

# Design for Function



**Strategies to keep your landscape  
beautiful and practical**

Gail Hansen, PhD. Oct 23, 2013, 12:15pm, General Session 7



# How does your garden work for you?

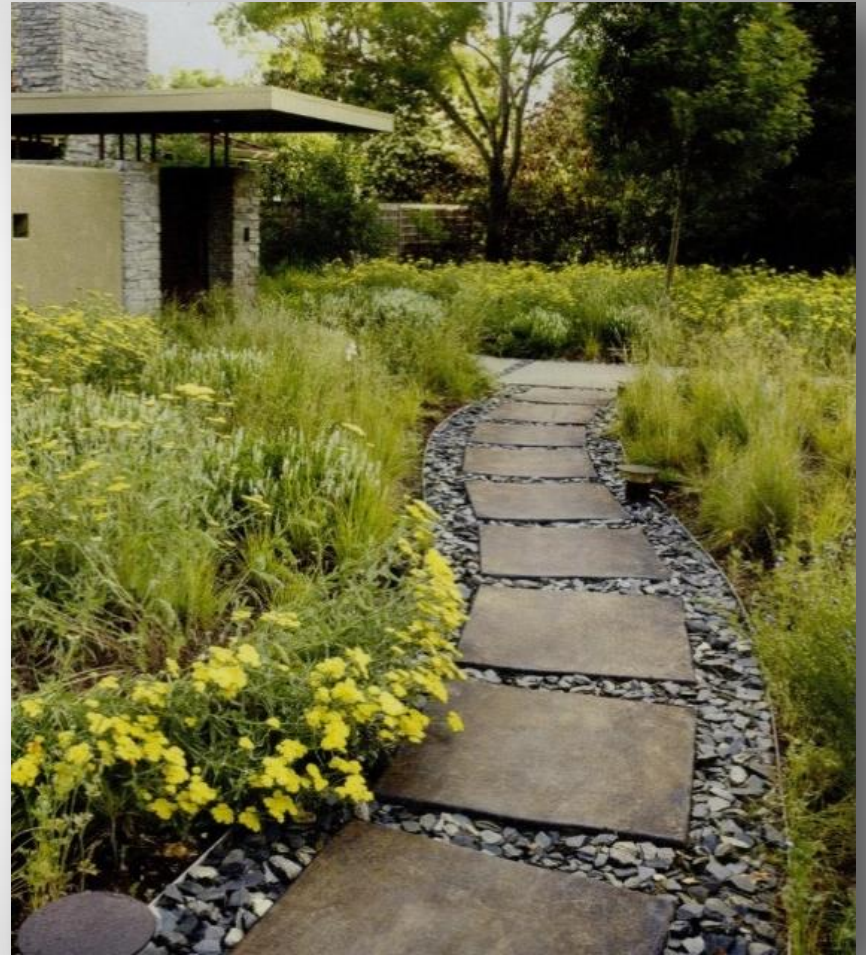




# Right plant - right place



**Functional  
garden- spaces  
between plants**



**Negative space**



# Small Patio/Deck or gathering area





# Pathways don't exist or poorly built





# Utilities and other eyesores





# Fences/privacy





# Too many ornaments and stuff





# Space - not enough stuff





# Space- too much stuff





# No place for pets or kids



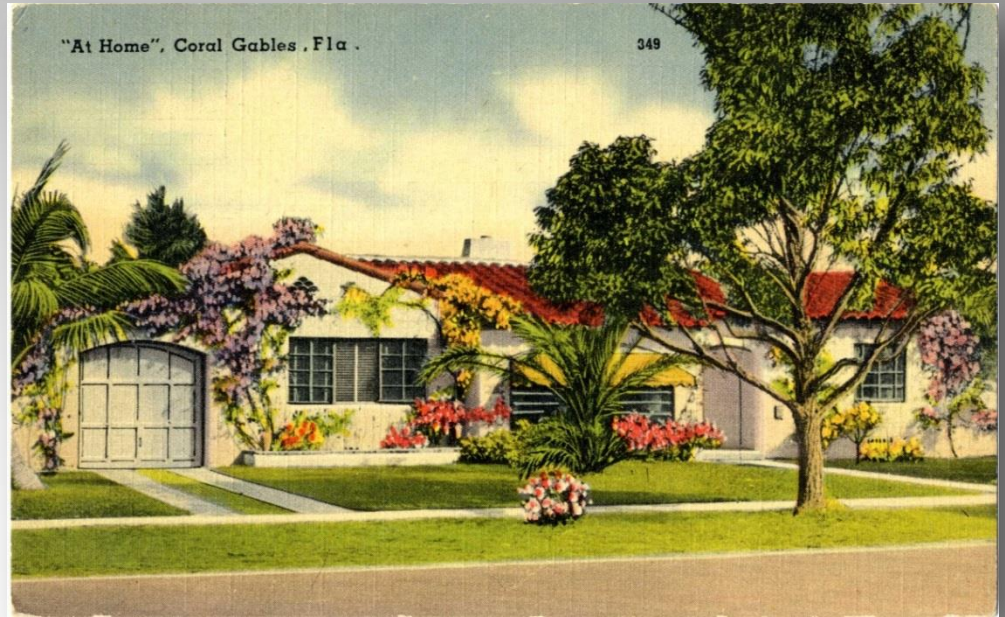


**No trees- too  
many trees  
Too much sun-  
shade**





**Help, it  
just  
doesn't  
work**

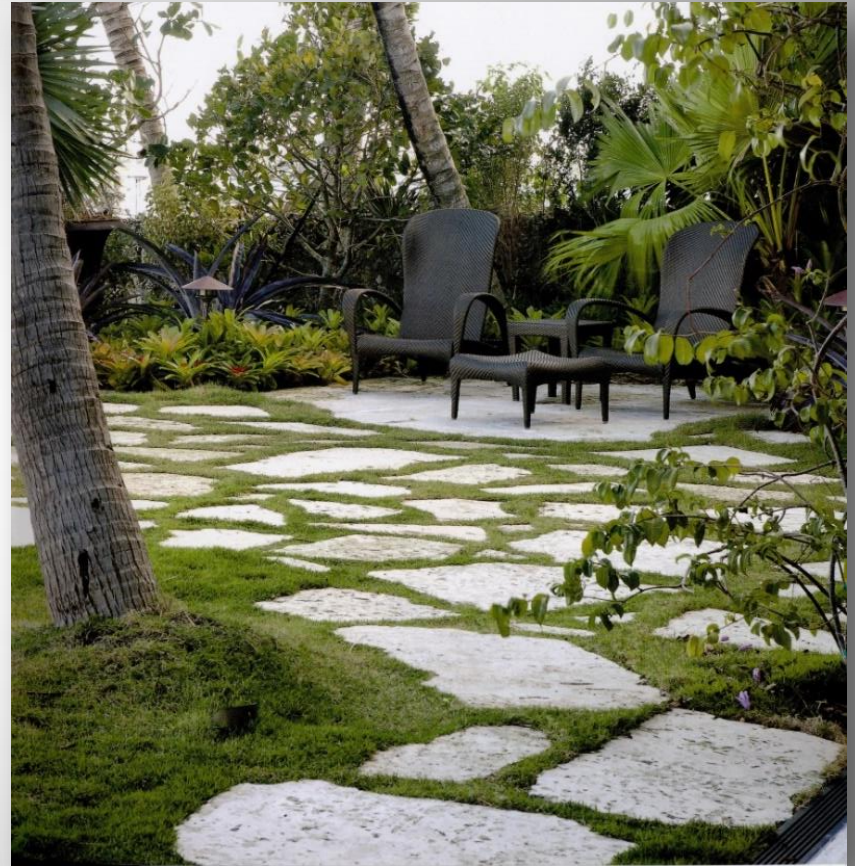




# Form follows Function

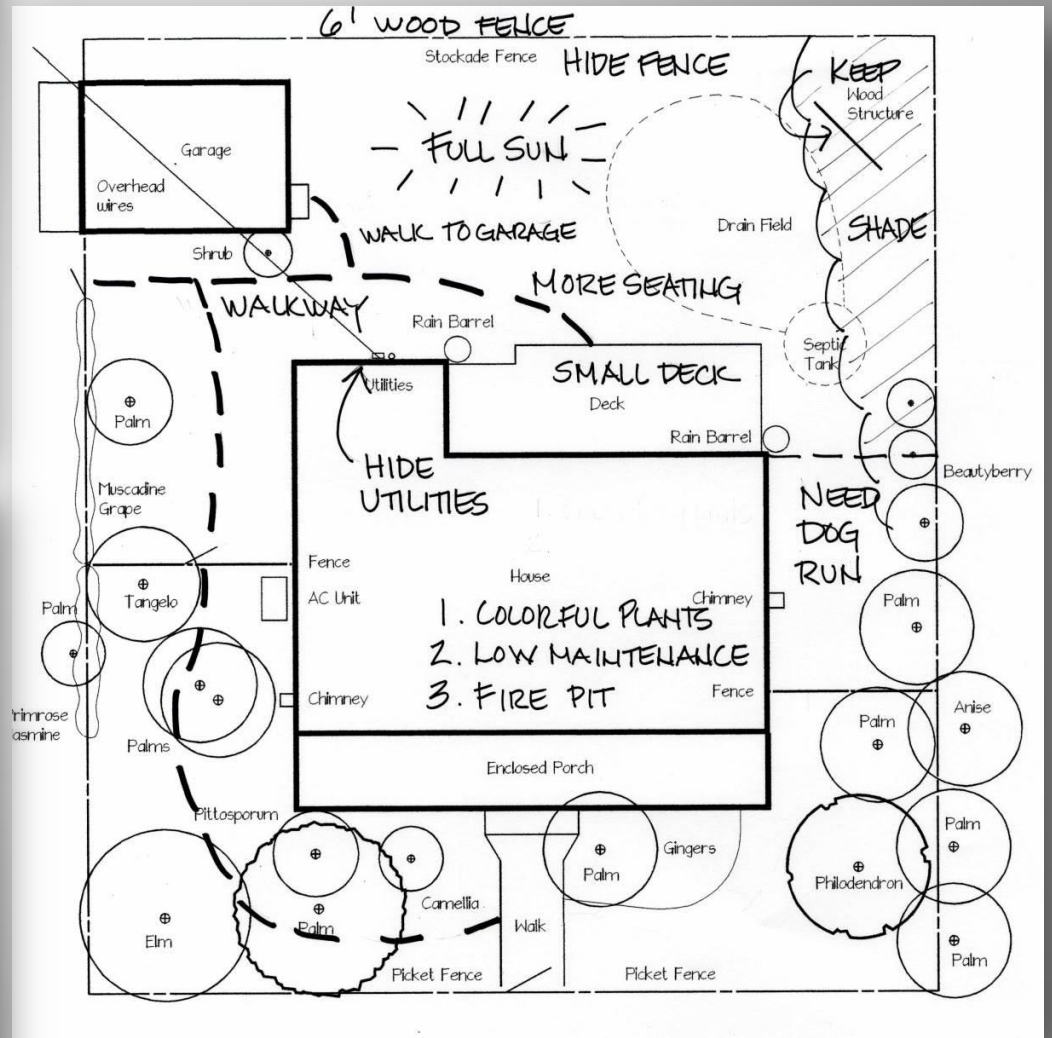
## Questions to ask:

1. Who uses the yard?
2. What do you want to do in the yard?
3. What do you need to do it?
4. Do you have room to do it?



**Form = organization = functional**



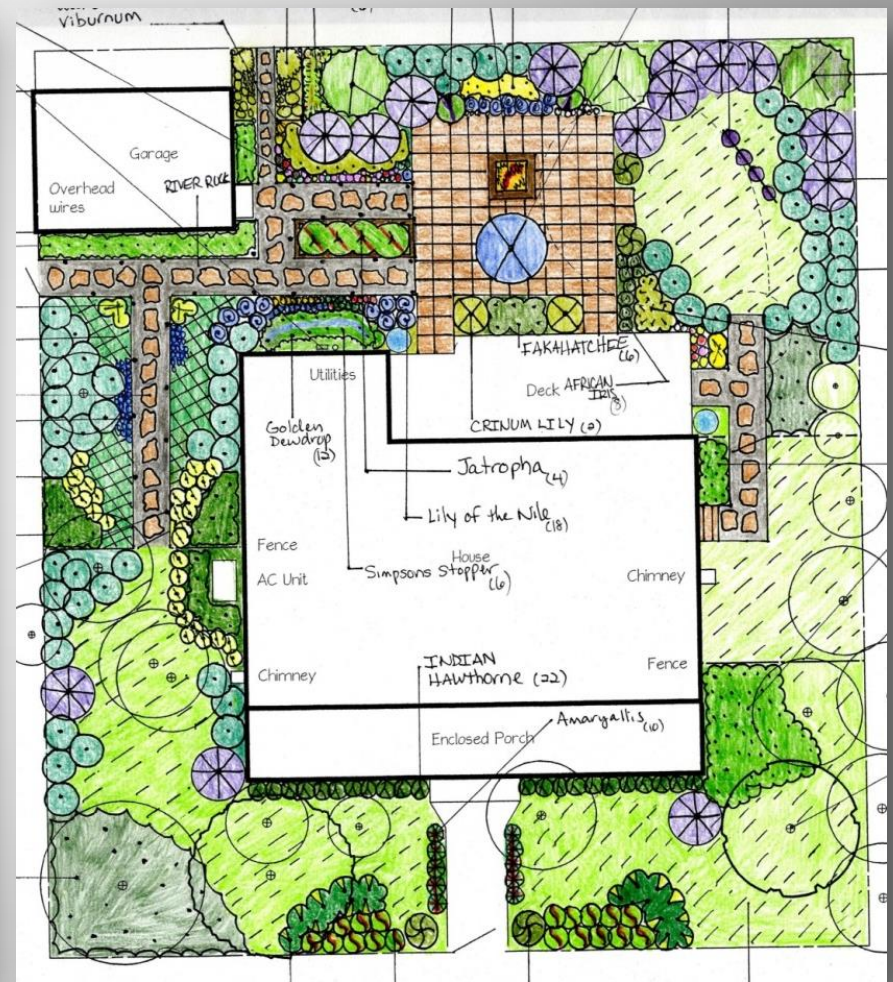
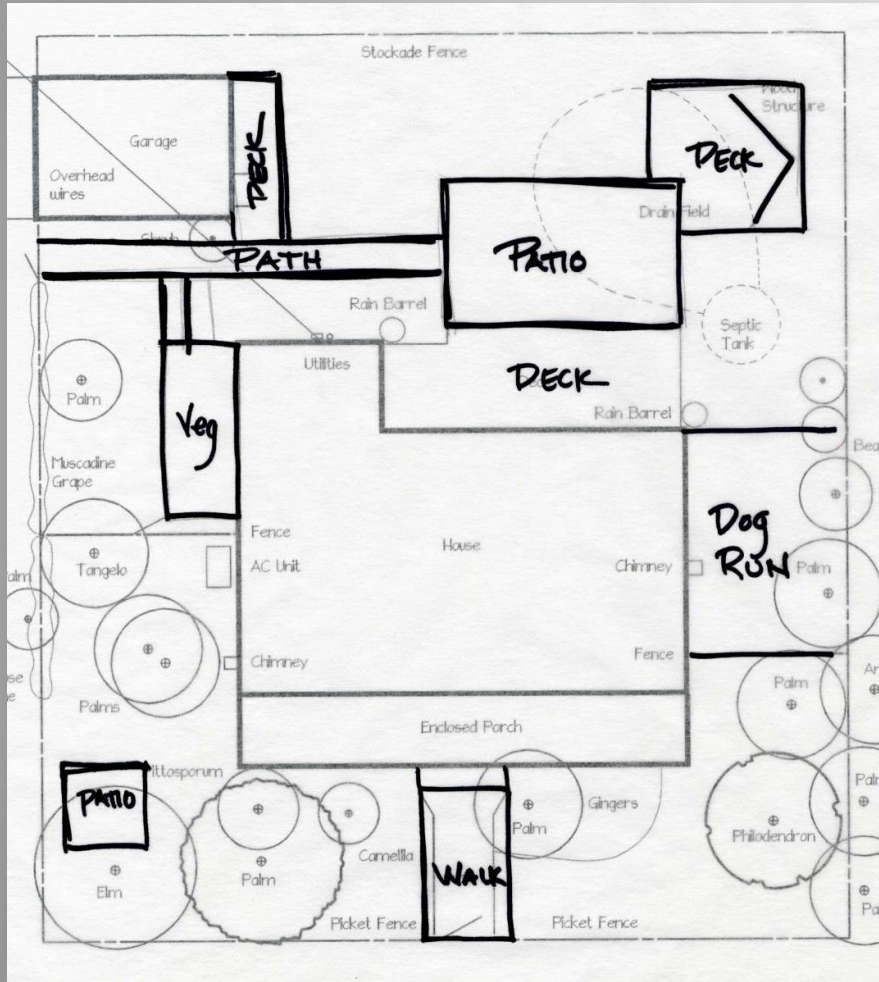






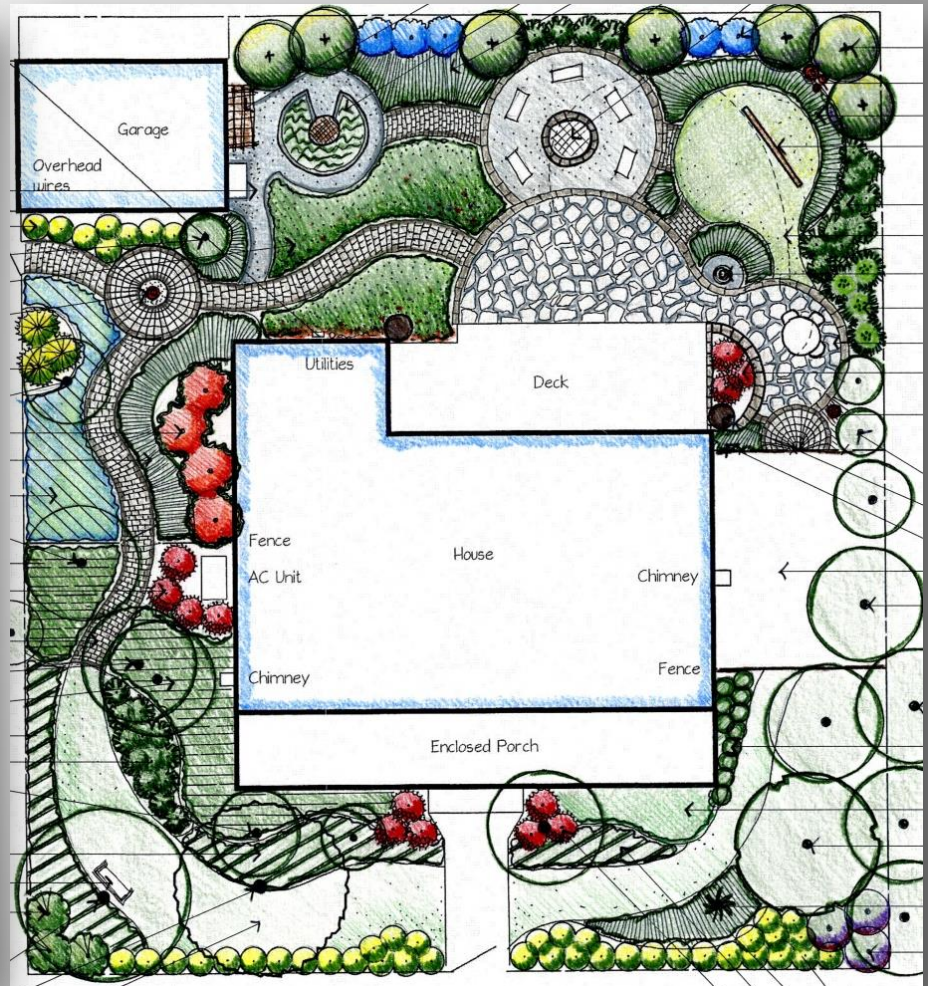
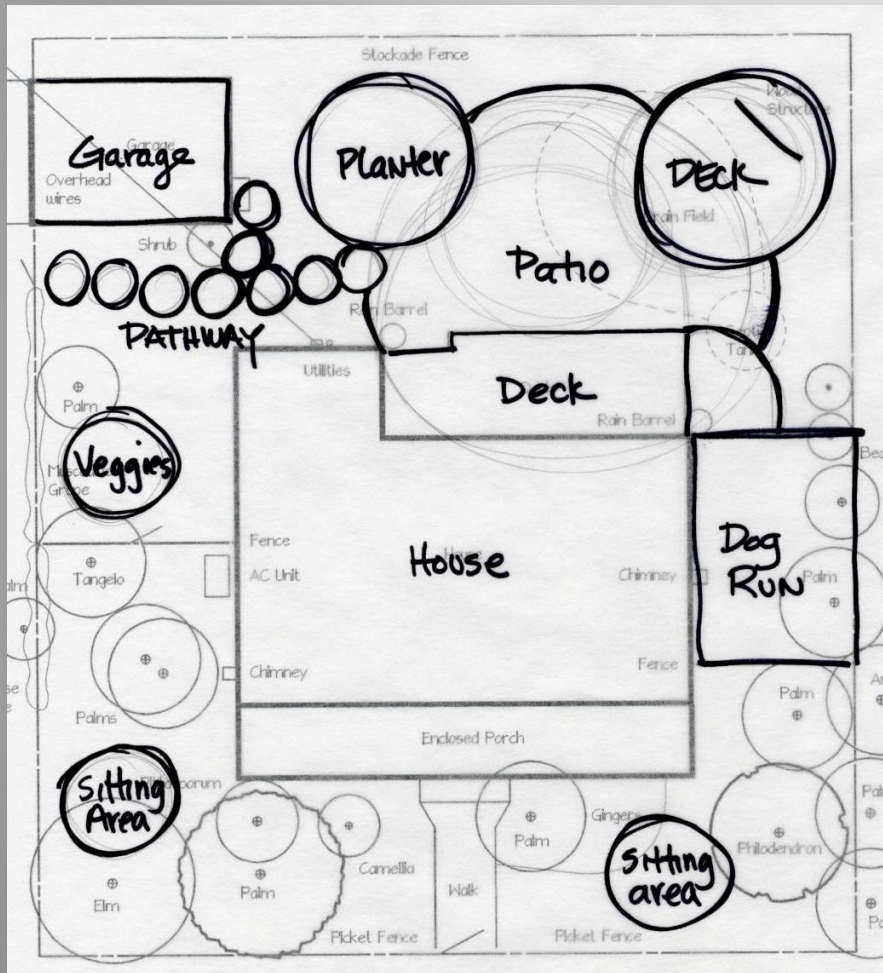


# Form-Square



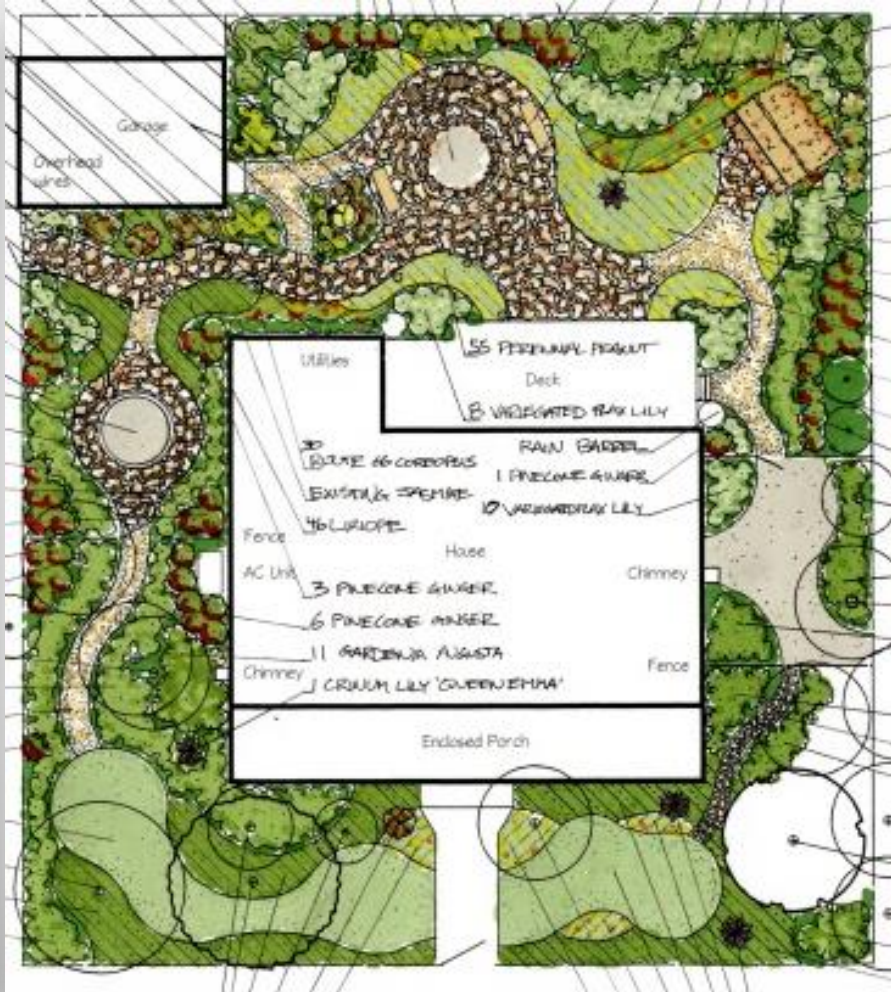
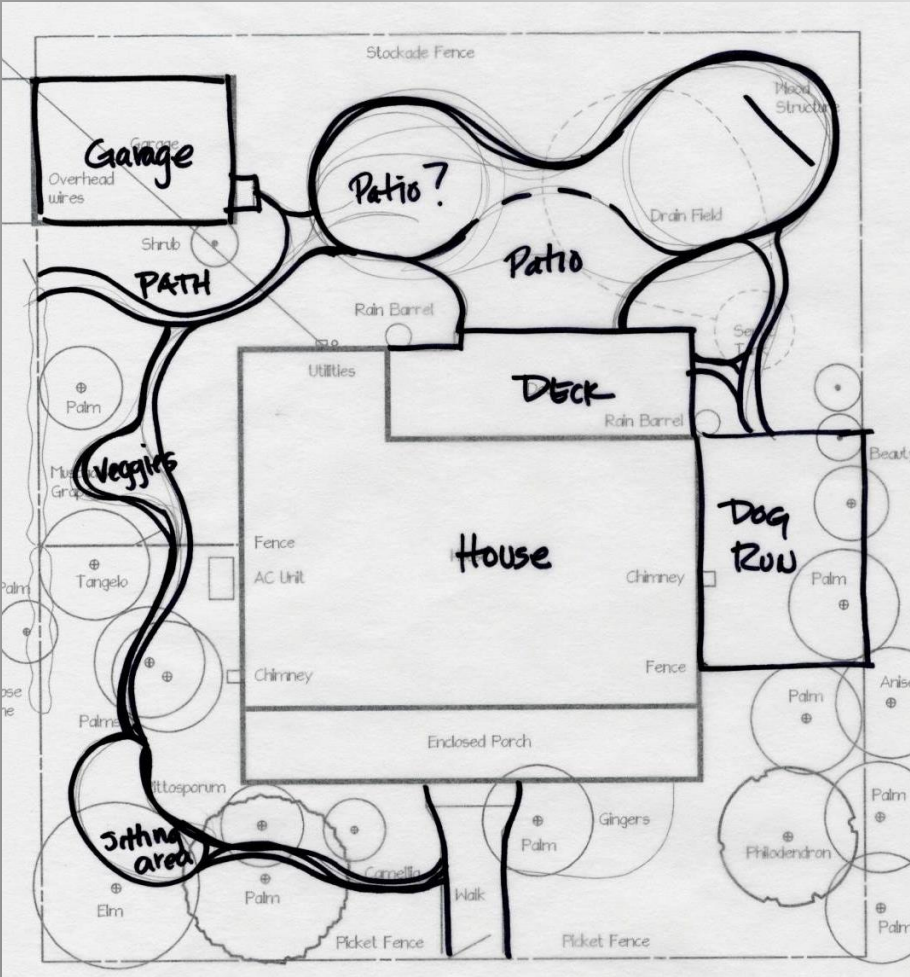


# Form- Circle



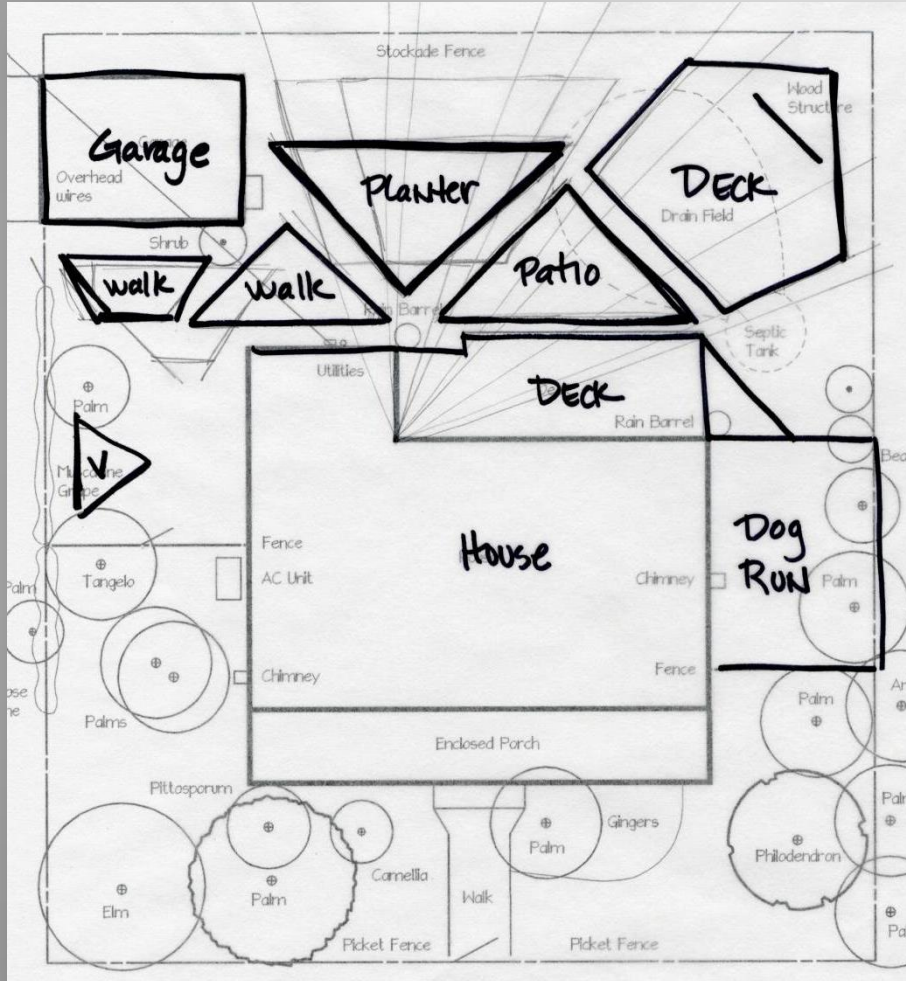


# Form- Natural

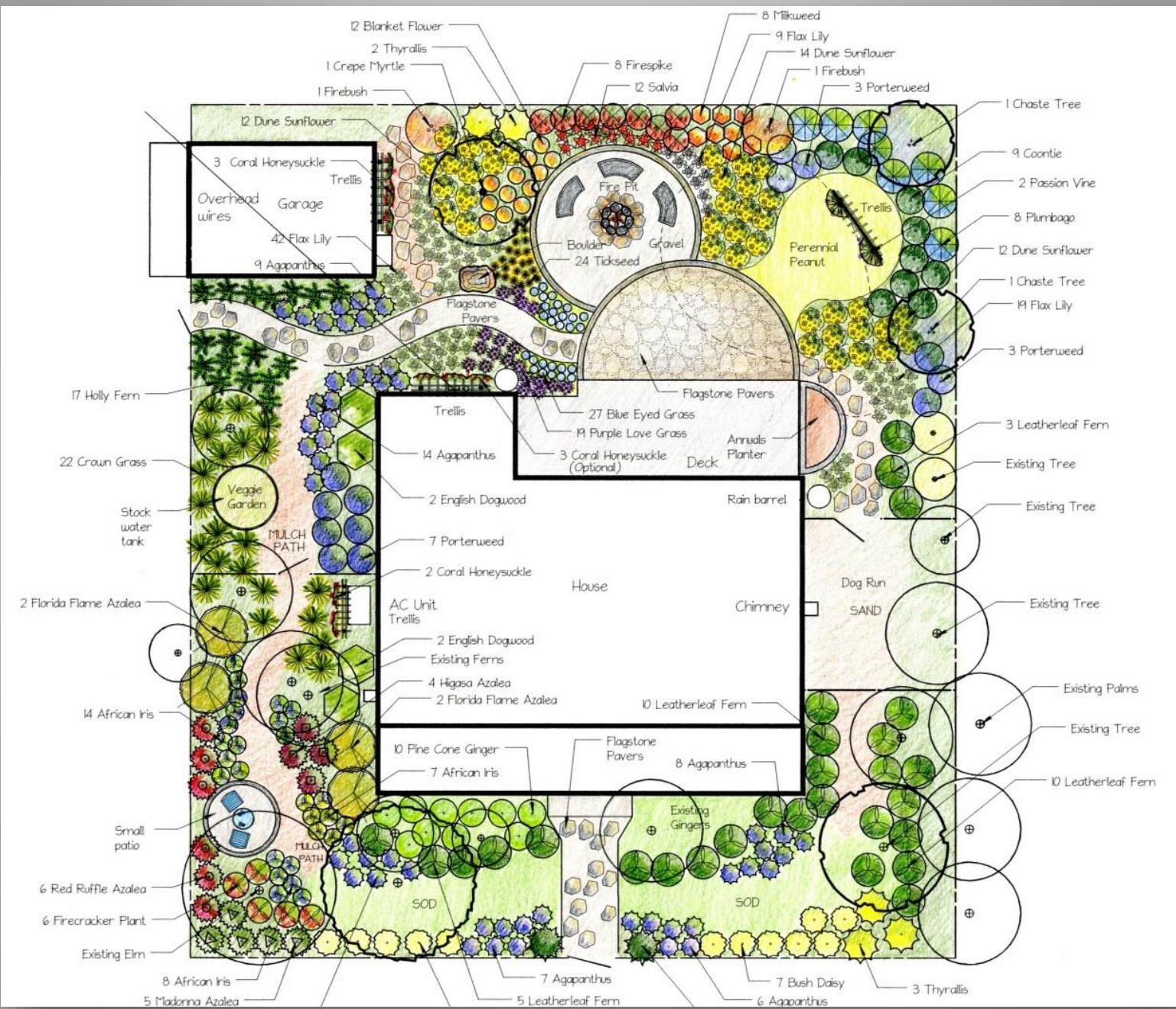




# Form- Angles









# One large or several small seating areas



Small open areas define planted areas and organize space

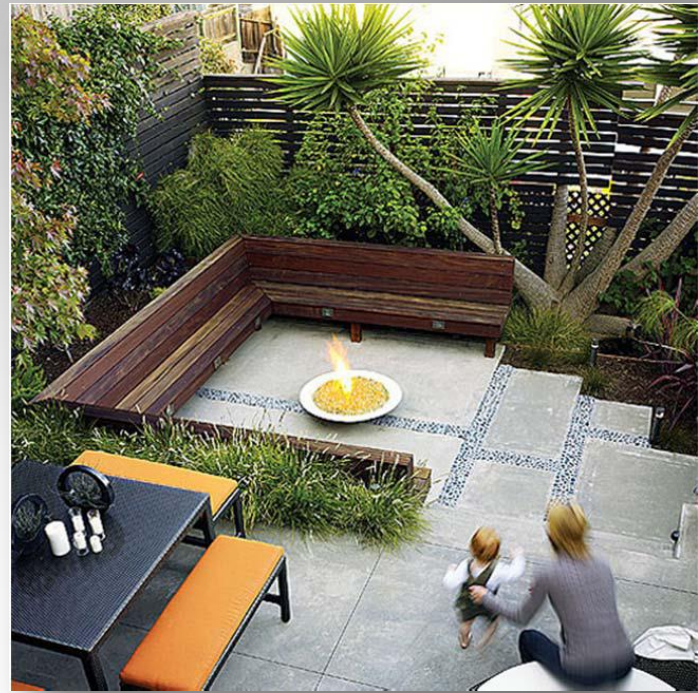




# Structures to define space

Provide edges and mass to frame plant material

Gives garden a finished look





# Garden walls, hard pathways

Separate beds with pathways or  
short walls to provide a neat look





# Overhead structures to provide shade



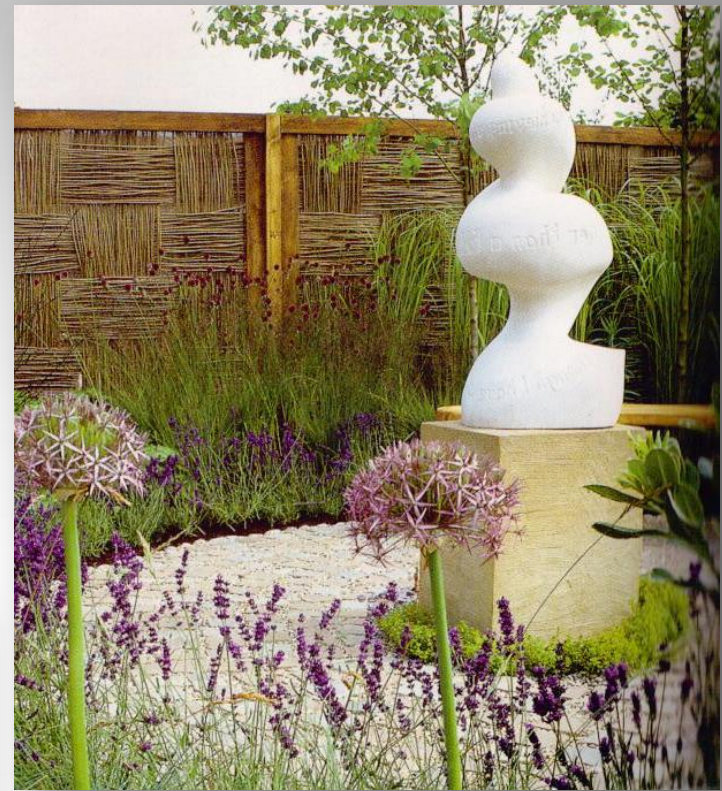
**Arbors and pergolas where trees are a maintenance problem**

**Or where trees cannot be located close to buildings or utility lines**



# Large garden ornaments

Functional ornaments- supports for plants or homes for wildlife





# Create privacy with plants or structures





# Hide unattractive and problem areas

Hide dog runs and work  
areas





# Use outdoor furniture for color and texture

Set the theme for the landscape

Eliminate need for colorful annuals





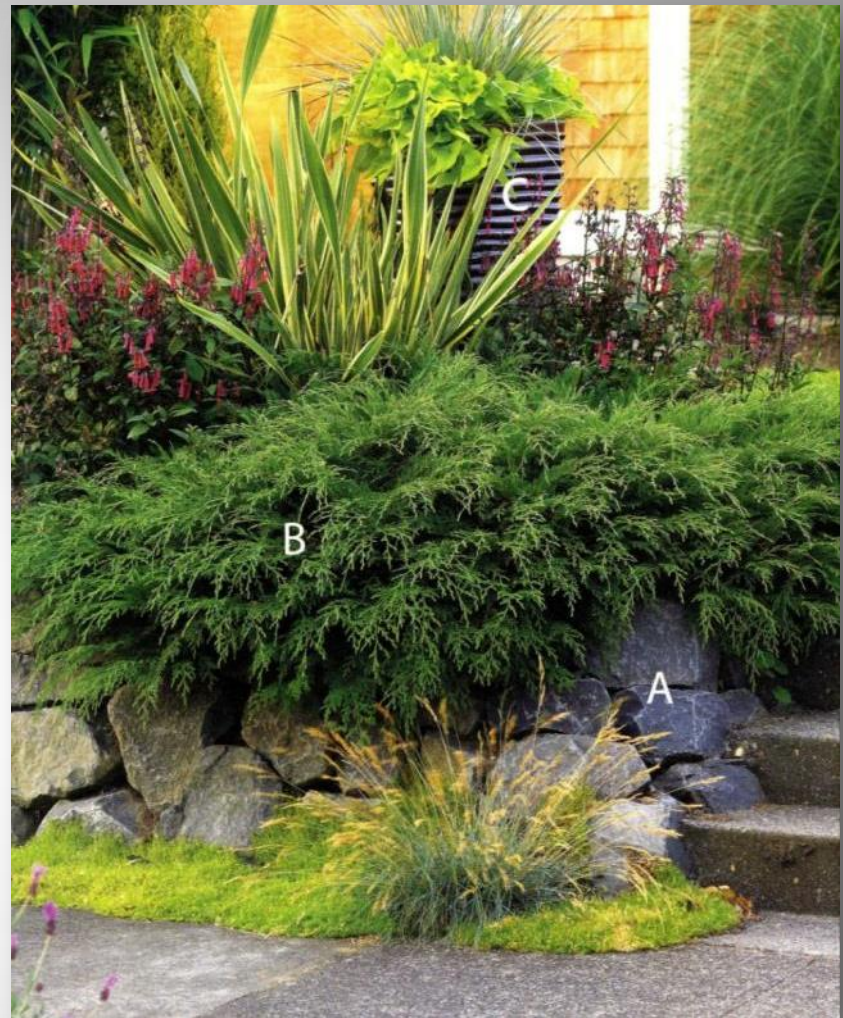
# Variety of surfaces



Cover bare areas with large rocks, stone or concrete pathways



# Large evergreen plants



**Shade, block views  
and wind**



# Plants with a naturally pleasing form and colorful foliage





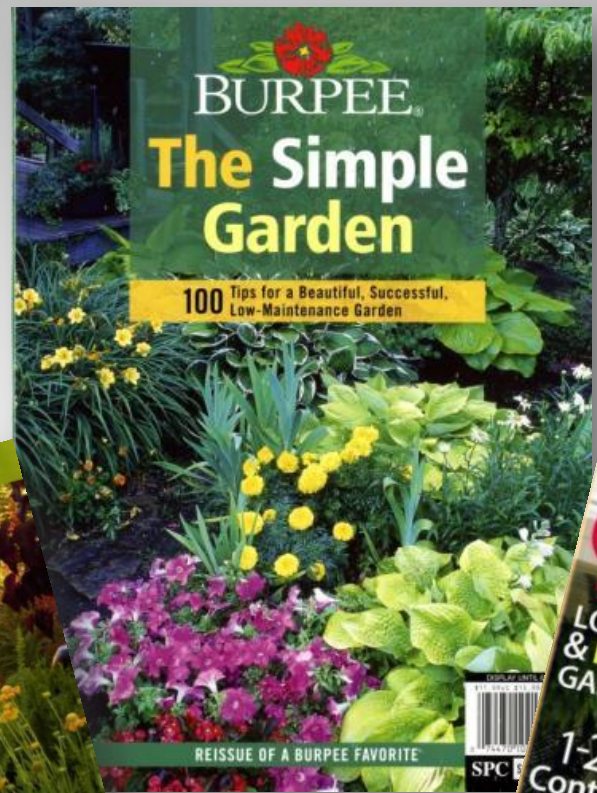
**Use a small  
plant palette  
with variety of  
characteristics**



**Fit the plant  
to the space**









# yards

turn any outdoor space into the garden of your dreams

billy goodnick

## Landscape Design: Twenty-Two Ideas for a Low-Care, Low-Cost Landscape<sup>1</sup>

Gail Hansen<sup>2</sup>

**M**ANY HOMEOWNERS DESIRE a beautiful landscape but are often discouraged by the lack of time and money needed to create and care for the garden of their dreams. A pleasing, low-care, low-cost landscape is possible, however, with careful planning, appropriate plant choices, and thoughtful design. Following are four basic time- and money-saving strategies for residential landscapes:

- Start with a good design. Use simple geometric shapes in the hardscape to provide structure and repetition for organization.

- Know your plants. Learn about hardy plants with interesting forms and foliage that thrive in your area.

- Know your soil. Choose plants that are compatible with your soil, or enrich and improve your soil with compost in selected areas when necessary.

- Know your climate or soil conditions. Learn to accept the perfect imperfection of nature. Don't try to control every weed or errant twig on

your property. Avoid excessive trimming, weeding, and fertilizing with energy, and chemicals. The tips below are for low-care, low-cost landscapes include ideas for plant selection as well as hardscape selection

### When selecting plants:

1. Choose plants (Figure 1). Drought-tolerant, low-water, and pest-resistant plants are ideal. Choose plants appropriate for your

area. Check the hardiness zone for cold tolerance, select long-lived plants that thrive in your soil conditions, note insect problems and susceptibility to disease, and consider sturdiness and wind resistance. Pay attention to plants that work well and repeat them in areas with similar conditions. Additional information about plant selection is available from your local county Extension office or at the Florida-Friendly website, <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/publications.htm>. Download *The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Guide to Plant Selection & Landscape Design* for a complete list of Florida-Friendly plants. The guide includes important information for each plant, such as height and spread, growth rate, pH requirements, soil moisture and light requirements, and salt tolerance.



FIGURE 1. A plant palette with hardy plants saves time, money, and resources.

2. Base plant choices more on interesting foliage than flowers (Figure 2). Flowers often require time for deadheading, regular maintenance, and replacement. Look for large foliage with color and interesting shapes

<sup>1</sup>This document is ENH1181, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date April 2011. Visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.  
Figures 1-20, credit: Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology. Figures 21-24, credit: Gail Hansen.  
<sup>2</sup>Gail Hansen, assistant professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.

