

THINK BIG FOR SMALL SPACES

Small gardens can't have everything, but they can have a few extraordinary things designed well. Instead of feeling restricted by the size of your outdoor space, think about the possible potentials. Your goal is to focus on quality not quantity.

Plan ahead

Think about the opportunities and constraints of your space. Write out a wish list of what you like and what you don't like. This is a good starting point for making changes to your small space. You don't need to tackle everything in one year, plan ahead in stages.

Utilize every square inch

Your current site has an infinite number of growing spaces that remain undiscovered. Plant in between the gaps of a flagstone path or create raised beds to extend your planting space. Try out potscaping for architectural elements all year round and don't forget the vertical landscape. Smaller gardens can have great heights that cannot be ignored. A garden designed at multiple levels can expand your designing space and create new opportunities.

Instead of thinking of your garden space as a rectangle, subdivide it into rooms or distinct areas for different activities. One area will be designated for entertaining, one active area for cultivating vegetables and one quiet lounging area for relaxation.

Choose a single style or theme

Limit your lists of wants or desires. Simplicity is the key. Connect the spaces with similar objects or a repetitive paving pattern. Simple patterns work better in small spaces. Use a select number of plants and repeat them throughout the garden to create a natural rhythm.

Avoid clutter. Anything and everything will not fit into any garden regardless of its size. If the garden is too chaotic, you will feel neither comfortable nor relaxed.

Apply visual trickery

Feeling restricted by your designated fence line? Don't be afraid to borrow a view from your neighbour. In most cases, this will mean opening up a section in your garden to view your neighbour's specimen tree or water feature.

Don't let your whole garden show in a single glance. Conceal certain areas for viewing later on. Your guests will like the mystery and the element of surprise. Mirrors and reflecting pools situated in the right spot accomplish the job well.

Designing small spaces is not an easy task but one that can be personally rewarding and challenging. Don't be afraid to ask for help if the task seems too daunting. Learn from your mistakes and continuously revise or rework your ideas. Remember to keep an open mind and a notepad nearby.