windows and patio verandas for, moderate sunlight to the plants.

A few recommendations

1) Primrose (spring) - [Click Here](#) To View Images

2) Kalanchoe (Spring) - [Click Here](#) To View Images

3) Geranium (Summer) - [Click Here](#) To View Images

4) Marigolds (Summer) - [Click Here](#) To View Images

## Chapter 4

### **Backyard Landscaping With Ponds**

Ponds are one of the wonderful features in any landscaping garden. If you have a pond in your backyards it comes a focal point for everyone and kids love them too, especially if you have fish in it.

However many people are frowned by the very thought of constructing a pond in the backyard. This happens because many people think that a pond must be a large pool of water with fantastic rocks and water splashing all around.

This is not at all true. A simple water feature can add visual as well as audible beauty to your garden. The true beauty of a pond is the "water" itself. Don't overcomplicate things by trying to add a lot of features in your pond.

There are two primary things that you will have to do when designing a pond.

**1) A place from where the water will fall. This doesn't have to be too tall**

**2) A water reservoir for collection of water**

The falling water will produce beautiful sound adding audible beauty to your pond and the entire garden. A reservoir must not be deeper than 2 feet. Of course you will have to check the regulations of the local authorities, because a reservoir deeper than 2 feet is considered as a swimming pool and may require different set of rules.

The sides of the reservoir are finished using rigid fiberglass shell or flexible synthetic rubber liners are sometimes used

Adding fish and aquatic plants in the pond can add extra interest. An added advantage of adding aquatic plants is that they greatly help in achieving balance of ecosystem in the pond. Of course achieving such a balance can take a little time.

The bottom of the pond can be covered using landscaping gravel. This gravel creates tiny spaces in between which forms a living space for the microorganisms. These microorganisms release a large amount of carbon dioxide, which gets consumed by the aquatic plants.

On the other hand plants release oxygen necessary for the living of fish and other microorganisms hence the entire ecological balance gets maintained. Also aquatic plants also add a visual balance between the pond and the entire surrounding garden.

To maintain a pond you will require a constant supply of water, especially if you are planning to add fish. There is a simple way to calculate the amount of water you will require in the pond.

- 1) Calculate area of pond in square feet
- 2) Multiply the area by depth in feet to get volume in "cubic feet"
- 3) Multiply this number (cubic feet) by 7.5 to get the quantity of water required to fill the pond completely in gallons.

Actually it is slightly less than 7.5. [Click Here](#) for actual answer

Your garden pond can be designed in such a way that the water falls from a step-by-step cascade into the reservoir. This creates visual as well as audible beauty. A simple electrical pump can take the water above the cascade and fall from their because of gravity. However the loss of water due to evaporation must be considered here.

If constructing a cascade is not possible even simple readymade kits of small bubblers are enough to add beauty to the pond. The choice is always yours and what exactly you want to achieve out of this.

Recommended reading

**All About Building Waterfalls, Ponds, and Streams**

[Click Here](#) To Visit

## Chapter 5

### **Backyard Patio Landscaping Design**

A backyard is a very private place. Whether you are with your family or alone, a house backyard always demands privacy and relaxing atmosphere. In such a backyard a patio is the place that allows the users for relaxation.

A patio can be as simple as a space covered with sloping roof supported by wooden posts and raised above the ground. Sometimes a more complex design can have regular brick structure with toilet arrangements.

The whole purpose is to relax and enjoy the beautiful landscape around. It also helps to keep an eye on kids playing around in the rain (if you don't want to join them) for the same reason most patios designs are semi-open type. This means they have mild steel or wooden railing running around the border up to 3 and a half feet and open above till roof bottom.

Container gardening is the best option for patio landscaping. Hanging lightweight baskets with flowering plants in the work best with patios. Also pot plants that can survive in moderate sunlight are a good choice.

The selection of plants entirely depends upon your climatic conditions though. You can take help of the nursery guy for this. They can tell you which plants bear flowers and their colors and their seasonal alternatives too.

If you want to be a little more creative, you can design a patio where the surrounding garden slightly enters the patio

itself. For example you can have a portion of the lawn area entering the patio. This creates a connection between the surrounding landscapes.

Imagine you patio with rabbits and ducks walking by when you are having hot coffee. Many such relative ideas can add some extra interest in your patio.

## Chapter 6

### **Walkways & Pathways In A Backyard Garden**

Walkways are an integral part of any backyard-landscaping garden. The main function of a walkway is to provide a way to walk into remote area of your garden without disturbing the lawn surface and other vegetation. If a walk way is not provided your family members will start using the lawn surface and it's beauty will fade away in a matter of days because of constant human movement over it.

The real beauty of walkways lies in two things.

- 1) The finishing material
- 2) It's overall shape

Walkways can be built using a variety of finishing materials. Two of the most popular ones are interlocking concrete blocks and bricks. Normally a gravel bed is first laid on the entire walkway surface and then interlocking concrete blocks are laid by hammering using a mallet (wooden hammer) so that they don't dislocate from their position. Because of their natural color, bricks are popular too.

Depending upon the overall size and shape of your garden and locations of various landscaping elements, a sketch of the walkway is first drawn on the landscaping plan. As said earlier it's primary use is to provide a way to reach remote places.

A walkway with flowerbeds along its length and a extruded concrete on the border creates a lovely and well defined walkway. Every walkway must have a slight slope to one side so that the rainwater gets grained out easily. Pools of

water on the walkway not only make it difficult to walk but are also a breeding ground for mosquitoes, very dangerous for health. Pools of water on a brick walkway can make the surface slippery too adding more danger.

Casual seating platforms along the walkway, with nothing more a small wall of height than 1 foot 6 inches can serve best. Also artificial lighting along the length at regular intervals helps in easy movement during night hours.



## Chapter 7

### **Lighting In A Backyard Garden**

Lighting can make or break your garden if not planned with enough care. The purpose of any lighting system in a garden has two main purposes.

- 1) Increase value of your garden
- 2) Create a mood in your garden

In most cases you will find the backyard garden decorated with lighting using two distinct methods. The first one is a "general purpose lighting" whose main function is to illuminate the space for regular use during night times.

Secondly lighting is used with great effect for adding mood to your garden. Such kind of "special purpose lighting" can be seen on rock gardens, fountains or even behind a big tree for light and shadow effects.

One of the biggest advantages of landscaping lighting is not just lighting, but also the shadows cast by artificial or natural objects. There are literally unlimited possibilities for creating a splendid show of lighting effects in your garden. For example you can use "Japanese garden lamps" carved in stone and use them along your pathways to create some great quality mood in shortest budget.

However landscaping lighting efficient planning during design stage itself. When you are creating a landscaping plan for your garden it is important to denote the positions of lights on your plan so that the electrical wiring can be laid underground before you start building pathways or lawn areas.

Another important development in the field of landscaping lighting is the use of "solar landscaping lights". As the name suggests these light convert "direct sunlight" into electricity and store it into a small battery for future use.

During early stages of development of these lights the battery used to be a standard lead-acid battery but has been replaced by "nickel-cadmium" one for longer storage and improved performance.

Also the light bulb is now replaced by a LED (light emitting diode). Previously it used to be standard incandescent bulb that consumed more electricity and had poor life cycle. If you are planning to have these lights in your garden it is a must to plan their position first. This is because they require direct sunlight to show their maximum effect.

You must not position these lights in places where shadows of tall trees or even your house building is going to fall. So look for areas where direct sunlight is available for maximum amount of time.

To cater this problem special solar landscaping lights are available where the solar cell and the battery are away from the actual light fixture so that you can fix them at a location where they will be exposed to direct sunlight. This requires wiring from the point between the solar cell/battery and the light fixture in your garden. Good planning from the design stage will save time and the length of wiring, saving you money.

## **Chapter 8**

### **How To Attract Birds To Your Backyard**

Birds and other pets in your garden can add great impulse of life immediately. It is quite easy to attract birds/butterflies in your garden once you know a little secret.

For this, think from the bird's point of view.

Why would a bird visit your garden?

For two reasons

**1) For collecting honey**

**2) For food**

So in order to attract birds you must plants flower and fruit bearing plants in plenty. Once these plants start showing symptoms of flowers and fruits on their branches, birds and butterflies will automatically get attracted without many efforts from your part.

Once they start coming you can keep them coming by adding additional accessories in your garden such as bird feeder or even birdbath.

Bird feeder and bird bath can be raised a little above on a wooden post so that birds gets protected from dogs and cats. A bird bath is nothing but a vessel about 8 cm in depth at the center and increasing at the periphery (just like a saucer). It is necessary to fix this to a wooden post so that it doesn't get toppled if a bird sits on its edge.

Another way to attract birds forever is to plant hedges that interlock with each other forming a dense structure. This will give them an opportunity to build nests in them. Once they build a nest they are bound to revisit.

Also if you pesticides in your garden as a measure to keep away diseases make sure you use a non-toxic one because pesticides can kill birds. Also keep the bird feeder and birdbath clean to avoid diseases to birds.

Thanks for reading. I hope you enjoyed it!

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