

Components and features of landscaping

I :Plant components

Lawn

A lawn can be defined as the green carpet for a landscape. It is a basic feature for for any type of garden. In a home garden, lawn improves the appearance of the house, enhances its beauty, increases conveniences and usefulness thus adding monetary value to the real estate. The lawn provides a perfect setting for a flower bed, a border, a shrubbery or a specimen tree or a shrub. Besides the material value, a lawn has its spiritual value, too. A lawn is the source of charm and pride and reduces tension of the mind after a day's hard work in the materialistic world.

Shrubbery

Growing of shrubs in a group is called shrubbery. It is of two types

- (i) Pure shrubbery
- (ii) Mixed shrubbery.

Pure shrubbery refers to planting of entire selected area with a single species whereas a mixed shrubbery has many different species of shrubs.

Flower beds and borders

Annuals and herbaceous perennials are grown in flower beds to provide mass effect of different colors. Borders are continuous beds of more length than width containing plants of one kind only.

Rockery

A rockery or a rock garden is the arrangement of rocks with plants growing in the crevices. Its bold ruggedness is a pleasant contrast to the softness of the flowers. The stones help the plants in retaining their moisture and keeping their roots cool. In plains, on the sunny side some of the cacti and succulents and plants like Lantana, Setcreasea, Verbena, etc. can be grown successfully. Ferns and some indoor plants also look natural on the rockery slopes in shade.

Rocks are also valued in garden design for their interesting shapes. The range and variability of shapes and size give them a sculptural quality. Those with natural curves and smooth outlines are more valuable than others. Their surface texture is another attractive feature. Cobbles and pebbles found in water courses are generally smooth.

Carpet beds

The art of growing ground cover plants closely and trimming them to a design or alphabetical letters is called a carpet bed. Colourful foliage as edge plants is found to be more suitable for this purpose.

- Perennial in nature
- Should have quick recuperative quality
- Should withstand frequent pruning
- Should withstand summer sun and heavy rains
- Should withstand drought e.g. Alternanthera

Non-Plant Components

Topiary

It is the art of developing the plant or training the plant into different forms or shapes like animals, birds, arches, etc. The plant should be amenable for repeated pruning and also flexible with more vegetative growth. e.g. For hills - Cupressus macrocarpa, Pinus patul; for plains - Casuarina sp., Caesalpinia coriari, Bougainvillea sp., Clerodendron sp.

Hedges

With the help of plants, live hedges can be formed and used as a fence or a green wall. Acalypha, Casuarina, Divi divi (Caesalpinia coriaria), etc., are plants suitable for hedging. Hedges help to screen a particular site or building or hiding of unwanted places. They help to partition the garden into several parts.

Edges

These are perennial herbs often used as a short border for lawn or ground cover or dividing beds from roads, walks or paths. These herbs often stand frequent trimming e.g. Eupatorium, Alternanthera era, Duranta, Dwarf marigold, etc.

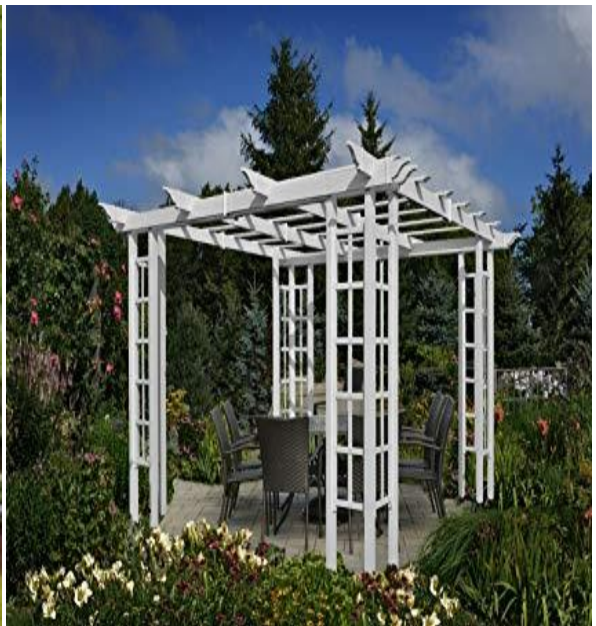
Arches

Arches are supports provided for climbers. It should be at least two meter height and one metre wide. The breadth depends upon the path over which it is constructed but should not be less than 1 metre. Arches may be made of wood, metal, stones or concrete structures.



Pergola

A pergola is formed by connecting a series of arches over a considerable length. Usually flowering creepers are trained over the arches. A pergola is a useful resting place during the summer months in tropical regions. The path below remains cool due to the creepers growing above. Below the pergola, concrete or wooden benches may be constructed for sitting.



Garden Trellis

A garden trellis makes the most of limited space with a vertical display of lush greenery and colourful blooms.

Uses of a garden trellis include the following.

- Creates a privacy screen in a garden or balcony
- Provides support for large vines and trailing plants
- Screens an unattractive area of the landscape
- Provides shelter from wind
- Provides shade for sitting area
- Climbers such as climbing roses, Clematis, English ivy, passion flower, etc. are suitable for trellises



Foot paths

Foot paths facilitate movement within the garden area. Foot paths may be winding, circular or straight. Spinal or herring-bone designs can also be adopted. Winding foot path conceals the components beyond and creates curiosity. Straight foot paths make one walk fast. A vista at the end of a straight foot path adds beauty to the scenery

