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## Landscaping: The Concept of Foundation Planting

By Elizabeth Passage

Landscaping: The Concept of Foundation Planting

The special planting set close to the house is called foundation planting and has great importance since it improves and enhances the proportions of your house as well as relates the house to the grounds. Evergreens are widely used for foundation planting not only because they can thrive in the shade of the house, but because of their year-round good looks. If you have not used evergreens elsewhere, though, it can be a mistake to suddenly use them at the foundation. The contrast will be too sharp; the evergreens are apt to look forbidding.

There remains a wide choice of flowering shrubs, dwarf fruit trees, roses and cushion chrysanthemums that will lend color to your foundation design in spring, summer and fall. Japanese redleaf barberry, floribunda roses, flowering quince and forsythia are among the bushes and plants that can be used. While it is tempting to try one of each of the nursery's evergreen specimens in your foundation planting, this should, of course, be avoided. On the other hand, contrast tall and low-growing types: use stiff-needled pines with feathery juniper with broad-leafed laurel and rhododendron.

In your preliminary planning, draw to scale the relationship between your house elevation and the foundation shrubs and trees as they will look at mature height. Perhaps some of those you've selected will be too tall for your house, obscuring your windows and making the house gloomy inside. In that case, you don't want them. In general, because your entrance is the most important feature of your house facade, you start your planning with it in mind, using shrubs that direct the eye toward the door. The planting in front of the house is usually bowl-shaped in its overall outline. This gives the impression of a broad base to the house. In some places, let the wall show to the foundation. Put the tallest shrubbery at the corners of your house.

In summary, begin with the end in mind. What looks great now may not look so great once everything is grown to maturity. To accent with garden decor and garden accessories, visit

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Elizabeth Passage  
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Elizabeth Passage has a lifelong passion for, and extensive experience in, the garden gift, landscaping, garden decor, garden design industries.

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### **Basics Of Landscaping**

**By Sara Nightingale**

So you have a yard, but do you have landscaping? The best thing to do is to get back to the basics and start learning about landscaping from the soil up.

It Starts with the Soil

In order for your soil to work as well as possible, you need to have it tested. Your soil might be perfect or it might just need some nitrogen. Soil engineers can test and analyze soil from different points in your yard to help your yard perform at its best.

What you need to understand about landscaping is that it serves more than just an artistic or aesthetic purpose. Landscaping is functional outdoor art, but it can also serve as a vehicle for privacy; landscaping can exist to attract certain insects or birds to your home; landscaping can be used to cover up your foundation that sticks out from the bottom of your siding, among other things.

Good landscape designers are taught to utilize your landscaping for whatever you desire (security, privacy, etc) with a design that is pleasing to the eye and to the neighborhood. So think about what you are trying to get done with your landscaping. If you are trying to attract butterflies or keep neighbors from peering in, keep this in mind so that your landscaping can serve both purposes.

Simplicity is important in design and art. It's one of the best guidelines you can follow as a beginner or

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do it yourselfer. Just keep things simple to begin with. You can do more later on. Simplicity in planting, for instance, would be to pick two or three colors and repeat them in your landscape. Keep decor to a minimum and within a specific theme.

Balance is just as the word implies a sense of equality. There are basically two types of balance in landscape design: Symmetrical and Asymmetrical.

Symmetrical balance is when there are equally spaced matching elements in the garden design. With a garden equally divided, both sides could share all or part of the same shape, form, plant height, plant groupings, colors, bed shapes, theme, etc. Symmetrical design is somewhat of a mirror image or reflection. Asymmetrical is just the opposite.

After you have completed your landscaping you will be outside, sweating, and getting your hands dirty trying to get that green thumb.

Sara Nightingale is an avid gardener and landscaper who specializes in helping newcomers to beautify their outdoor surroundings

<http://www.landscaping.thegardenstop.com>



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