



DESIGNING GARDENS

STUDY PROGRAM



STUDY GUIDE

HOW TO WORK THROUGH THIS COURSE

Over the following pages, you will move through a logical, self-paced learning experience that can enlighten and educate you in how to design gardens and use appropriate plants.

It is important from the outset to understand that learning about something is not the same as just reading about it. Learning implies a permanent change in what you know and can do.

Anyone can read a book and understand it; but for most people the detail of what you read is largely forgotten.

Reading something once only puts information into short-term memory. It is soon lost if you don't 'work' on it. Studying the same information takes longer, but by thinking about it and processing it you can transfer that information to long-term memory. This way, you will enhance your ability to recall and apply that information for years to come. If you take your time to work through the twelve lessons that follow, you will learn.

READ, REFLECT, RESEARCH, REVISE

Throughout the following pages, you will find not only things to read about, but also things to do:

1. Throughout each lesson, there are suggestions of things to do under the headings "Learn More". These are all sorts of ideas about things you can do in order to explore the subject further.
2. At the end of each lesson, there is an interactive self assessment test (assignment), for you to undertake. When you click on this, your computer needs to be online. You will be taken to our cloud-based online school. The answers you choose will be evaluated immediately, and your results can be seen on completion of each test. You can return and repeat tests if you wish.

Undertaking these tasks will involve reflection, research and revision of the topics you read about. By repeatedly encountering each topic in different ways, your perspective on each subject will broaden, and the commitment of information to longer term memory will strengthen.

You don't need to undertake all of the suggested tasks if you don't want to; but we strongly recommend that you do some in each lesson, and that you take all of the self-assessment tests.

The more time you spend doing these things, the stronger your learning will be.

COMPLETING THE COURSE

After completing all 17 lessons you will be presented with a final assessment which can also be undertaken online.

Do not attempt to do this until you have worked through all 17 lessons, and feel like you have learnt the subject well.

Upon finishing this final assessment you will immediately see your final results, and you can save a pdf copy of those results as a "Certificate of Completion".

WELCOME AUDIO

Click the button below to listen to the welcome audio for this course. This feature is supported by most computers and some mobile devices.



The Contents of the Course

HOW TO WORK THROUGH THIS COURSE	2
LESSON 1 INTRODUCTION TO GARDEN DESIGN	6
DO IT IN STAGES.....	7
THE PLANNING PROCESS.....	8
EARTHWORKS.....	9
DESIGN IS A PROCESS.....	11
HOW TO DESIGN A GARDEN ROOM STEP-BY-STEP.....	11
GARDEN ROOM COMPONENTS – WHAT TO PUT IN YOUR GARDEN ROOM.....	12
DESIGNING A GARDEN FOR A NEW HOUSE.....	13
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	24
LESSON 2 APPROPRIATENESS OF GARDEN DESIGN	25
TECHNIQUES FOR KEEPING IN SCALE.....	26
THE IMPORTANCE OF SPACE.....	26
GARDEN FEATURES FOR SMALL GARDENS.....	26
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	31
LESSON 3 CREATING AN IMPACT	32
BORROW YOUR NEIGHBOURS LANDSCAPE TO MAKE YOUR GARDEN SEEM LARGER.....	33
BRINGING THE OUTSIDE IN.....	35
BRINGING THE GARDEN INSIDE.....	36
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	42
LESSON 4 DESIGNING TO A BUDGET	43
WORKING OUT YOUR BUDGET.....	43
MAINTENANCE COSTS.....	44
THE PLANT BUDGET.....	45
SELECTING AND MAINTAINING YOUR TOOLS.....	45
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	48
LESSON 5 CHOOSING PLANTS	49
WHAT VARIETY?.....	49
WHICH PLANT?.....	50
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	57
LESSON 6 USING THE GARDEN	58

OUTDOOR LIVING.....	58
GARDEN FURNITURE.....	59
BARBEQUES.....	62
CHILDREN PLAYING.....	63
MAKE GARDENS MORE USER FRIENDLY.....	66
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	75
LESSON 7 WHERE THE GARDEN MEETS THE HOUSE.....	76
WHAT TO DO.....	76
PRACTICAL CONCERNS.....	76
OTHER WAYS OF JOINING THE GARDEN AND HOUSE.....	77
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	81
LESSON 8 MAKING THE WINTER GARDEN MORE COMFORTABLE.....	82
SOLUTIONS FOR SLIPPERY SURFACES.....	84
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	90
LESSON 9 GARDENS FOR CHILDREN.....	91
PLAY EQUIPMENT FOR DIFFERENT AGES.....	91
CHILDPROOFING A GARDEN.....	92
PLAY EQUIPMENT.....	94
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	99
LESSON 10 THE SECURE HOME AND GARDEN.....	100
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	105
LESSON 11 LIGHTING A GARDEN.....	106
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	111
LESSON 12 DEALING WITH SHADE.....	112
TREES TO CREATE SHADE.....	113
ENTERTAINING IN A SHADED GARDEN.....	114
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	117
LESSON 13 GARDEN ART.....	118
CHOOSING GARDEN ORNAMENTATION.....	118
GARDEN SCULPTURE.....	120
OTHER ORNAMENTATION.....	122
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	129
LESSON 14 POTS & PLANTERS.....	130
LOOKING FOR COLOURFUL POTS.....	132

USING COLOURFUL POTS.....	132
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	137
LESSON 15 COLOUR IN THE GARDEN.....	138
COLOURS AND GARDEN STYLES.....	138
TIPS FOR USING COLOUR.....	140
SEASONAL COLOUR.....	141
TIPS FOR YEAR ROUND COLOUR.....	142
HOW TO BRIGHTEN A WINTER GARDEN.....	143
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	147
LESSON 16 APPLICATIONS FOR COLOUR.....	148
TEN WAYS TO USE COLOUR.....	148
COLOUR THEMES.....	152
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	159
LESSON 17 GARDEN FURNITURE.....	160
FURNISHING THE GARDEN.....	160
WHAT FURNITURE DOES YOUR GARDEN NEED?.....	161
WHERE TO PUT YOUR GARDEN FURNITURE.....	161
WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN GARDEN FURNITURE.....	162
BARBECUES.....	162
WASHING LINES.....	163
HAMMOCKS.....	164
UMBRELLAS.....	164
POOLSIDE FURNITURE.....	164
COLOURS.....	164
REVIEW WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN LEARNING.....	169
FINAL ASSESSMENT.....	170

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LESSON 1 INTRODUCTION TO GARDEN DESIGN

Designing your own garden can be one of the most creative things you ever do – producing a living sculpture that gives you years of enjoyment.

The secret to good garden design is a plan.

Site Analysis

When starting a design, the first thing to do is carefully examine the existing garden. Unless you have a brand new house on an undeveloped block, you will have to consider what is already on site. Things to look for include:

- Easements, caveats and utilities – are there legal restrictions on what you can do and where you can build? Look for gas, electricity, phone and water connections.
- Buildings and hard surfaces – are there sheds, paved areas, garden beds, etc?
- Topography and access – is there a slope or a change in levels? Can vehicles or pedestrians move freely?
- Orientation, seasonal issues – does the house shade parts of the garden? Do deciduous plants let in light during winter? Does one part of the house or garden get hot in summer, etc?

- Climate – where are the prevailing winds? When and how much does it rain? How often do you get frosts, etc?
- Soil, drainage – do you have clay or sandy soil? Are there wet spots in the garden?
- Atmosphere – is there any noise or air pollution?
- Vegetation – are there existing trees or shrubs you want to retain?
- Re-usable materials – are there any pavers, timber, etc. on site?
- Local area – what are the surrounding gardens like?
- Are there likely to be any future building works (extra rooms, new garage, etc)?

Deciding What You Want

- What sort of atmosphere do you want to create?
- Privacy – do you want the garden for entertainment purposes, or for peace and quiet?
- Views, focal points – where are you going to look at the garden? (The most common view is usually from the kitchen window). Is there a view you want to hide?
- Traffic – do you need room for cars? Will pedestrians trample the lawn?

LEARN MORE >>>

Suggested task

1. Find a site to be landscaped within easy reach of your home. It could be your own garden, another home garden, a small section of a local park or a redevelopment of an older garden. Conduct a brief site analysis, i.e. consider what is on-site using the points opposite. In particular think about:
 - a) What structures already exist - can these be incorporated into the design?
 - b) What plants are present - can any of these be retained or transplanted in the new design?
 - c) What is the existing soil like? Does it need to be amended? Does it drain well?
 - d) How does the climate affect the growing conditions throughout the year?
2. Draw up a list of priorities for your chosen site. Rank them in order of importance.

- Children, pets – do you need room for ball games or for the dog to play?
- What sort of plants do you like?
- What sort of plants don't you like (e.g. do you suffer from allergies or hay fever)?
- How much maintenance do you want to do?
- Do you want to include an irrigation system?
- Do you need a clothesline?
- Would you like an area to grow vegetables?
- Budget – how much do you want to spend?

As with anything constructive, it is always a good idea to start with a plan. List everything you want to eventually include in the garden - and arrange these things in order from your highest priority to your lowest. (Note: the low priority item might only be low because it's expensive and not necessarily because you want it any less).

Your 'prioritised' list might be something like this:

- 1) Washing line
- 2) Barbecue
- 3) Lawn (or mulch to keep the mud and dust down)
- 4) Fences on boundaries
- 5) Trees for shade
- 6) Shrubs to screen the neighbours' houses
- 7) Plants to provide cut flowers inside
- 8) A garden setting for eating outside
- 9) Paved pathways for access in wet weather
- 10) A paved patio area
- 11) A vegetable garden
- 12) A garden shed
- 13) An ornamental pond
- 14) A swimming pool.

A well-planned garden will eventually accommodate everything on your

DO IT IN STAGES

Often the garden has to be developed in stages because:

- a) The money isn't available to do it all at once.
- b) Other work must be done first (e.g. a sewerage main is to be laid, a shed is to be erected, or a building is to be extended).

Undeveloped, or underdeveloped, parts of the garden might be screened with fast growing plants or a temporary fence until they are able to be attended to. Areas designated for paving, garden beds or water gardens might be grassed to provide a reasonable appearance until the time is right to finish the development.