LANDSCAPE DESIGN BASICS

PRINCIPLES DO-IT-YOURSELFERS NEED TO KNOW

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AGENDA

- Design building blocks
- Design & arrangement of plant material principles
- Site conditions
- Formulating & executing a landscape plan

DESIGN BUILDING BLOCKS

- Line
- Form
- Texture
- Color

LINE

- Line is a design tool well suited to directing the eye (visual) and movement (physical).
- Straight lines suggest directness, efficiency, and speed
- Curved lines, by contrast implies a slow, restful, meandering movement.
- Lines in the landscape: edges, borders, rows of plants, or a combination of these.

FORM

- Form is the mass or shape occupied by an object or group of objects.
- Example of forms, columnar, oval, vase, weeping, pyramidal, & round

Columnar   Oval   Vase   Weeping   Pyramidal   Round
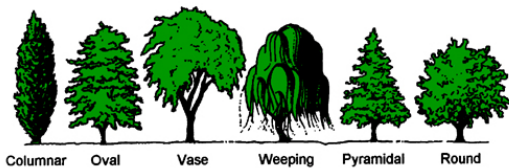
TEXTURE

- Texture is what gives an object or surface its tactile quality, from coarse to smooth.
- Use texture to change the perceived size of a space.
- Color can affect the perception of texture.
- Use one texture throughout the layers to achieve unity.
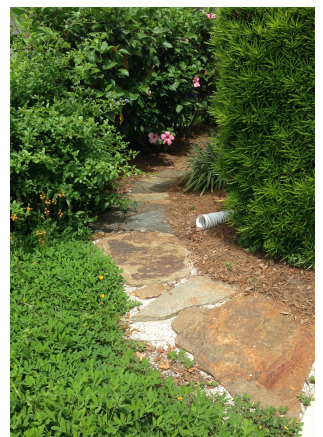
COLOR

▸ Color attracts the eye and draws the attention of the viewer.

▸ Warm colors = Red, yellow, orange tend to advance toward the viewer.

▸ Cool colors = greens, violets, and blues tend to recede.

▸ Color can be the most temporary characteristic of plant material, yet it is the one that carries the most visual weight.

DESIGN & ARRANGEMENT OF PLANT MATERIAL PRINCIPLES

▸ Proportion

▸ Scale

▸ Balance

▸ Rhythm

▸ Contrast

▸ Dominance

PROPORTION

▸ Describes the relative shape of a space.

▸ Plant material, garden structures, and ornaments should be considered relative to human scale.

▸ other important scales include the size of house, yard, and the area to be planted.

SCALE

▸ Scale determines how one perceives an object or a space

▸ Selecting plants based on mature size to fit the space

▸ Hardscape also give scale to a garden

BALANCE

▸ Visual weight, quantity, masses, and color are distributed relatively equally on both sides of the view axis, a composition is considered balanced.

▸ Formal balance repeats the same left and right, giving stability, stateliness, and dignity.

▸ Informal balance differs from left to right giving curiosity, movement, and feels alive. Total mass of plants need to balance left and right.

Formal balance   Informal balance
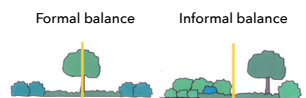
RHYTHM

▸ Repetition is the rhythm in landscape composition.

▸ Repeating line, form, color, and texture creates rhythm in the landscape.

▸ Too much can be monotones and too little can cause confusion.

CONTRAST

▸ Expresses differences in visual or spatial experience. Dark versus light, confined versus spacious, rugged versus manicured.

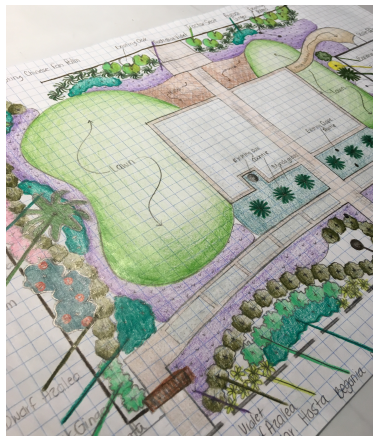▸ Contrast within a plant massing is used to highlight individual plants.

DOMINANCE

▸ An element that has authority in the design scheme.

▸ Dominance can be a focal point or a strong place of interest like a view point or a place that has a special feeling.

SITE CONDITIONS

▸ Climate

▸ Sound Attenuation

▸ Erosion control

CLIMATE

▸ Plants simultaneously create and respond to climate conditions.

▸ Vegetation contributes to the balance of soil moisture, atmospheric humidity, and soil fertility and texture, and pH.

▸ Beware of micro climates

SOUND ATTENUATION

▸ Plants, especially dense evergreen masses, are somewhat effective in the masking of undesirable noise, especially in the hight frequencies.

▸ Minimum of 25 feet which should include dense foliage for a buffer.

EROSION CONTROL

▸ Plants roots are probably the best solution to erosion control since they have a binding effect on soil.

▸ Lawn is good to as long as it is not too steep.

▸ Terrace
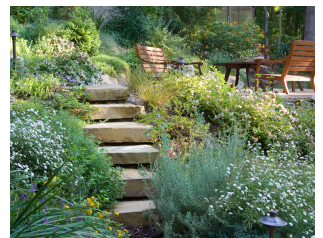
FORMULATING & EXECUTING
A LANDSCAPE PLAN

▸ Base mapping, preliminary and intermediate design concepts and with review and revision for the preparation of final plans.

▸ Work with layers of plants like: tree canopy, shrubs, sub-shrubs, and groundcovers.

▸ Designers attempt to emulate nature.

"IF YOU THINK GOOD DESIGN IS EXPENSIVE, LOOK AT THE COST OF BAD DESIGN"

Dr Ralf Speth, CEO Jaguar

REFERENCES

▸ Landscape Design: Arranging plants in the landscape by Gail Hansen. UF Publication #ENH1188

▸ Basic Principles of Landscape Design by Gail Hansen. UF Publication #CIR536

▸ Water Wise Landscaping: Principles of Landscape Design, Colorado Master Garden Program - CMG GardenNotes #413