

Landscape Design Principles

Order: The overall framework of a design. The coordinated, compositionally attractive, assemblage of forms and materials.

Ways of organizing the elements of a design to achieve order and an overall sense of balance:

Symmetry: Establishes balance in a design composition by arranging elements of a design in an equal manner around one or more axes. Formal & logical feeling. One or two major vantage points.

Asymmetry: Creates balance with unequal parts by means of placement. Informal & casual.

Multiple vantage points.

Massing: Grouping elements into identifiable groups.

Unity: The internal feeling of oneness within the design. The harmonious relationship among the elements of a design composition.

Ways of creating unity in a design:

Dominance: Making one element (or group of elements) more prominent in comparison to other elements within a design via contrasting size, shape, color, texture, etc.

Repetition: Utilizing similar elements (or elements with similar characteristics) throughout a design composition. The commonality of all of the elements within a design.

Interconnection: Physically linking various elements of a design together to establish a visual relationship. The eye moves smoothly from one aspect to another without interruption.

Rhythm: Time and movement. Experiencing the spacing and timing of a composition much like a musical beat.

Ways of creating rhythm in a design:

Repetition: The repetition of elements in such a way as to create an obvious sequence.

Alternation: Certain elements of a sequence are changed or altered regularly.

Inversion: A type of alternation in which select elements are inverted or reversed for visual interest.

Gradation: A type of rhythm where there is a gradual change of the repeated elements of a sequence.

Source: *Residential Landscape Architecture: Design Process for the Private Residence*. Booth & Hiss. Prentice-Hall. 1991. Pages 203-231.