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 - Article Index
- ▶ Décor & Home Living

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Landscaping



Putting Landscape Plans into Action

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Setting a budget

The pleasure of landscape planning is all about dreaming rather than worrying about costs or who will do the work and when. Once your design concept is in place the time has arrived for wise planning, which includes comparing costs as well as scheduling the work whether you tackle it yourself or hire someone else to do it.

Using your final design, make a list of every major component. Most plans call for some work that's beyond your capability, time or desire to do it yourself. Start contacting landscaping professionals and also do comparison shopping for materials. [Garden Plans for Every Yard](#)

To devise a budget for landscaping, compare what you think you can spend (what your resources allow) and what you think you should spend (what the best quality materials cost). On average, if your home is newly built, budget 15 to 25 percent of your home's price to install your dream landscape. If your home is a more established property budget 5 to 15 percent of your home's value to renovate. If you keep your expenses within this range your lan efforts are most likely to boost the value of your property. [Video Landscape Lessons](#)

To help finalize your budget make a chart that has room for each item on your by three columns labeled A, B and C. Fill column A with the cost of your ideal cl particular feature or task. When you are finished add up all the numbers to see within your budget. [Landscaping for Outdoor Living](#)

If that number is too high go back through the list and make changes to the an quality of materials, or even delete some items. Put those numbers in column E adding that up, if you are still over your desired budget, repeat the process in c

As you go through this exercise assume you can save half the cost of a hired jo

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within your skill level to do it yourself. If you plan to stretch out the installation years keep in mind that the cost for some products and services may increase

While you figure costs for each item on your plan start thinking about your priorities first that would most likely increase the resale value, such as the construction of a deck, front entry, and retaining walls or the purchase of trees and shrubs. Also for the essentials that will be scheduled first, such as tearing out old landscape grading, drainage system installation, and bed building. Add in the costs of other items including paving, lighting and plants. Be realistic about the cost of maintenance and include it in the budget.

As the budget for each item on your plan comes to light a project and priority list will take shape. Stick with your plan. Think twice if a contractor pushes you to install a feature you only want a pond—it's your landscape and you have the final say.

Construction

Make patience and flexibility your steadfast partners in any landscaping venture. Continue your step-by-step approach to landscaping by determining a plan of action now. Just as you must budget the costs over time, determine what needs to be done and the order of projects.

Whether your plan is large or small—entailing weekends or years—it's always worthwhile to think things through and take your time when making decisions. For example, it's better to wait a month after installing a patio before planting around it. In that time you may realize that you overlooked a good view or miscalculated the angle of the summer sun. Instead of planting a few shrubs you decide that an arbor would be more suitable. Moral of the story: Don't rush the work; set a pace that allows you to enjoy the process.



If you're anxious to get started, however, you'll hardly go wrong by planning to do the following projects first (because you'll see huge improvements before long). Deal with drainage and soil improvement issues. Proceed with construction of a deck, a patio, a privacy fence, a pool, or an outdoor living area. Make exterior repairs on the house before you start working on any of the surrounding landscape. Clean up the lot, remove dead plants and pull weeds.



Remember, landscaping is an ongoing process. As yards and gardens continually evolve there is always another project—more fun and challenge—on the horizon.

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