

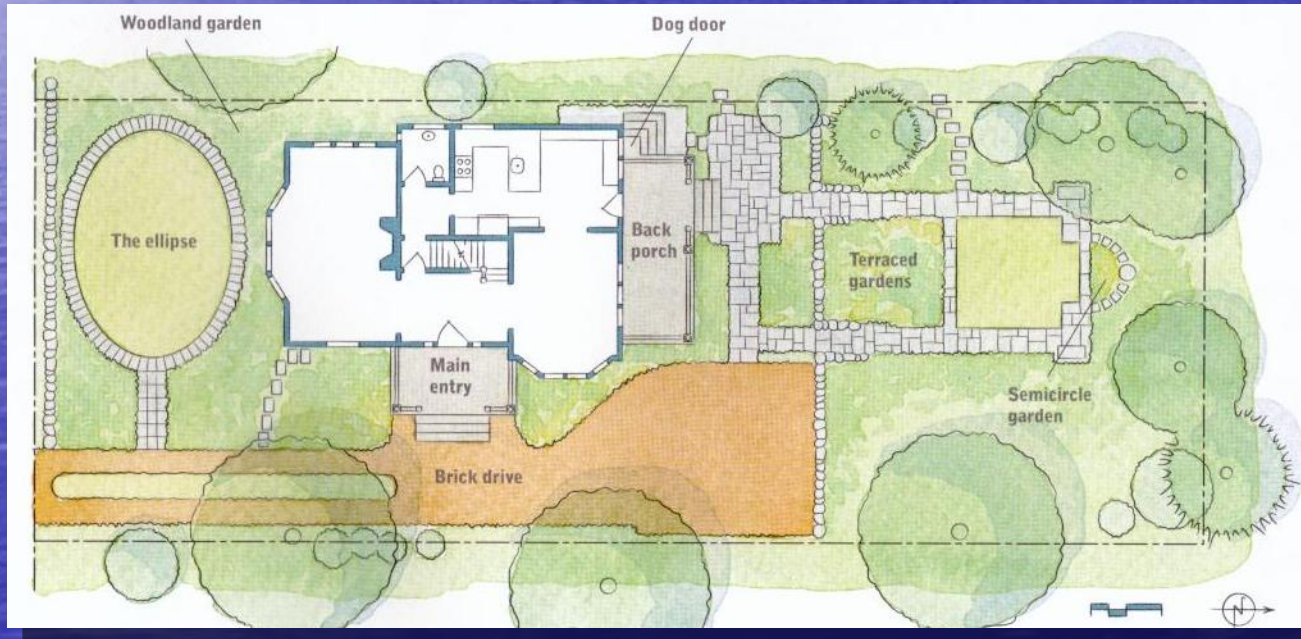
Landscape Design: Elements and Principles

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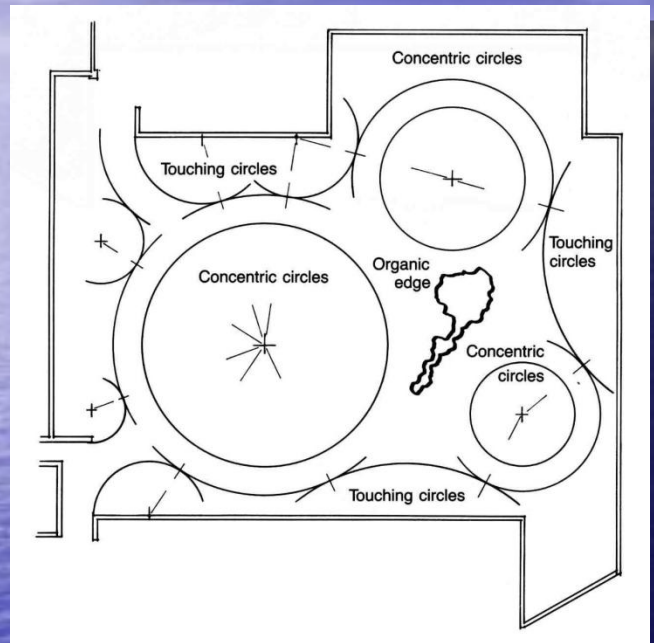
Elements and Principles of Landscape Design

The Visual Appeal of the Landscape

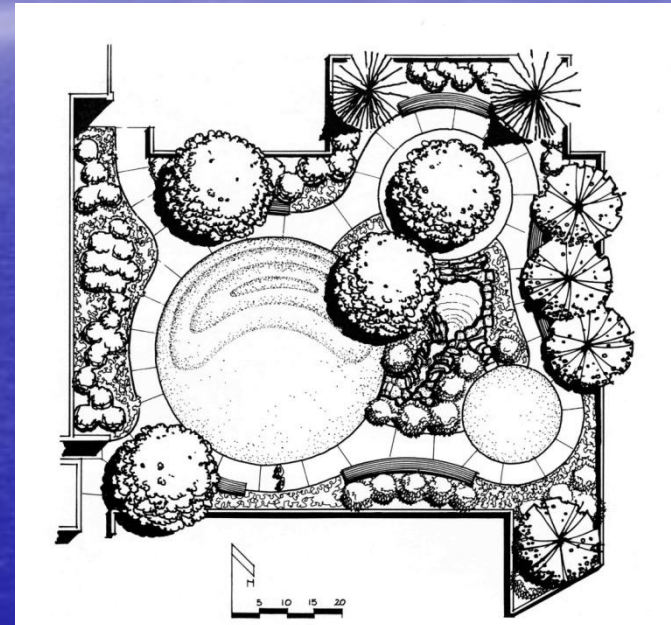


Kit of Parts

(with instructions)



From Concept to Form in Landscape Design, 1993, Reid, pg 103



From Concept to Form in Landscape Design, 1993, Reid, pg 104

Elements - the separate “parts” that interact and work with each other to create a cohesive design

Principles – the instructions or guidelines for putting together the parts (elements) to create the design



Elements of Design

- **Line** - the outline that creates all forms and patterns in the landscape
- **Form** - the silhouette or shape of a plant or other features in the landscape
- **Texture** - how course or fine a plant or surface feels or looks
- **Color** - design element that adds interest and variety
- **Visual Weight** – the emphasis or force of an individual feature in relation to other features in composition

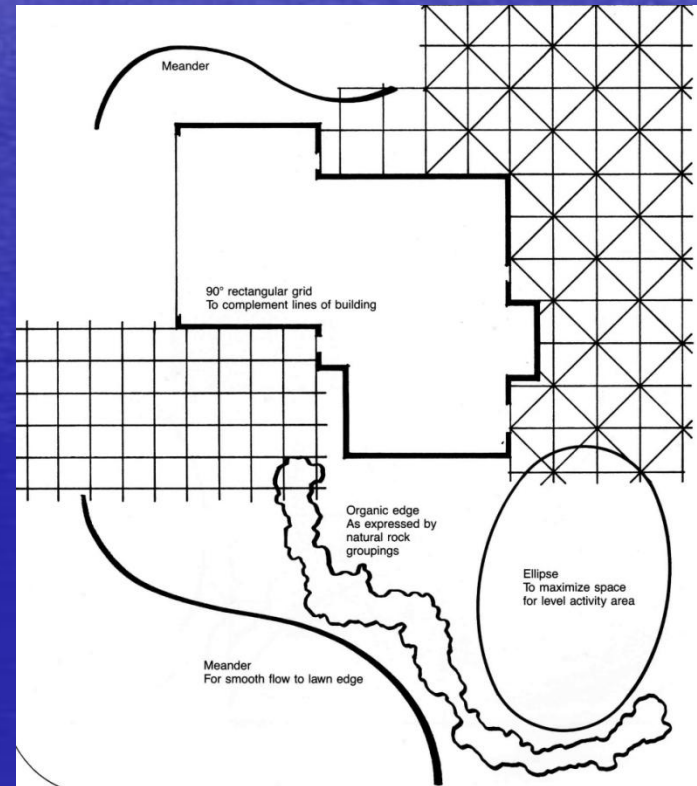
Line

- Lines define form and creates patterns. They direct eye movement, and control physical movement. They are real or perceived

Straight lines are structural and forceful, curved lines are relaxed and natural, implying movement

Lines are found in:

- Plant bedlines
- Hardscape lines
- Plant outlines





Plant Bedlines - connect plant material, house and hardscape. Defines spaces.



Landscaping, Better Homes and Gardens, 2002, pg 60



Garden, Deck and Landscape, spring 1993, pg 60

Bedlines delineate the perimeter of a space and create a shape

Hardscape lines - define spaces and create forms and patterns



Small Garden, 2006, pg 9

Lines creates a grid
pattern and wavy form



Small Garden, 2006, pg 169

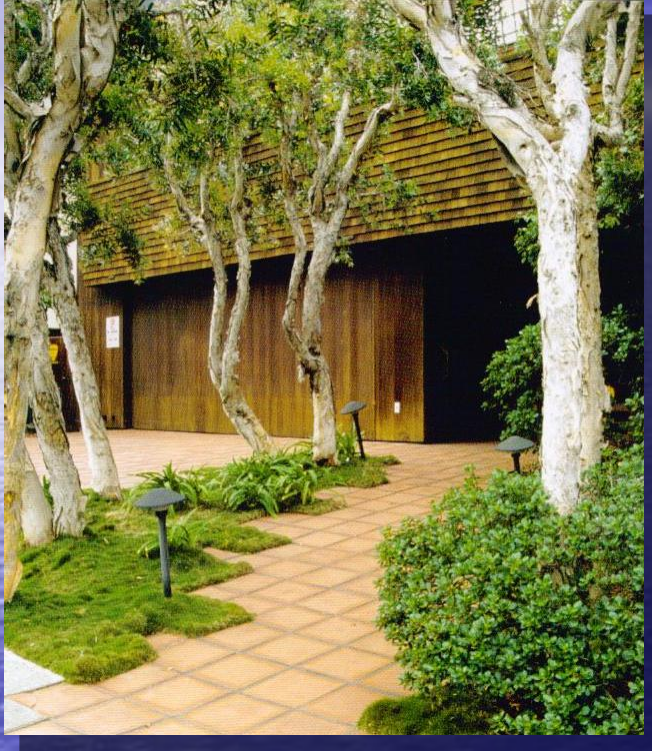


Garden Design, Nov/Dec, 2003, pg 45

Lines
define the
pool edge
and create
the form of
the pool



Plant lines - define space through the plant shape and height



Home Landscaping, 2007, pg 79

Vertical trees create an implied wall



Home Landscaping, 2007, pg 118



Garden Design, April 2008, pg 53



Form

- Three-dimensional – a series of lines that define a shape or space, and provides scale

Form is the most enduring quality of a plant or a mass of plants although it can be manipulated through pruning or shearing

Form is found in:

- plants
- hardscape
- voids (open spaces)



Small Garden, 2006, pg 53



Form in Plants - Plants have a variety

of forms- round, columnar, vase-shape, pyramidal, upright, weeping, prostrate, spreading, and oval



Professional Planting Design, Scarfone, 2007, pg 15

The greater the contrast in comparison to other forms the greater the prominence- use for emphasis

Neutral forms should establish the bulk of the composition

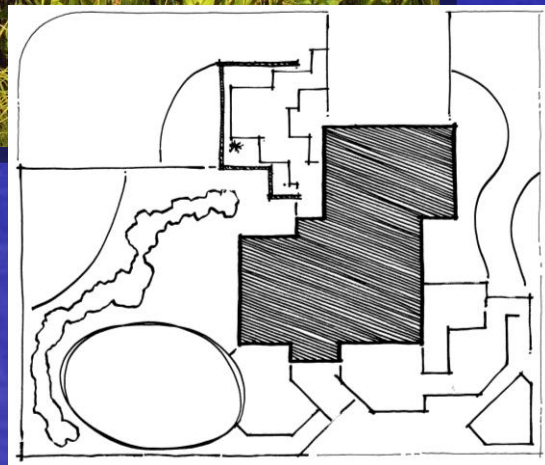


Garden Design, Nov/Dec, 2003, pg 52

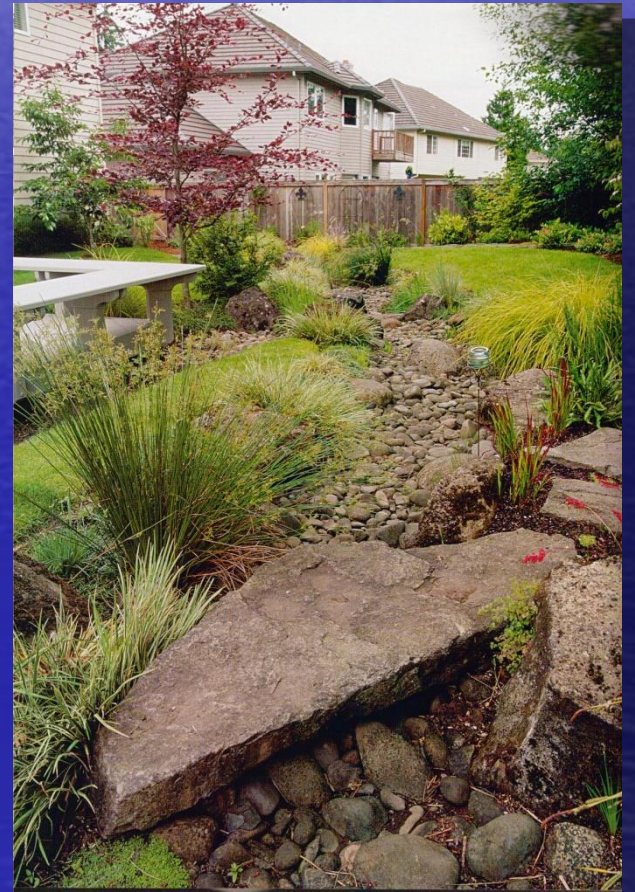
Form in Hardscape - the shape of structures and garden ornaments. The shape of structures often determines the overall form theme of the garden- such as geometric or naturalistic



Small Garden, 2006, pg 211



From Concept to Form in Landscape Design, 1993, Reid, pg 98



Landscaping Your Home, Fine Gardening, 2001, pg 150

Form in Voids - the spaces left over between structures and plant material

Garden Design, Nov 2007, pg 72



Provides a space for activities and for viewing plant material



Landscaping Your Home, Fine Gardening, 2001, pg 21



Forms for themes- both plant and hardscape forms can reinforce a theme



Outside the Not so Big House 2006

Natural, formal and contemporary themes in plants and hardscape



gasl01gardens



Outside the Not so Big House 2006

Texture

- Surface quality – tactile and perceptual. Provides variety, interest, and contrast. Affects perceived size.

Texture is referred to as coarse, medium, or fine

Texture occurs in:

- Plant material
- Hardscape material



Small Garden, 2006, pg 180



Plant Texture - the texture of plants differ with the size of the leaves, twigs, branches and trunk



Garden Design, Feb/Mar, 2005, pg 180

Fine texture compliments and reinforces color and form- lets more prominent features dominate

Rough texture is more dominate



Garden Design, Sept/Oct, 2005, pg 93



Hardscape Texture -

texture of buildings, patios, decks, walls, and water features is related to the type and size of materials



Landscaping, Better Homes and Gardens, 2002, pg 55

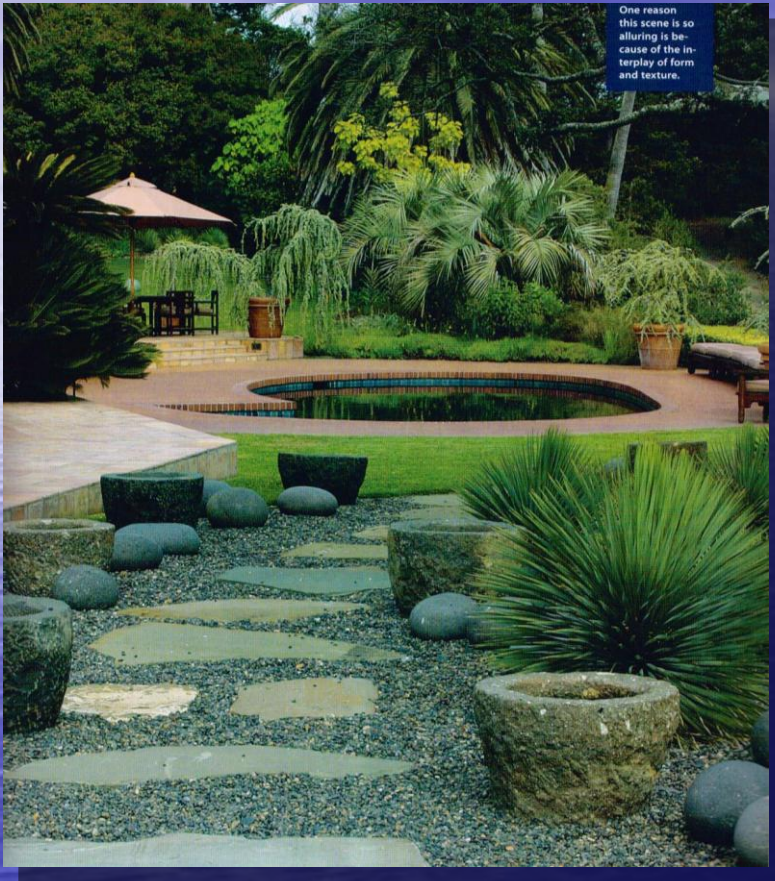


Landscaping, Better Homes and Gardens, 2002, pg 78



Texture and Scale - texture affects perception of distance and scale

Fine Gardening, Nov/Dec, pg 41



Rough textured plants appear closer- minimizes distances and makes a space feel smaller

Fine texture recedes in the landscape- exaggerates distance and makes a space feel larger



Landscaping, Better Homes and Gardens, 2002, pg 64



Color

- The hue of the plants and hardscape material provides variety, interest, and contrast. Affects human emotion and perceived distances

Color schemes in planting are color combinations based on the color wheel.

Color appears in:

- Plants
- Hardscape
- Water



Small Garden, 2006, pg 42



Plant Color - Color is found in flowers, foliage, fruit, and bark, and changes with the seasons

Gardener, spring, 2004, pg 104



Use color to highlight other characteristics such as form and texture

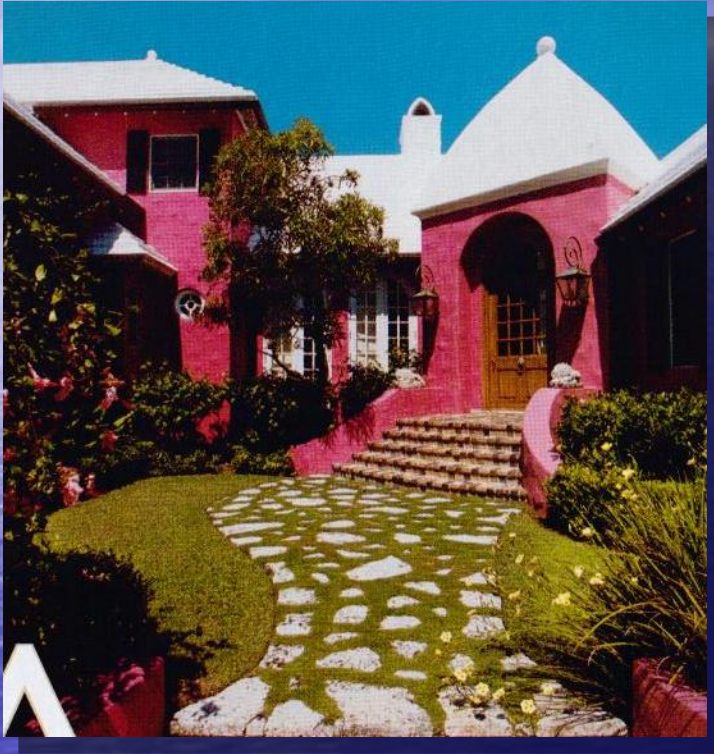
A small amount of bright color has as much visual impact as a large amount of a dull color



Fine gardening, Nov/Dec, 2007, pg 52



Hardscape Color - Color is found in buildings, stone, rocks, pavers, wood, and furniture



Garden Design, Nov/Dec, 2003, pg 43

Color in hardscape can be the focal point or blend with the landscape



Small Garden, 2006, pg 11



Basic Color Schemes -

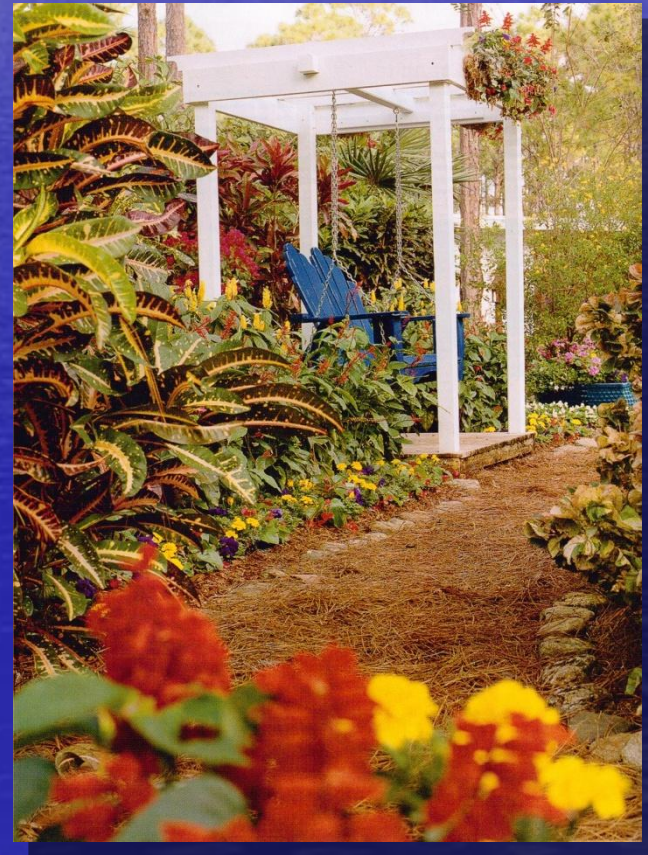
monochromatic, analogous, and complementary

Landscaping Your Home, Fine Gardening, 2001, pg 98



Cool hues- blue, violet, green-
recede in the landscape and feel
calm and serene

Warm hues- red, orange, yellow-
appear closer and feel lively and
energetic



Gardening Ideas, Spring, 2005, pg 46



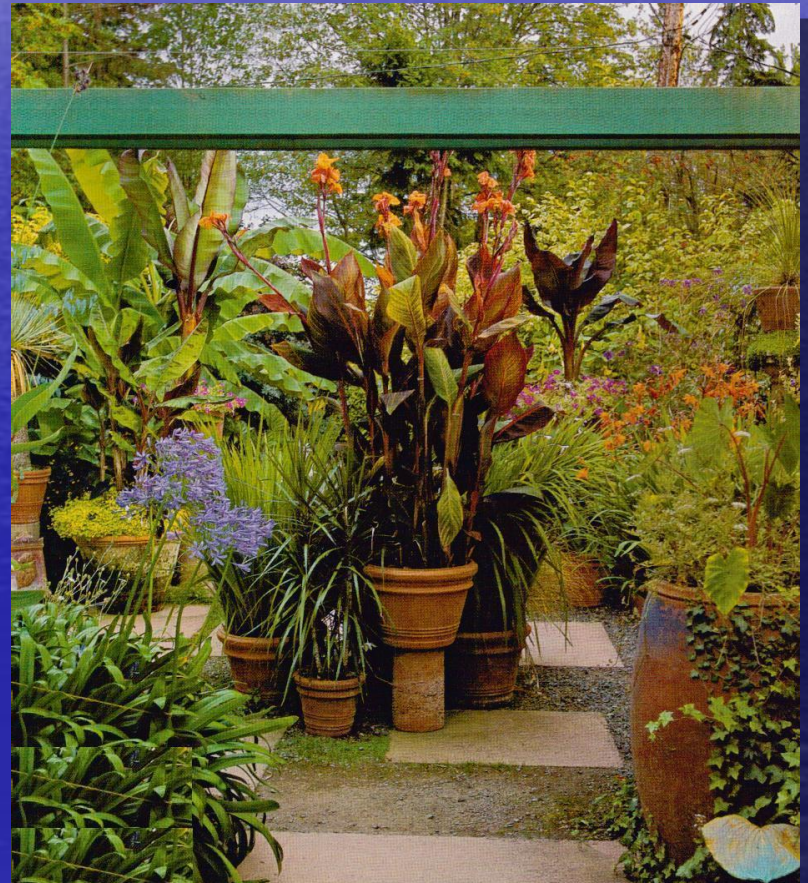
Visual Weight

- The force of expression of each of the elements

Sometimes called visual strength – it is the characteristics of the elements that attracts our attention

Elements can have:

- high visual weight
- low visual weight



High Visual Weight - upright forms, bold textures, bright colors



Garden Design, April, 2008, pg 50



The Tropical Garden, 1997, Warren, pg 75



Low Visual Weight - horizontal lines, prostrate forms, fine texture, dull colors



Landscaping, Better Homes and Gardens, 2002, pg 8



Landscaping Your Home, Fine Gardening, 2001, pg 145



Principles of Design

- **Scale and Proportion** – actual size and relative size of an object
- **Balance** – equal visual weight and attraction. Symmetrical or asymmetrical
- **Rhythm** – movement of the eye across repeated features (sequenced repetition)
- **Unity** – linkage through the use of line, materials, plants. All the parts are consistent in character
- **Emphasis** – a prominent feature that attracts attention and invites further viewing



Scale and Proportion

- Scale- size or physical dimensions, creates and defines space
- Proportion- size relative to adjacent objects

The most important scale is relative to the human body

Scale and proportion is found in:

- plants
- hardscape
- voids (open areas)



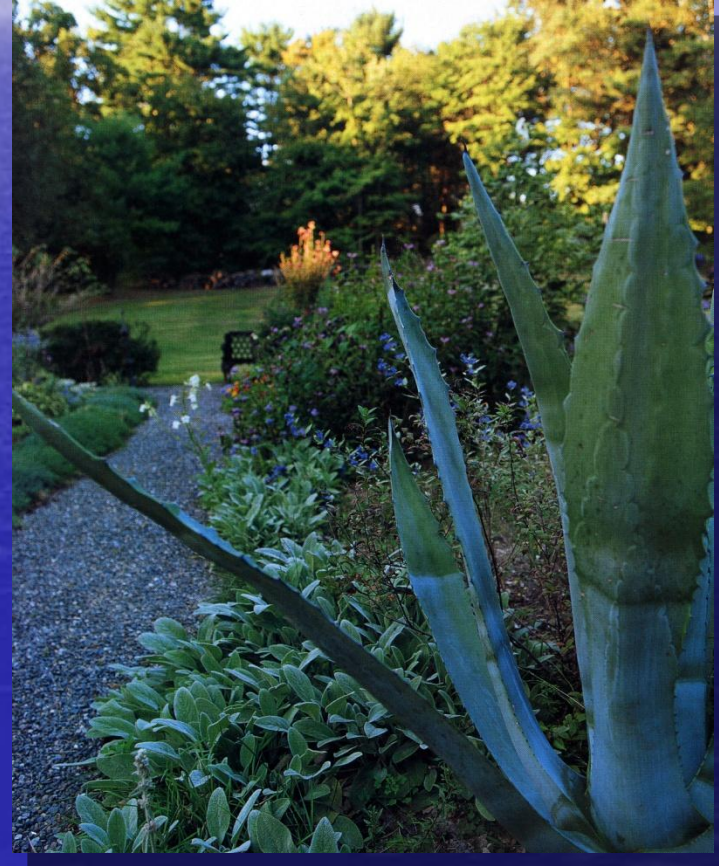


Scale/Proportion of Plants - the size/scale of individual plants or a mass of plants can vary greatly



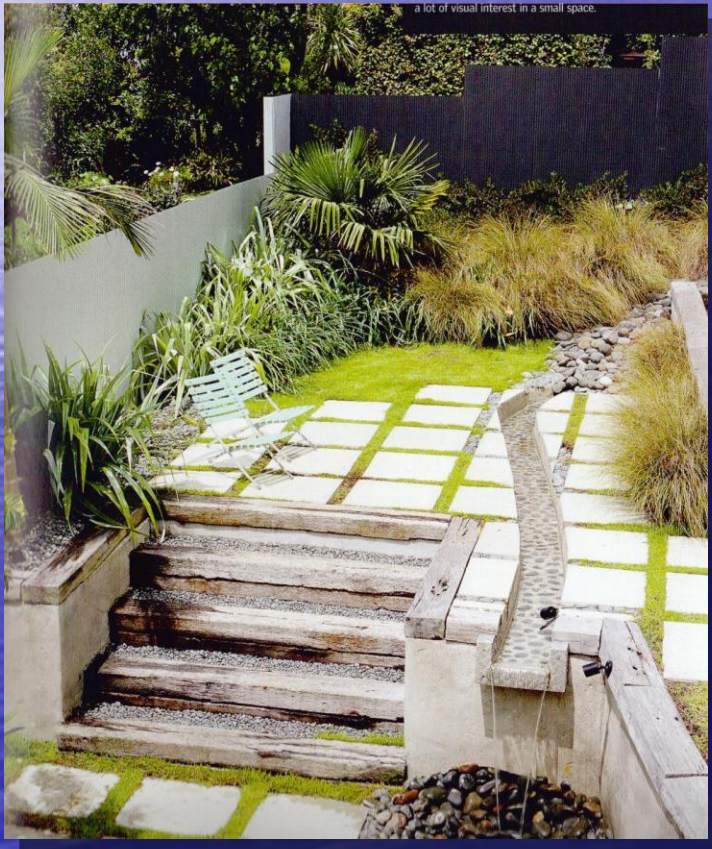
Garden Design, Sept/Oct, 2005, pg 36

Use like sizes to achieve
repetition and unity



Use markedly different sizes
to achieve contrast

Scale/Proportion of Hardscape - should relate closely to the human body for function and psychological comfort



Small Garden 2006 pg 95



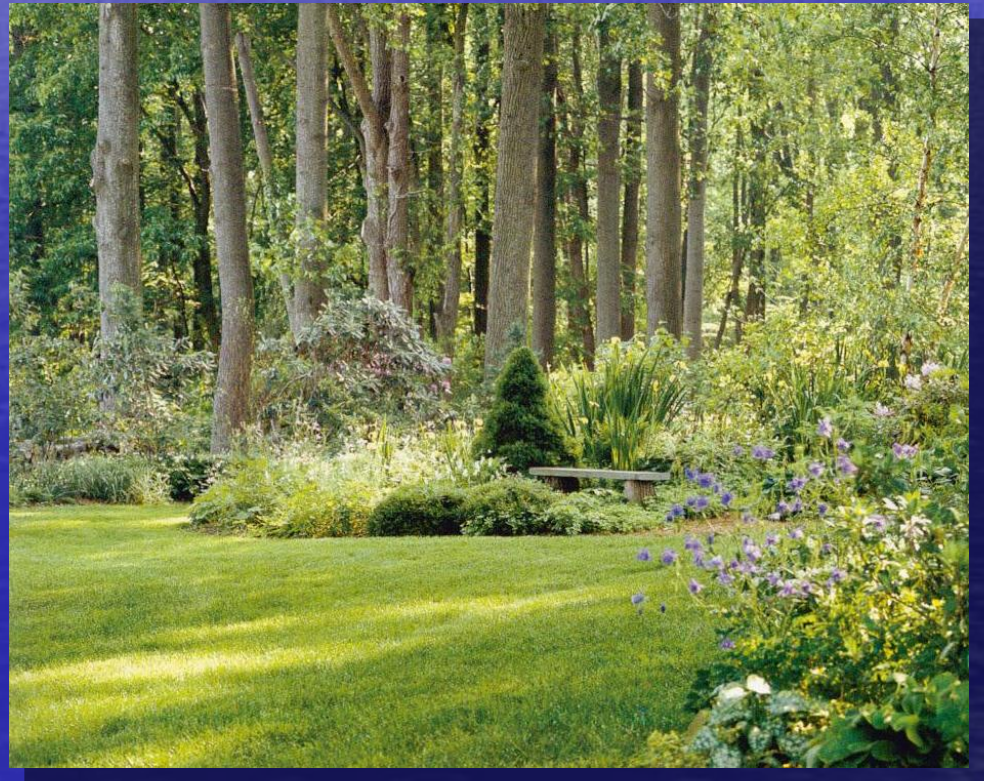
Garden Design, Nov/Dec, 2003, pg 52



Scale/Proportion of Voids -

size and scale of the open areas between plants and structures is determined primarily by function and the overall size of the yard

In planted areas with masses and voids the proportion is the spatial relationship between the open space and the planted area



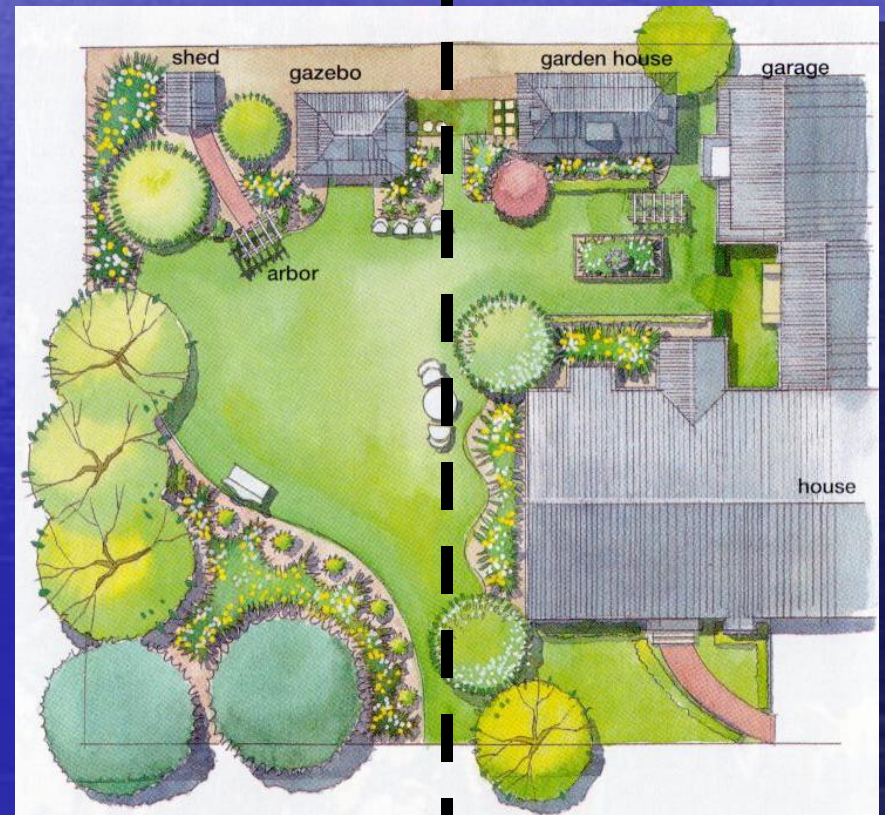
Balance

- Balance – an equal mass - actual or visual- about a central axis

Shape, color, size and texture all affect visual mass and balance

Balance is either:

- Symmetrical- mirror image
- Asymmetrical- equal visual mass
- Perspective- relates to depth



Symmetrical Balance -

mirror image is more formal, easiest to achieve.



Garden Design, Nov 2007, pg 76



Small Garden, 2006, pg 183

The mind naturally assumes a central axis and seeks even distribution of objects or visual mass



Asymmetrical Balance -

considered informal- balance by visual mass of non-equivalent forms, size, color, and texture



Outside the Not So Big House 2006

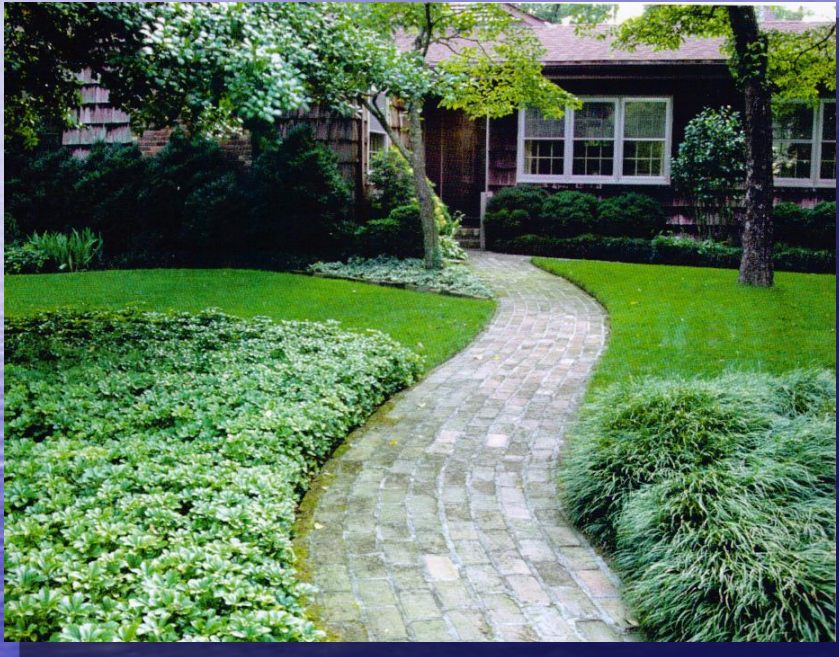
A small mass (grouping) of large sizes, dense forms, bright colors, or coarse textures (high visual weight)-

Can be balanced by a large mass of small sizes, sparse forms, grayed colors, or fine textures (low visual weight)



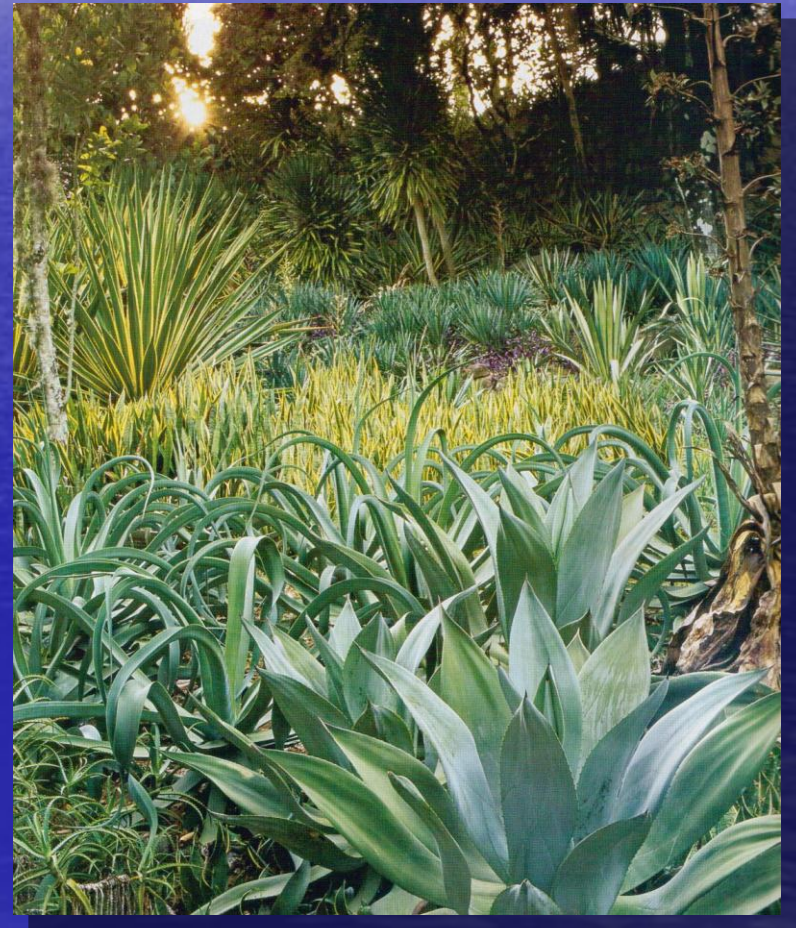
Perspective Balance -

includes the foreground, midground, and background



Home Landscaping, 2007, pg 79

Foreground and background elements have equal visual weight through massing and color



Garden Design, April 2005, pg 57

Rhythm

- Repetition- repeated use of features to create pattern or sequence (sets up a rhythm)
- Alternation- alternating the sequence of features for more interest
- Gradation- gradual transition from one quality to another

Too much repetition creates monotony, too little creates confusion

Rhythm occurs in:

- plant material
- hardscape material

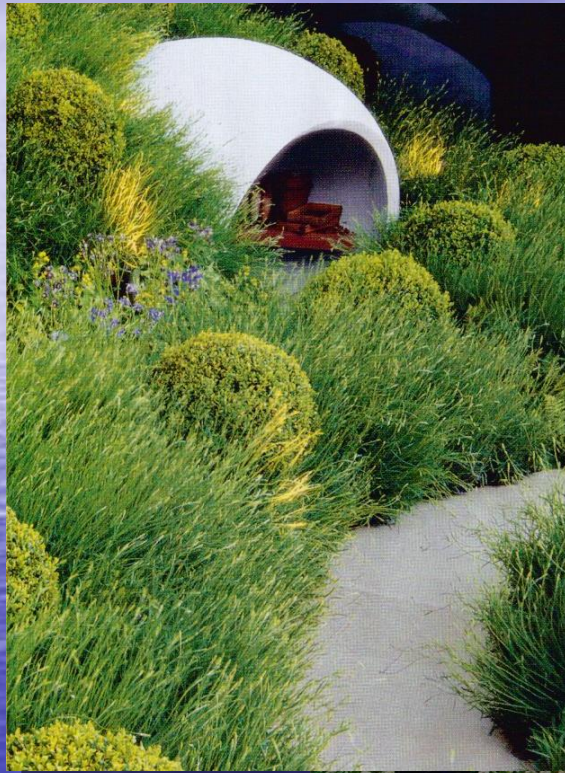




Rhythm in Plants -

repetition, alternation, or gradation of type of plant, size, texture, or color

Garden Design, June/July 2000, pg 53



Repetition-
of same
type of
plant



Gradation- slow or
gradual change from
one quality to the next

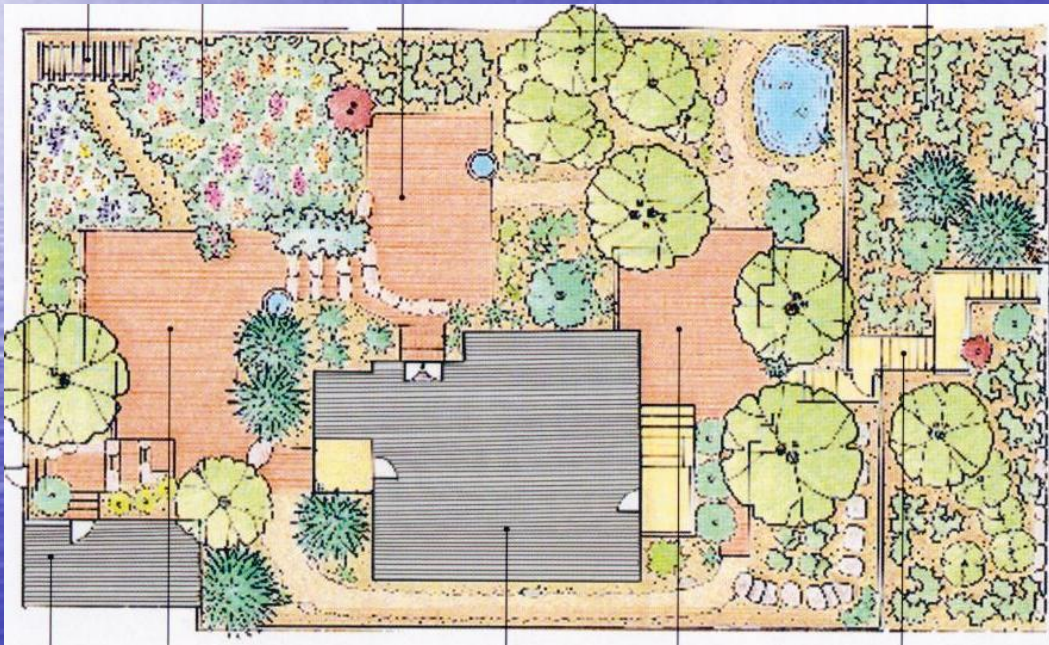


Alternation- produces a
regular and anticipated
sequence

Garden Design April
2008, pg 66

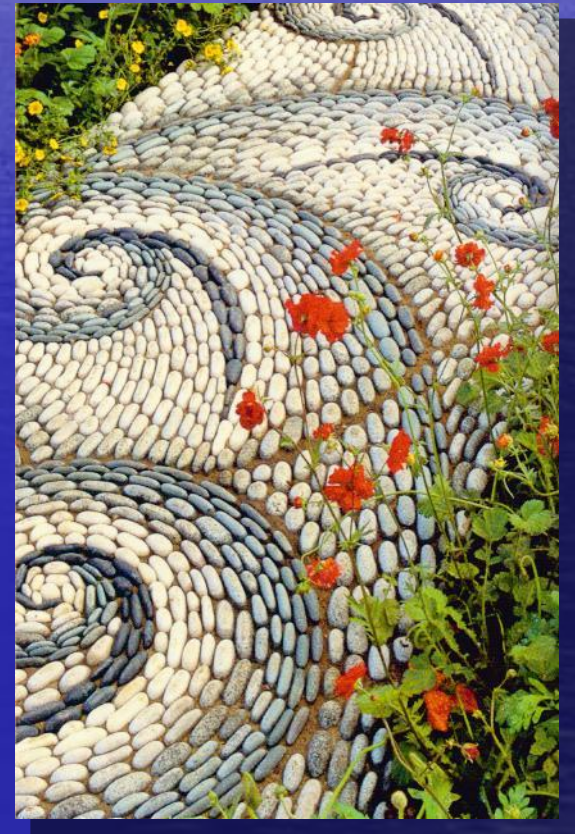
Home Landscaping, 2007, page 125

Rhythm in Hardscape - repetition, alternation, or gradation of form, material, size, texture, and/or color



Landscaping Your Home, Fine Gardening, 2001, pg 96

Repeated use of square and spiral forms



Small Garden, 2006, pg 194



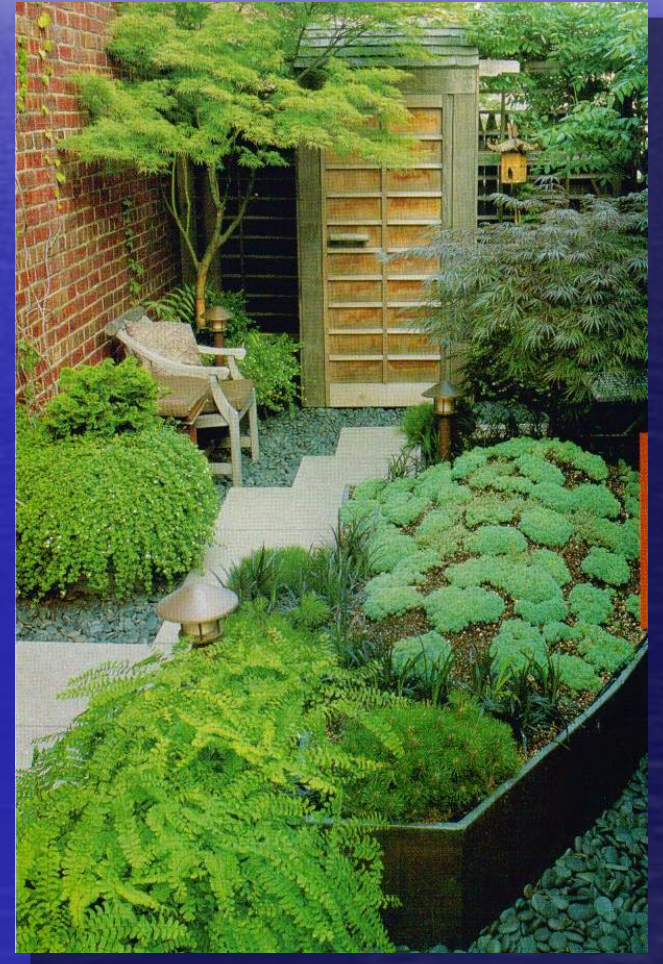
Unity

- Unity- a consistent organizational theme, style or character where all features blend for connection and harmony

Results from similar characteristics (pattern, form, texture), an overall balance, and proper scale. Some variety is needed for interest.

Unity can be found in:

- Plant material
- Hardscape material





Unity with Plants -

aesthetic characteristics of plants are used to create unity



- analogous colors
- similar shapes
- related textures
- common plant groupings- tropical, woodland, grasses, aquatic, desert



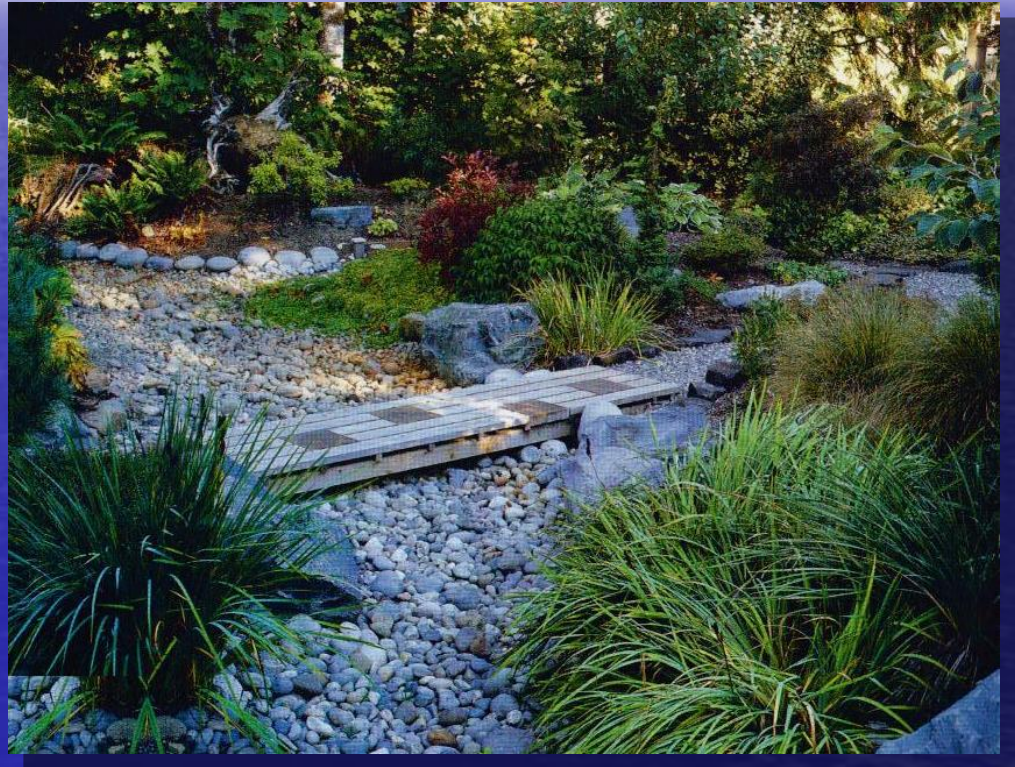
Unity with Hardscape - organizational framework for the garden, connects and defines spaces

Materials have similar
characteristics



Landscaping Your Home, Fine Gardening 2001,
pg 150

Garden Design, Nov/Dec 2003, pg 71



Continuation- a line, edge or surface
treatment connects features in a
composition



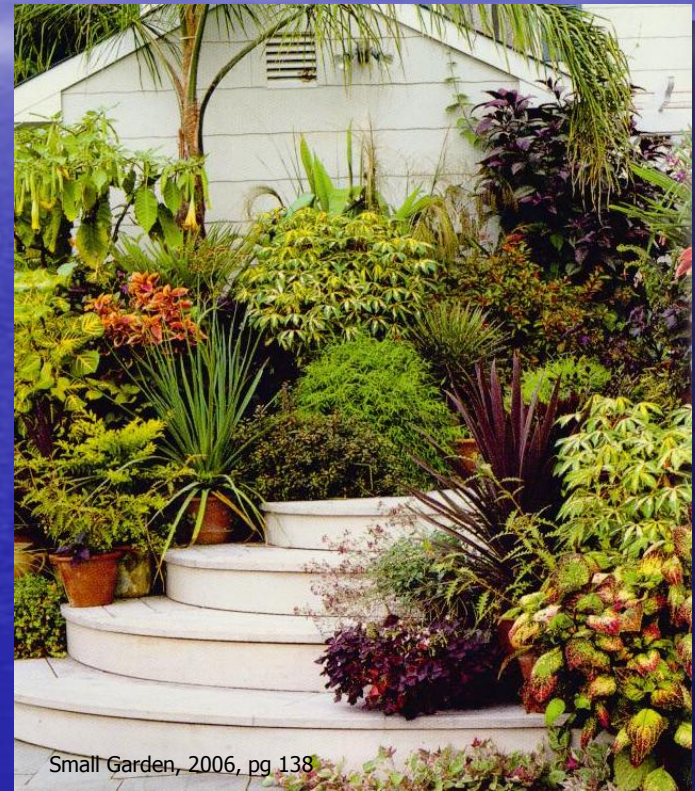
Unity and Variety-

unity must tie the composition together but also incorporate variety to prevent monotony

In a monochromatic color scheme use light to dark shades for variation



Garden Design, June/July 2000, pg 53



Small Garden, 2006, pg 138

Repeat plants with similar shapes for unity, but use different colors for variety

Emphasis

- Focal Point- a dominant feature that draws attention, used to guide views and circulation. Use sparingly to create interest

Contrast with other features in size, color, form, or texture

Emphasis occurs with:

- Specimen plants
- Garden ornaments

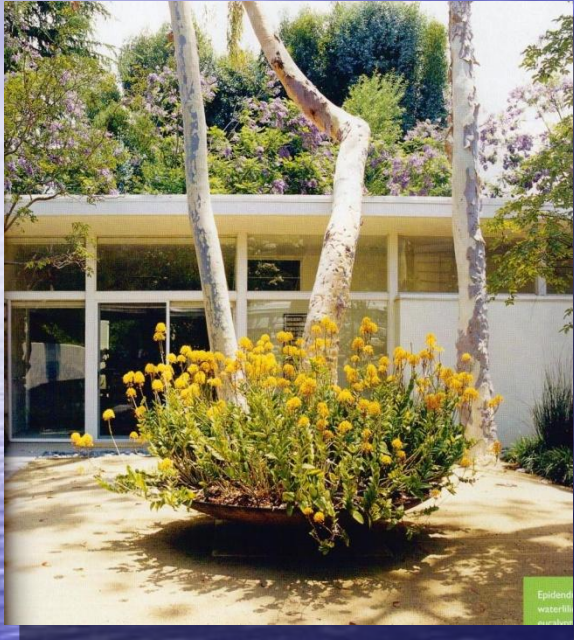


Small Garden, 2006, pg 163



Specimen Plants - attract attention through contrast

Garden Design, Sep/Oct 2005, pg 51



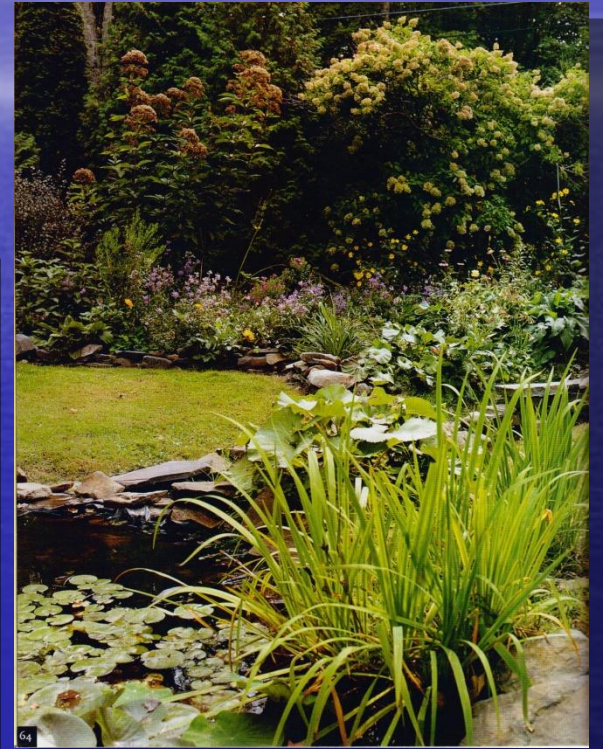
Isolate individual plants- draw the eye by purposeful placement of plants

Garden Design, April 2005, pg 78



Draw attention to entrances, steps or statuary

Garden Design, June/July, pg 64

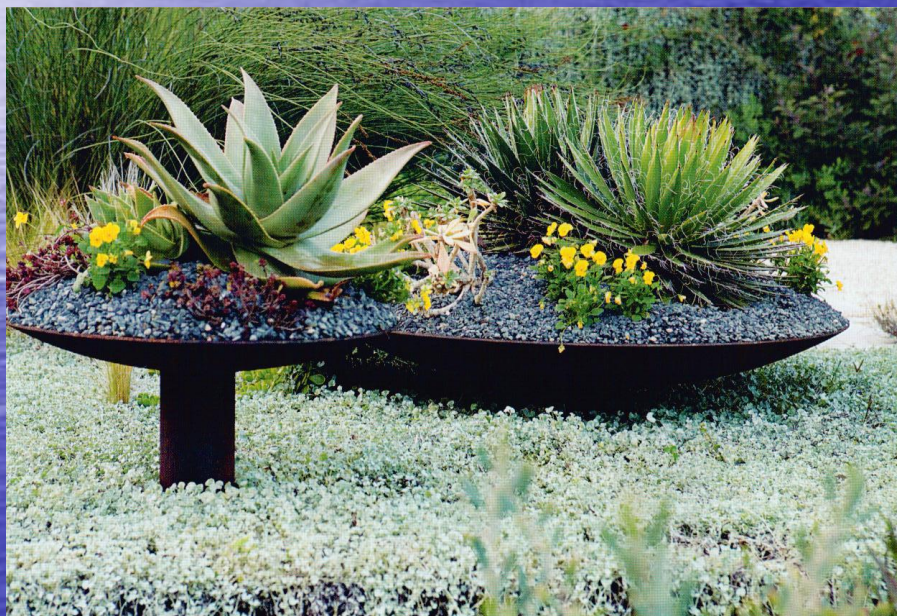


Dramatically contrast form, color, texture, or size

Garden Ornaments-

attract attention through contrast

Draw the eye by purposeful contrast to the soft plant material



Garden Design, Aug/Sept 2007, pg 55



Small Garden, 2006, pg 234

Dramatically contrast form, color, texture, or size

Summary

- Elements of design (parts)
 - Include: Line, Form, Texture, Color, Visual Weight
- Principles of Design (instructions)
 - Include: Scale/Proportion, Balance, Repetition, Emphasis, and Unity



Recommended Resources:

Scarfone, S. 2007. Professional Planting Design, An Architectural and Horticultural Approach for Creating Mixed Bed Plantings

Thomas, H. & Wooster, S. 2008. The Complete Planting Design Course

Bertauski, T. 2005. Designing the Landscape, An Introductory Guide for the Landscape Designer

Austin, R. 2002. Elements of Planting Design

Messervy, J. & Susanka, S. 2006. Outside the Not So Big House