

5 Tips for Using Your Outdoor Space

1. LAY THE GROUND WORK

No matter what size your yard or landscape is, you can create an organized and tidy look by establishing the area with corners and borders. One way you can do this is by laying walking paths with concrete, stone or pavers to create a formal traffic pattern. In addition an paver patio can really give the back yard the attractive feeling you always wanted. Another way to create borders is to add shrub or tree hedges to give the appearance of borders around your yard or landscape. A perfect fast growing hedge plant is Sweet Viburnum. It can adapt to sun or light shade, has a nice light green new growth, and can grow upwards of 15' plus, depending on trimming.

2. ADD TO THE AESTHETIC APPEAL

Adding the occasional burst of color or small accent to your yard or landscape can work wonders in your outdoor space's overall look and feel. For color, plant a few bright red or orange flowering shrubs along the edges of your landscape. Encore Azaleas give you color all four seasons and come in a variety of colors and sizes. You can also use sculptures or water features to enhance the aesthetic appeal of your outdoor space. For that shady spot, an Autumn Fern gives you great colors in early spring and late fall.

3. INCORPORATE OUTDOOR FURNITURE

An old wooden bench or a quaint chair and small table set can instantly give your outdoor space a homey and welcoming feel. Place a bench in a shady area to suggest a more relaxing ambience. A small table and two or three chairs with a background of a screen of evergreens is the perfect setting for afternoon tea. If you are thinking of a paver patio, then maybe a fire pit and small sitting wall is in order for your outdoor living space.

4. PLANT FOR PRIVACY

Privacy can be peaceful, especially when it comes to your outdoor space. A variety of container plants on your patio or deck can work not only as bursts of color and creativity, but can also provide a screen around your inner landscape. A fence clothed with ivy can provide a low perimeter around your yard and add an intimate and enchanted feel. Any mixture of trees, shrubs and perennials can work to provide screening between you and your neighbors. A nice medium tree that will provide not only a visual screen but color due to its red foliage is an Forest Pansy Redbud. They reach a maximum growth height of about 15' tall, bloom hot pink, and have a nice red foliage that will add color year round!

5. INVITE THE BIRDS AND THE BEES (AND BUTTERFLIES!)

Nectar-rich flowering plants in your garden or landscape will attract a regular crowd of monarchs and other winged wonders into your outdoor oasis. One of those such plants is Abelia, which comes in several different varieties and is a favorite among butterflies! My personal favorite Abelia is Rose Creek, due to its compact growing habit and beautiful white clustered flowers. Also, adding a bird feeder and regularly filling it with seeds will make for a lively garden scene. The birds will thank you!