

DESIGN YOUR GARDEN *on a budget*

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It can be quite a challenge to make changes or improvements to your garden. Budget is an important factor and hard landscaping can be costly - so if you have a medium to large garden, consider concentrating on one area at a time.



Photo by Felix Mittermeier from Pexels

Decide on the style you would like for your garden. Do you want a modern, contemporary look? Or is a cottage style more to your tastes? Your garden could be a low-maintenance wildlife haven, a space for entertaining or relaxing in, or even a family-orientated space with plenty of child-friendly areas. Even a small, bare courtyard can be transformed!

Consider the type of plants that you like - this includes flowers, shrubs and trees. Maybe you'd like to try your hand at growing your own delicious herbs and veggies. Take a stroll around the garden and make note of the shady areas or sunny hot spots. Remember to allow for utility areas for washing lines, compost bins and rubbish bins.

Plan a garden path so it links the garden together. For example, a curved path will look more natural in a long, thin garden and make a small, square plot look larger. Paths can be made up of pavers, gravel or brick.

If you have a medium to large plot, try to plan seating areas in various spots around the garden to add interest and provide different views of your land. Decking is perfect for a low-maintenance patio, to which you can add raised beds, benches and screening. Containers filled with fragrant plants and some greenery around the decking will soften the appearance of hard edges.

If you have a small garden to design, try to limit the range of materials you use to avoid the space looking cluttered. Keep

your planting simple by not using too many different varieties and planting things in groups. Evergreens give structure throughout the year and long-flowering perennials add colour. Trellis with Clematis or fragrant Jasmine clambering up against walls will give height and privacy, and a water feature will create a relaxing atmosphere. Don't be afraid to divide a small garden into smaller 'rooms'. Surprisingly, this can actually make the garden seem larger!

A courtyard garden is usually surrounded by walls or other buildings, which can mean a lot of shady areas - plants here need to be colourful (and preferably scented) to transform the courtyard into a calm, peaceful oasis to relax in. Plants can be grown in raised beds set around the edges of the courtyard with climbers covering the walls to maximise space. A vertical 'living' wall designed with planters or 'pockets' fixed to a wall would be a really stunning feature with flowering plants or herbs, or even a few vegetables!

Gardens tend to evolve. With whatever style you choose, once you have the hard landscaping in place, you can enjoy the simple joys of growing plants and creating your own personal outdoor space, whatever shape or size. A garden is a space that will bring you pleasure for many years.

Written by Tracey Cole

Village Garden Landscaping

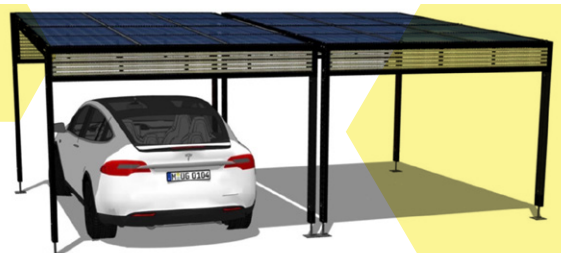
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