

JDW Quality Landscape & Design, LLC

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Choosing the Right Landscaper

Overview and Introduction

Whether you're looking for extensive commercial maintenance or a residential design, choosing the right landscaper can be a tough job! Since it doesn't take a whole lot to start a landscaping business, **there are a ton of landscapers to choose from**. It can seem quite overwhelming!

Using this Guide

We've designed this twelve page guide to help you evaluate local landscapers. Read through to get a feel for things to take into consideration. **Use our handy checklist on the last page to make the whole process super simple!**

Contact us at 443-QUALITY if you have any questions about anything you read in this guide!



The Three Sections in This Guide

Finding Qualified Landscapers - this section will teach you how to eliminate inexperienced landscapers and leave you with established, credible, local experts!

Choosing the Right Landscaper - once you've identified the landscapers worth speaking to, this section will help you interview and choose the right one for your project.

The Checklist - Be sure to have this list handy when you call and speak with each landscaper.

Thank you!

We sincerely appreciate you taking the time to review this resource we've created. **We're passionate about providing high-quality landscaping services** and hope this guide helps you find the right landscaping company for your project. Feel free to call us with any questions!



Call if you have any questions! We'd love the opportunity to speak with you about your upcoming project.

Great customer service is all I want, and their attention and response to my needs were excellent. Extra time was given to make sure I understood what was being done and that everything worked as it should



DAMIEN G.
Home Advisor Review

Finding Qualified Landscapers

The last thing you want to learn is that you've hired someone who is "practicing" on your property. **It doesn't take much to start a landscaping company** - a truck, a lawn mower, and a pair of gloves. So it's critical to find a company with experience.

Reputation Basics

Start by reading through the online reviews of any provider you're thinking of hiring. Sites like Google and Home Advisor are great for this. **Make sure to actually read the reviews, too, instead of just looking at the average rating.** They can be quite revealing!



Additional Considerations

Seeing lots of positive reviews and glowing testimonials isn't enough. **Be sure your provider has actually worked on projects similar to yours.** For instance, *Have they won any awards or been awarded any large, significant projects?*

Location and Response Time

We believe in hiring locally - both when it comes to our employees and in the businesses we choose to hire and support. While this is largely a personal choice, there are practical benefits, to hiring locally when it comes to choosing a landscaper.

Working with a local company ensures you're helping to stimulate your local economy. It also ensures your landscaping provider is personally familiar with the soil conditions, climates, and

any local regulations (they live in the same community, after all!) And, they tend to take more pride in their work, as they regularly get to see the properties they're responsible for.

NATURE HAPPENS!

When a storm rips a branch from a tree or and floods areas of your property, or the summer is scorching your plants, you'll want a provider that can respond in a timely manner. You want to make sure your landscaper can respond quickly if you have a problem so that it doesn't grow out of control. **Hiring locally also helps ensure your provider is able to get to your location quickly and efficiently.**

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Call if you have any questions! We'd love the opportunity to speak with you about your upcoming project.

JDW Quality landscaping did a phenomenal job on my yard! We have about two acres and I just had no idea what to do with it, not only were they easy to work with they gave me some brilliant ideas and I was impressed at how quickly they worked how reliable they are and how affordable it was compared to the other companies I looked at.



Choosing the Right Landscaper

Now that you've narrowed down your list of potential landscapers, it's time to get in touch. This section will help you learn what to look for when you're speaking with a landscaper about a project.



For Homeowners

As a homeowner, landscaping is a great way to express personality. The right provider will work in a holistic manner, turning your vision into a design that takes your dwelling structure, fixture styles, and grounds into consideration.

A good landscaper won't simply say "yes" to everything a client wants, especially if it could lead to long-term maintenance challenges or impact the health of your plants. **It's important you find a landscaper who has experience converting a vision into a practical design.**

Contemporary Homes

We typically recommend evergreens for contemporary homes or homes featuring stone in their design. This can lead to designs that emulate a natural mountain or forest setting.

Victorian Homes

Victorian styles work well with colorful and wistful additions. We love the look of crepe myrtle, magnolias and hollies, since they compliment scalloped siding and roofing, traditional rails, and columns.

Ranchers and One Story Homes

Ranchers and one story homes allow for more customization options, but do require attention to details like a plant's determinate height (how high they can grow) if we want to avoid additional maintenance on roofs and gutters.



Call if you have any questions! We'd love the opportunity to speak with you about your upcoming project.

Commercial Maintenance, Landscape Design, Landscape Installation, Tree Services, Irrigation Installation, Irrigation Repair, Mulching, Rock Beds, Leaf and Debris Removal, Trash Pickup and Removal, Seeding and Fertilization, Storm Water Management, Water Diversion, and more!

For Businesses

For businesses, there are additional considerations beyond just the look and feel of the landscaping. **It's important to consider how your landscaping will impact the use of your property, as well as your maintenance costs.** A good design will be a marriage between beauty and functionality.



Non-retail Locations

With manufacturing facilities, warehouses, and office buildings you'll want to consider your long term maintenance costs. **A good design should help reduce maintenance in low-visibility areas.** Don't neglect beautifying highly-visible areas, though, as this can have a positive impact on your employee and visitor perception.

Retail Locations

With retail locations, it's also important to consider reducing maintenance costs, but it's even more critical to identify the high-traffic, high-visibility areas of your property. By marrying beauty and function, you'll **ensure your landscaping becomes an asset - attracting visitors to your retail location without unnecessarily boosting maintenance costs.**

Efficient Installations

We must also consider the operating and logistical challenges of the project site, regardless of the type of commercial property. We want to make sure access isn't impeded for too long, and completely avoid blocking access to the property whenever possible.

We may have to coordinate with Miss Utility or local utility companies. We may find that we are unable to drive a certain truck over certain areas because it is too heavy. We may need to remove a fence in order to complete an installation.

All of these things and more come into consideration if we are to have a smooth installation.

So we'll engineer the step by step process of installing the landscaping with as much detail as the rest of the project. We're not going to do an installation without taking all of the job site's usage into account.



General Considerations

Service Intervals and Availability

In Maryland, it's recommended to perform weekly service between April and November. This will help keep the grass healthy, prevent weeds from becoming established, and ensure you have an experienced set of eyes on your property on a regular basis. *Does this provider have that type of availability? Can they commit to that service interval?*

Payment Options

Make sure to ask what type of payment and billing options the landscaper accepts. For instance, do they offer net billing for commercial accounts? Do

they accept all major credit cards, like Visa, Mastercard, Discover, and American Express? What is their policy on checks? Do they offer alternative payment solutions like Paypal, Venmo, or Zelle?

Your Current Design

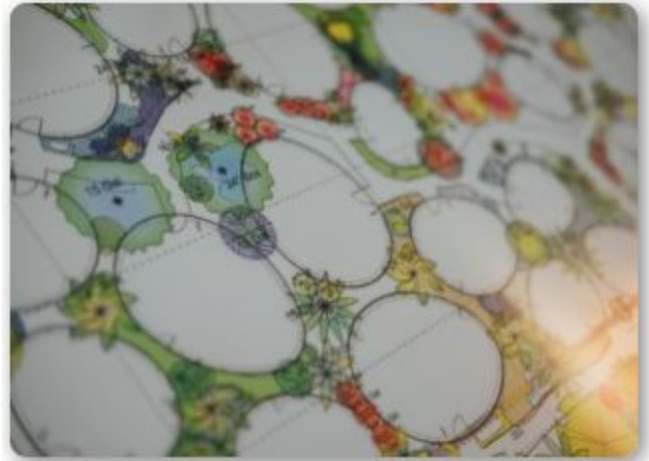
Your provider should take your current design and installation into consideration before ever presenting a proposal for a new one. **There are usually a few things the current design can tell us, including what mother nature wants to do.**

For instance, if there's an area of your lawn that doesn't grow so well, it isn't necessarily a matter of needing fertilizer or poor moisture. Oaks are very acidic, for example, and when they drop their leaves it can cause certain grasses to grow poorly. A proper assessment may show that area to need rye grass or even moss, both of which do well in acidic soils.

The assessment of your current property will yield the best installation and design consideration for your new landscape, so don't settle for a landscaper who makes quick, obvious recommendations.

Developing Your New Design

If you've come this far, we're certain you have a vision in mind. As stated above, **it's very important to choose a landscaper who isn't simply being a "yes man."** Many residential and commercial clients have ideas about their landscaping, but are simply unaware of how all of the elements of an installation come together for a beautiful, functional design. **Be sure to work with a landscaper that can take your vision and convert it into a design that meets your aesthetic goals without introducing maintenance and care challenges.**



It's important to think of this as a two step process: designing and engineering. Each are different. Your design is like a wishlist, indicating what we would achieve in a perfect world. Once your landscaper understands that, they can engineer a functional design. If so, you've found a designer that can make your dream a reality.

A few examples: we have had a client request a cypress installation just six feet from the house. We had to advise of potential damage to the foundation and siding, as the sap can be very acidic and can erode concrete, mortar, and more.

Some people like the look of land ties, but change their mind when they learn that they only last 5-8 years, even if properly treated and maintained.

Some customers like the look of birch trees - they are really beautiful in a properly planned landscape scenario thanks to the papery look of the bark. But they need a lot of water to remain healthy and thrive. We've had to recommend alternatives when clients have requested birch on properties without the right water content.

It's important your landscaper is able to provide creative alternatives to your wish list items when they're just not functionally possible.

Environmental and Local Regulatory Considerations

Another consideration is city and county certification procedures for businesses. Many times local regulators require a certain number of native plants or stormwater management plantings. These regulations exist to help minimize runoff from parking areas and streets into public storm drains. The reason these regulations are in effect is because of how the fertilization chemicals can throw off the homeostasis of the local ecosystem.

Residential properties near water have regulations, as well, which are becoming more stringent. Annapolis and Ann Arundel county have had these types of regulations in place since 2007. If you are close to the water you need to account for retention areas - meaning you'll need plants that consume the water before it is able to drain into local waterways. If these things aren't properly considered it can result in fines that continue to be assessed until the issue is resolved.

Long-term and Low-Maintenance

You'll want a company that designs landscaping installations that provide long-term, low-maintenance solutions. These are generally ideas and designs that account for how your plants and trees grow throughout the year.



For instance, would it be better to use rocks instead of mulch in some areas? Are tree selections being made based on beauty and maintenance requirements? Evergreen trees are great at reducing maintenance because they don't drop as many leaves, the leaves they do drop are much smaller, and contribute to soil health... all while reducing your dependence on leaf removal services.

Maples and oaks look beautiful, but they require more maintenance. There is the obvious need for leaf removal, but the leaves also contribute to high acidity levels in the soil, which results in a need for soil amendments and fertilizations.

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Call if you have any questions! We'd love the opportunity to speak with you about your upcoming project.

Servicing Annapolis, Caitinsville, Columbia, Elkridge, Glen Burnie, Hanover, Linthicum, Linthicum Heights, Pasadena, Severn, Severna Park, and the entire Baltimore Metro Area

The Checklist (print this page)

Provider name: _____

Date: _____

- Are you happy with this provider's reviews online?
 - Do they have good reviews on sites like Google and Home Advisor?
 - Did you read a few reviews and like what you saw?
- Is your provider local and rooted in the community / locally owned?
- Are appropriate payment options available, like net billing/invoicing, credit cards, checks, etc?
- Did this provider win any awards or manage any substantial, noteworthy projects?
- Has this provider designed and installed similar installations before?
 - Did this provider take the time to evaluate your property?
 - Did this provider discuss local regulations and requirements?
 - Did this provider suggest installation components that are specific to your type of building?
 - Was this provider a "yes man" or did they provide guidance and alternative solutions?
 - Did this provider take the time to explain why elements on your wishlist would or would not work?
- Has this provider maintained similar installations before?
 - Did this provider discuss long-term and low-maintenance solutions?
 - Is your provider able to consistently provide weekly service during peak seasons?
 - Does this provider have the ability to respond quickly in the event of an emergency?
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- Did this provider take the time to learn about how your property is used to help coordinate the installation properly? IE asking about peak hours of traffic, working with you to coordinate the best times to have crews on site, etc. ?

Additional Information and notes:

