

# LOW MAINTENANCE LANDSCAPE™

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN QUESTIONNAIRE

Customer name. Address & Zip code. Phone. Email. Date.

Please take a few minutes to answer these questions. This will help us create a perfect landscape design for you. If a question does not apply or you have no opinion, please skip it or write "NA". We are one of the few landscape companies dedicated enough to offer a questionnaire and we appreciate your cooperation. Please understand that you are hiring us to design a professional landscape plan in which you will be billed an agreed upon rate for our time. If you in turn hire our company to install or construct the landscape, the fee will be discounted from the installation.

1. What will be the primary uses of your new landscape? Examples include: (entertainment, active recreation, passive recreation, attract visitors or customers, visual enjoyment only, increase re-sale value, curb appeal, children play areas, picnics, gardening, sports, swimming, outdoor cooking, reading places, romantic places, (Circle what applies.) Other uses: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What characteristics would you use to describe your dream garden? Examples include: (busy, simple, lush, extravagant, plain, simplistic, medieval, curvilinear, formal, geometric shapes, symmetric, asymmetric, naturalistic, colorful, evergreen, self-sustainable, easy care) (Circle what applies.) Others \_\_\_\_\_

3. What are some functions or needs of your landscape? Screening/ create privacy from neighbors / street, shading the house, blocking wind, solar reduction (brightness), physical barriers, noise control, climate control, erosion control.(Circle what applies.) Others \_\_\_\_\_

4. What kind of garden themes are you interested in? .(Circle what applies.) \_\_\_\_\_

|                          |                           |                               |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| LOW MAINTENANCE GARDENS  | COLORADO / RUSTIC GARDENS | BERM & HILLSIDE GARDENS       |
| SELF SUSTAINABLE GARDENS | ANNUAL COLOR GARDENS      | ORNAMENTAL GRASS GARDENS      |
| NATIVE PLANT GARDENS     | HARDY TROPICAL GARDENS    | BROADLEAF EVERGREEN GARDENS   |
| NATIVE WOODLAND GARDENS  | DRY SHADE GARDENS         | EDIBLE & PERMACULTURE GARDENS |
| BIRD & WILDLIFE GARDENS  | ECLECTIC GARDENS          | DESERT, CACTUS & ROCK GARDENS |
| BUTTERFLY & BEE GARDENS  | MINIMALIST GARDENS        | COTTAGE & CUTFLOWER GARDENS   |

5. Are you interested in any of the following hardscape amenities? (Circle any that apply) \_\_\_\_\_

|                           |                            |                               |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| FLAGSTONE PATIOS          | STONE RETAINING WALLS      | OUTDOOR FIREPITS              |
| FLAGSTONE STEPPING STONES | FLAGSTONE SEATWALLS        | DRAINAGE SYSTEMS              |
| FLAGSTONE STAIRCASES      | STONE OUTCROPPINGS         | DRY RIVER BEDS / RAIN GARDENS |
| ANTIQUE BRICK PATIOS      | STONE EDGING / ACCENT ROCK | LANDSCAPE LIGHTING SYSTEMS    |
| DECORATIVE CONCRETE       | WATER GARDENS              | IRRIGATION SYSTEMS            |
| MANUFACTURED BLOCK        | PONDLESS WATER FEATURES    | DECKS, FENCES & PERGOLAS      |

6. Do you presently have an irrigation system? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you interested in an irrigation system or an estimate? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you interested in selecting plants that will tolerate drought? \_\_\_\_\_ How often during hot summer months would you feel comfortable watering? (Circle one that best fits your desires.)

1-2 days      2-5 days      5-10 days      10-20 days      Over 20 days      monthly / none

7. How much time do you presently spend outside in your garden relaxing \_\_\_\_\_ and working \_\_\_\_\_? How much time would you like to spend outdoors in a landscape that fits your needs? (Circle one.)

0-1 hr/week      1-2 hrs/week      2-3 hrs/week      3-5 hrs/week      5-10 hrs/week      over 10 hrs/week

8. Are there any wet areas in your landscape that need special attention? \_\_\_\_\_ Does water stand in this area after a rain for more than a couple days? \_\_\_\_\_ Does it stay moist during the summer? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you have dogs in your backyard? \_\_\_\_\_ What breed? \_\_\_\_\_ How many? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you know where the cable and phone utilities are buried in your yard? (front/back/side). \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have any privately owned buried lines that you need to mark for us. (dog fence \_\_\_\_\_, propane \_\_\_\_\_, front yard lamp \_\_\_\_\_, Landscape lighting \_\_\_\_\_ Outdoor outlet \_\_\_\_\_, irrigation lines \_\_\_\_\_, drainage \_\_\_\_\_, ect \_\_\_\_\_

11. What is your single favorite color in the landscape? \_\_\_\_\_ Are there any colors to avoid? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What are your favorite Flower color combinations? (Circle or write) \_\_\_\_\_  
.red/purple, red/pink, purple/yellow, blue/pink, red/blue, yellow/blue, orange/blue, pink/yellow, pink/purple, orange/red, white/blue

13. What are your favorite Foliage color or combinations? (Circle or write) \_\_\_\_\_  
.light green, med. green, dark green, olive, blue-gray, blue-green, maroon, purplish green, gold, chartreuse, variegated-white

14. Are there any particular plants or flowers that you would like to have in your landscape? (Please list)

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15. Are there some plants you wish to avoid or use in small numbers? (Please list) \_\_\_\_\_

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16. Some flowers require frequent dead heading or staking in order to look attractive. These include some of the most aesthetic flowers such as hydrangeas, roses, peonies, daylilies, & daisies. This does require extra time and commitment. Would you prefer flowers that require these techniques? (yes/no/some) \_\_\_\_\_

17. Do you have any small children? \_\_\_\_\_ If they play outside you may consider avoiding plants with thorns or plants that are poisonous if ingested. Familiar examples include barberry, yucca, rose, yew, and holly. Do you wish to avoid plants with these characteristics? (yes/no/some \_\_\_\_\_)

18. What landscape maintenance level do you want? If you are not a novice gardener, it is strongly recommended that you hire a professional garden maintenance person to help you with general plant care, weed control, and monitoring of potential problems with insect, disease, and environmental stress. We offer our Maintenance Program for all new customers. Are you planning on doing the work yourself, or hiring a professional garden maintenance person? \_\_\_\_\_ (Check one that best fits your desires.)

\_\_\_\_A. Very low maintenance: 1-3 checkups per year if professional is hired, seasonal clean-ups, and monthly deep watering during droughts, monthly weed control. Typical landscapes; native plant gardens, rock gardens, slow growing plants, compact shrubs, plants that tolerate drought, deep rooted plants, no dead-heading, little pruning (liriodendron, nandina, yucca, sedum, sumac, coralberry, plumbago, catmint, Russian sage, most grasses)

\_\_\_\_B. Low maintenance: 3-6 checkups per year if professional is hired, minor dead heading, seasonal cleanups, monthly weed control and weekly to bi-monthly watering during drought. Typical landscapes; low maintenance gardens, slow growing shrubs, and perennials that need yearly cutting to the ground, ornamental grasses, most groundcovers (boxwood, modern shrub rose, false indigo, black-eye susan, crapemyrtle, ect)

\_\_\_\_C. Medium maintenance: monthly checkups if professional is hired, monthly cleanups 1-2 months; monthly weed control, weekly watering during drought. Typical landscapes; Japanese gardens, free flowering old-fashioned perennial gardens, most fast growing and flowering shrubs, most shade perennials, moderate moisture and rich soil plants (forsythia, hosta, fern, annuals, hydrangea, barberry, iris, phlox, juniper, & peony).

\_\_\_\_D. High maintenance: monthly checks if professional is hired PLUS a few to several hours per week of your own weeding, watering, cleanup maintenance. Typical landscapes; water gardens, lush beautiful gardens, formal gardens, cut flower gardens, vegetable gardens, frequent flowering plants that need dead-heading, fast growing shrubs, plants sensitive to pH, high water and nutrient users, (most roses, mums, iris, daisy-like plants, tulips, azaleas, rhododendrons, most annuals, climbing vines, tomatoes, vegetables)

19. Please indicate which of the following characteristics you prefer. (Check mark one or two in each set.)

**Set A: PLANT SIZES:**

- Smaller planting sizes (4" pots), great for lower budgets, greater spacing and longer maturity, higher maintenance, less resistance to pests, drought, and weed infestations
- Larger planting sizes, higher budget, closer spacing and fast mature time, lower maintenance
- Mix of both. (larger sizes in areas of importance, smaller on less visible areas)

**Set B: PLANT VARIETIES:**

- Over 50% common plant varieties (lower cost, easy to find, fast growth, reliable performance data, many have potential insect and disease problems, many are overused and monotonous,)
- Over 50% uncommon plant varieties (unique, interesting, different, improved resistance to insects & diseases, lower maintenance, higher cost, more difficult to find & estimate)
- Use native plants whenever possible (good for our environment & wildlife, self-sustainable)

**Set C: PLANT FOLIAGE:**

- Over 50% evergreen plants, more winter interest, less flowers, more consistent year-round appearance, lends a more formal appearance, many ornamental grasses look nice in winter too.
- Over 50% deciduous plants, less winter interest, more spring/summer/fall appeal, spectacular flowers, lends a softer, more naturalistic appearance, may seem barren in winter.

**Set D: PLANT AESTHETICS:**

- Plants mainly grown for their flowers (slightly higher maintenance, longer blooming seasons)
- Plants mainly grown for their foliage (lower maintenance, some flowers as well, colored foliage)

**Set E: PLANT DENSITY OR SPACING:**

- Detailed, lush appearance (higher initial cost, smaller barren / void areas, lower maintenance)
- Simplistic, modest appearance (lower initial cost, larger barren/ void areas, more weed problems)

**Set F: PLANT TEXTURE:**

- Do you like fine textured plants (small leaves or multiple small flowers in clusters, grasses)
- Do you like coarse textured plants (large leaves or single large flowers, not as compact)
- Do you like textural and color contrasts (mix of fine and coarse textured plants,) (recommended)

**Set H: BLOOMING SEASON:**

- Over 50% blooms in Spring/Early Summer (more appeal in spring, needs cutting back; summer)
- Over 50% blooms in Late Summer/Autumn (looks attractive & green in spring, flowers later)

**Set I: LARGE AREAS BENEATH SHADE TREES:**

- Groundcover areas (higher initial cost, lower long term maintenance, less water, no mowing)
- Lawn (lower initial cost, higher long term maintenance and cost, mowing, watering, fertilizing)

**Set J: MULCH:**

- Rock mulch (longer life, higher initial cost, higher replacement cost, wind and erosion proof, dirt will accumulate after many years, hard to clean, difficult to add plants, extra fertilization needed)
- Wood mulch (shorter life, lower cost, low replacement cost. Wind and erosion resistant, Adds nutrients to soil as mulch breaks down. Weed problems may occur. Add new layer every 1-2 yrs)

**Set K: LANDSCAPE EDGING:**

- Non-continuous Natural Rock edging; Outcropping style, natural hillside appearance, irregular, informal (long life, med materials cost, low labor cost)
- Continuous Natural Rock edging; natural, irregular (long life, high materials cost, med. labor cost)
- Continuous Rectilinear block-shape Rock edging; formal (high materials cost, med labor cost)
- Steel edging (long life, medium material and labor cost, attractive, simple, formal appearance)
- No edging (lowest initial cost, clean look, easiest to mow next to, must be redefined yearly)

**Set L: ACCENT LANDSCAPE ROCKS / BOULDERS:**

- Incorporate natural rock into the landscape (higher cost, most attractive, natural appearance)
- No accent rocks (lowest cost, may seem barren in winter, can always be added later)

**Set M: DRAINAGE ISSUES:**

- Estimate underground french drain pipe, attach to gutter downspouts (higher cost, prevents erosion and bed wash-out if heavy rain occurs before bed is established, solves drainage problems)
- Estimate splash blocks or flat stones under downspouts (low cost, reduces erosion & wash-out)
- No drainage structures (lowest cost, may have erosion and wash-out problems in the future)

**20.** Desired planting effect: (please check one which you are leaning towards)

- Instant gratification (I want large shrubs and trees for immediate effect and don't mind spending the extra money right now / Want to enjoy it this year / I've waited long enough to decide to do this in the first place / Too old to wait / Need quick curb appeal; want to sell house with in a year or two)
- Delayed gratification (I like to watch them grow and willing to wait; need to watch my budget)

**21.** Do you have a rough idea of your budget? (Y/N) We provide two options for you to consider before hiring us to design a landscape. We do not want to under or over budget your landscape design. We want you to have an idea of what you will be investing in your landscape. We can work with any budget \$2,000 and up. Most project budgets range from \$5,000-\$15,000 on average. We have worked with \$20,000-\$50,000 budgets as well. We prefer to establish a rough budget and then design your landscape based on your needs. From that point, we can revise the design, separate the project into phases, add work to a project, or give you options to add or subtract items. We can propose an appropriate budget. Answer "no" to the next question if you want us to propose a reasonable cost to satisfy your project goals.

**22.** OVERALL PROJECT; Do you want to propose an overall estimated budget? (Y/N) Please circle the budget range that is closest to what you are willing to spend. If you choose this option, we will show you pictures of similar priced installed landscape projects. We can tell you what options are possible for your budget and give you options. Please see our website for more pictures. \_\_\_\_\_

Less than \$3000      \$3000 - \$7,000      \$7000 - \$12,000      \$12000 - \$25,000      \$25,000 - \$50,000

**23.** What areas of your landscape are the highest priority? (front, back, other) \_\_\_\_\_ Do you want us to divide project into phases? \_\_\_\_\_ How many phases? \_\_\_\_\_ Spread over how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

**24.** PHASES; Do you want to propose a yearly estimated budget per PHASE? Please circle the budget range that is closest to what you are willing to spend. If you choose this option, we will show you pictures of similar priced installed landscape projects. We can tell you what options are possible for your budget.

YEAR 1: \_\_\_\_\_ 3K 5K 7K 10K 15K      YEAR 2: \_\_\_\_\_ 3K 5K 7K 10K 15K      YEAR 3: \_\_\_\_\_ 3K 5K 7K 10K 15K

**25.** The following are example project budgets for particular landscape items. Add all of the desired budget items together to arrive at a total project budget range. FYI, your dollar stretches further per square foot with plants and mulch....less with rock and hardscaping. An average \$/SF cost for landscaping is \$6-\$12 per square foot. Bigger project areas = less \$ / SF... smaller areas = more \$ / SF.

- |                                      |                                 |                              |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Landscape Planting Beds = \$3-15K    | Flagstone Patios = \$3-10K      | Drainage Systems = \$2-7K    |
| Mulch only; Existing Beds = \$1-3K   | Stepping Stones = \$1-4K        | Rain Gardens = \$2-5K        |
| Plant Replacements only = \$1-3K     | Stone Staircases = \$3-8K       | Lighting System = \$3-10K    |
| Berms / Hillside Plantings = \$5-10K | Stone Retaining Walls = \$5-15K | Irrigation System = \$6-12K  |
| Buffalo Grass Installation = \$3-7K  | Rock Edging = \$1-3K            | Decks / Pergolas = \$8-20K   |
| Bamboo Screen Planting = \$3-7K      | Stone Firepits = \$1-5K         | Fences; Wood/Metal = \$5-15K |

**26.** Have you ever hired a professional landscape service to install a landscape in the past? \_\_\_\_\_ Were you satisfied with the results of their work? (yes/no) \_\_\_\_\_ If not satisfied, what were your complaints. \_\_\_\_\_ What did you like about their service? \_\_\_\_\_

**27.** Have you ever tried to design and install your own landscape? \_\_\_\_\_ Were you satisfied with the results of your own work? \_\_\_\_\_

**28.** Do you acknowledge that you are hiring Low Maintenance Landscape to design a landscape and/or hardscape plan at our current hourly rate? (Yes / No) \_\_\_\_\_ In addition to hiring us for professional design work, are you also interested in hiring our company to construct / install your landscape as well? \_\_\_\_\_ Or just parts of the project? \_\_\_\_\_ Or are you looking for a design that you can install yourself? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have the time, energy, and knowledge to install a landscape yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

**29.** How did you discover our company? (Please circle one or write.) \_\_\_\_\_  
.Friend    Family member    Neighbor    Home show    Yard sign    LML Employee \_\_\_\_\_ . Internet search engine    Website

**30.** Do you have any other notes or comments you would like to add? \_\_\_\_\_

Please call us for questions, to discuss landscape design options or refer to our website below. After completion, please email or mail this form to the address below. If mailing, you may fold questionnaire into thirds along dotted line, tape or staple together both corners, and mail with no envelope. If emailing, please scan and send as PDF or JPEG file and send to email below.

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Place  
Stamp  
Here

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