



Love Your Landscape

Tips & Ideas to Reclaim Your Outdoor Space

If you live in Southern California, designing your outdoor space can be just as important as your indoor space. With moderate year-round temperatures and a lifestyle geared towards nature, your garden can serve as another “room” in your home. And with a little imagination and elbow grease, you can create a private garden that might just become one of the most popular spaces in your home.

In Love Your Landscape, the experienced outdoor building pros at J&W Lumber share tips for making the most of your outdoor space with design ideas for creating a welcoming backyard and modern ways to lighten up your garden.



Landscape and Garden Accent Ideas

If you are looking for ideas on how to enhance your garden with accent pieces and design elements, we have you covered. Here are a range of landscape design ideas that enable you to maximize your outdoor space and create an inspired outdoor room.

Install a Retaining Wall

Adding a retaining wall to your yard or garden is a functional addition – and it can be a stylish one, as well. A retaining wall can help you eliminate sloping areas and create a beautiful raised garden bed that will give your yard a multi-level look. Aside from some nutrient-rich soil, you will need outdoor building materials to create the wall. Cinder blocks work, but another option is railroad ties. Treated railroad ties both hold back dirt and resist decay while providing a rustic look. If railroad ties aren't your thing, you can use beautiful softwoods like Alaskan Yellow Cedar, which are hardy enough to repel decay and can be cut to fit the dimensions of your garden.

Build a Bridge

An emerging trend in garden accents is to recreate the dry riverbed look with rocks, and add a decorative bridge as a finishing touch. Decorative bridges add a gorgeous touch to your yard, and they are perfect for breaking up landscape spaces. Options today include decorative bridges made from 100% California Redwood that enhance the look of any garden, dry creek bed, or yard. At J&W Lumber, our garden bridge kit is ready-to-assemble and can easily be constructed in under an hour.



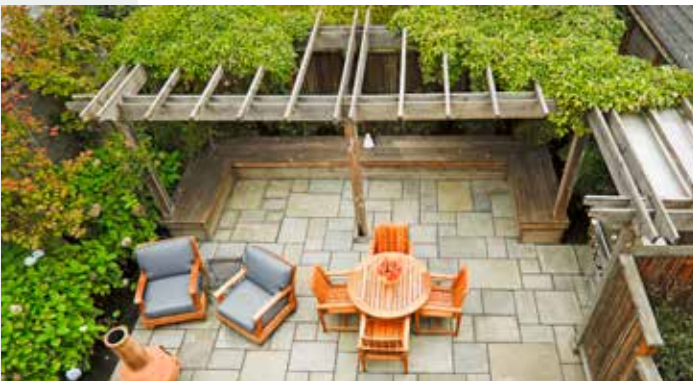
Put Up a Privacy Lattice

Well-placed lattice can provide both privacy and enhance the look of your yard or garden. It has a classic feel that creates a homey, natural space. Lattice is an affordable outdoor building material and can be installed in a variety of applications. Currently, our stores offer jumbo privacy lattice made from hardy redwood. We stock three separate patterns – diamond, square and triple weave – to offer the ultimate in both privacy and beauty. In addition, we carry two high end panels that are surfaced and made from clear cedar. These two types of panels have a more modern look compared to the rougher redwood alternatives.

For those looking to create a more substantial lattice structure – like a wall – there are pre-designed and pre-cut options from companies like Woodway Lattice, that offer pre-constructed Western Red Cedar panels with natural rot and pest resistance in a variety of styles. If you need help designing a fence or structure, our in-store professionals are able to help you design a custom structure for your home. With all the different rough materials in stock at our stores, this is a great way to create a high-end look at only a fraction of the cost. We are happy to provide referrals to contractors who can assist or manage the installation for the project.

Screen It

There's a new trend in outdoor building materials that might just turn your garden from a basic outdoor space into the Garden of Eden – the decorative outdoor screen by OutDeco. The screens are constructed from composite materials and are weather proof, insect proof and easy to install. OutDeco screens come in a variety of sizes, levels of privacy, and finishes, so you'll have plenty of options to choose from.



Add a Trellis

Trellises are often designed in an ornate fashion to create a unique look. If you are not a master woodworker, you may have a difficult time designing and building your own trellis. But fear not, there are plenty of pre-cut trellises to choose from on the market. Like the garden bridge, trellises should be constructed of rot-resistance wood, since they will need to face the elements. Redwood and cedar are great choices not only for their hardiness but for their undeniable beauty. We carry four different pre-designed trellis kits that include hardware, so you can build and install your new trellis in a matter of hours.

Build with Railroad Ties

Railroad ties are sturdy, nearly impervious to rot and insects, and rarely need to be replaced. Railroad ties are made from all different types of wood, including oak and various other hardwoods, to handle the pressure of 100-ton rail cars riding over them daily. Although you may not know exactly what type of wood you are getting in every tie, you can be sure it will hold up under pressure. If you need something sturdy and long-lasting – like a retaining wall or garden steps – railroad ties may be right for you.

Please Note: If you're building a raised garden box, or plan on having your project anywhere near an edible garden, do not use railroad ties. Chemicals from railroad ties can also leak into children's play areas, so if you're building a sandbox or other play area, it's best to use natural wood instead.



Add Form with Landscape Timber

Landscape timbers are a flexible and environmentally friendly alternative to rail road ties. They come in all different sizes and can be cut to your exact specifications. They are a natural product making them easy to work with and giving you the opportunity to make unique cuts for added effect. If you're building something that requires uncommon angles and shapes, landscape timbers are a great choice. Most landscape timbers are not structurally rated, so they are best suited for more decorative projects.

Landscape timbers are naturally rot and insect resistant – which comes in handy for outdoor projects exposed to the elements. They are a great non-toxic alternative to railroad ties, so you don't have to worry about chemicals seeping into your vegetable garden or your kids' playground.

Light Up Your Landscape

Landscape lighting can turn the night time darkness into a beautifully lit outdoor wonderland that accents the highlights of your landscape. From a small condo yard to a sprawling estate, there are lighting options for every property – and every taste. And with deck lighting styles from companies like Trex , you can find the perfect fit for your outdoor space.



Envision Your Space

With a variety of options from LED to floodlights, the first step in designing your lighting is deciding what you want to accomplish. Here are a few options for landscape lighting:

Flood an Area

Shining a soft light over an entire area can create a livable open space for entertaining – or simply showing off your beautiful property. A well-placed floodlight will cast a soft glow that allows you to enjoy the outdoors 24 hours a day.

Spotlight

You may have a section of your yard that is the crown jewel of your space, and you'd like to make it the highlight of your nighttime landscape. It could be a gazebo, your flower garden, or a Koi pond. A strong, direct spotlight will focus all eyes where you want them to go.

Wall Wash

Lighting placed in the ground and directed onto a wall of your home will announce your home's presence with authority throughout the evening, highlighting the beauty of its structure for all to see. Creatively-placed wall wash lighting will give your home a dual-personality in the day and the evening.



Decorative Lighting

Decorative lights aren't just for the holidays. Whether it's a string of lights on your deck, gazebo, or garden bridge – or overhanging LED lights across an outdoor dining space – decorative lights will create a festive atmosphere in your outdoor space 365 days a year.

Well Lights

Like highlighting a portion of your home with a wall wash, well lights can do the same for beautifully landscaped trees and bushes in your yard. Held in place by a removable spike, well lights illuminate bushes, foliage, and small structures to bring your landscape to life when the sun goes down.

Path Lights

The path less traveled can lead to wondrous discovery. But when it's dark outside, it's best to take the path most traveled – and light that path so people don't trip and fall into your flower bed. Path lights provide ambient lighting for walkways, and with various styles available, the right path lights will complement your surrounding décor. Solar is a great option for lighting your path, as there are no wires and virtually no installation involved.



Types of Lighting Available

However, it's not just styles that can vary. These days, there are a variety of lighting types as well.

Traditional

Traditional lighting, also known as incandescent bulbs, remain a good option for flood, wash and spot lighting. However, these bulbs are being gradually phased out in an effort to reduce electricity use. Increasingly, these bulbs are being replaced by Compact Fluorescent (CFL) and Light Emitting Diode (LED) bulbs for energy efficiency.


LED

Energy efficient and bright, LED lights are now the most popular lighting for landscape. With LED, you can have more lights that last longer – and you don't have to worry about bringing in an electrician to make sure your lights are up to code. The lights are “plug and play.” LED lights have a different feel than traditional bulbs – the most popular LEDs emit a clear, bright light that mimics daylight, but there are a variety of hues available, including a softer warm light and blue light, which produce a moonlight feel.

Solar

Sun-powered lighting has evolved, and Southern California is the perfect place to put solar lighting to use. From deck lighting to gazebo lighting to path lights, the SoCal sun will power your solar lights by day, so they can light the way by night.





At J&W Lumber, we've got ideas – and we can help you realize your dream garden. Whether you want to build structures from scratch or go with a prefabricated piece, we can help you choose the right materials. Contact us or stop into one of our showrooms today!

Create a Landscape You Love

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