

Landscape Installation Procedures

The population of the High Desert has increased dramatically over the last twenty years. Many people have moved here from other areas to enjoy cleaner air and a peaceful, less hurried lifestyle. Climatic conditions in the High Desert are harsher and more extreme than marine climates, offering a landscaping challenge.

New homes are often purchased on relatively large lots with little or no landscaping provided. This section is divided into Designing and Installing Your Landscape and Designing and Installing Your Irrigation System to assist with these important issues.

First, design your landscape on paper. Begin by listing the functions your landscape should provide your family, such as play areas for small children, entertainment areas and shade. Next, decide where these functional areas should be located for maximum pleasure and use. Consider wind patterns, sunlight accessibility, and other site specific conditions when creating your landscape plan.

Here are some useful facts to consider when designing your landscape:

- When selecting plants, consider function first and foremost. Next, decide on acceptable maintenance levels. Group plants according to irrigation needs whenever possible.
- Always select plants according to how their mature size and appearance fit into your design. Do not select plants based on initial appearance in immature stages of growth.
- Consider adding interest and color to your landscape by rotating annual flowers in small “investment zones” near your house.
- Plants that are placed by themselves and directly exposed to the sky are more frost-prone than those protected by shade from other plants, patios or other structures.
- In hot, dry, windy weather, shade-loving plants, such as azaleas and begonias, lose water faster than they can absorb it. Keep them in partial shade.
- Large growing trees should be planted at least 20 feet from your house. This gives tree roots adequate space to grow and prevents structural damage to your home. Also avoid planting trees closer than five feet from sidewalks and driveways.

Once your family has agreed on an acceptable landscape design, specific plants may be selected. The Plant List at the back of this book lists many climatically adapted choices for the High Desert and includes color photos. Keep in mind that other suitable plants do not appear on this list due to space limitations.

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