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Thank You for your trust and continued support.

Glenn

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Landscaping Mistakes and how to avoid them!

With the arrival of spring and summer many homeowners head for the outdoors. As well as taking care of spring clean up duties and a multitude of maintenance chores - many will start into gardening and landscaping projects.

Whatever your landscaping goal... attracting birds and other wildlife to a backyard sanctuary, adding colour, creating a theme garden, or improving the curb appeal - and value - of your home, its easy to make 'mistakes'.

Here are some of the most common landscaping mistakes, and a few tips on how to avoid them.

Guarded Entries.

Accentuating an entry pathway or doorway by planting shrubs on each side usually isn't a good idea - especially when the now innocent little shrubs will eventually grow to block the entry! Instead, consider planting on one side only, which allows the shrubs room to mature - and you opportunities to; reshape or enlarge the bed, add shrubs or other perennials, add a garden focal, or annuals for a seasonal display of colour.

Crew cut Plants.

Its not a good idea to locate a large shrub or small tree where you'll be required to constantly 'flat-top' prune it. Here again, remember that those pretty little shrubs and trees will grow! *Right now* it may look great tucked in against the foundation or under a window - but as it matures it will grow to obstruct the view and light from reaching the indoors - become misshapen as it crowds against

foundation walls, or causes damage to facia and eaves....and, *you'll find yourself cutting off the top!*

Hodgepodge.

A plant collector's landscape may be interesting, or it may create visual pandemonium. We most often choose plants based on their colour - either because we like the colour or we feel the colour will complement the exterior finish of our house. Keep in mind that colour is only one aspect of creating an appealing landscape design, repetition of plant form and texture are also important as they provide 'links' bringing landscape and architectural areas together.

Gluted Gardens. Quite often we purchase plants that are all about the same size initially, but grow to many different sizes. But, to keep our planting visually 'nice' we place all the plants at the same spacing because it looks 'right'. Instead, try this approach; choose larger plants for the key landscape areas, then fill-in with 'temporary' annual flowers/plants (annuals can be planted in the ground or in containers). Add more shrubs or perennials as the larger plants mature.

All in a Row.

It's a natural tendency to plant tall plants in back and

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Greetings!

I'm sending you this Newsletter with hopes that you find it interesting and informative

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Need advice?

Whether you're buying, or selling - or thinking of buying or selling...talk with your Realtor who is an expert and can provide you with professional advice and explanation. Ask about 'curb appeal' and the impact it can have on your home's value.



Continued from the Front Page

Landscaping Mistakes and how to avoid them!

a row of shorter plants in front of them. Instead, group plants in masses or sweeps, stagger plant heights in the beds and let a ground cover 'creep' along the edges or a vine to 'flow' around some of the plants.

The Foundation is Showing.

Resist the urge to snuggle plants close to house walls or plant to cover every inch of the foundation. You'll be sorry for having done so when it's time to paint, put up ladders to clean windows, access the roof, eavestroughs, or put up lights at Christmas! Also, with the foundation surrounded by garden beds it becomes difficult to gauge whether or not the ground is sloping 'away' from the house. Maintaining the slope ensures that water is directed *away from your home*, rather than towards it, where it can seep in.

The Value of Curb Appeal

The impact value of a lawn and landscaping that complements the appearance of a home is an important part of that positive first impression created when a prospective buyer pulls up in front of the house.

In general, improvements that are visible - *add 'curb appeal' and beautify a home* - will add more value than those less visible improvements that do not beautify. Here are 3 of the most important concepts to keep in mind when making an improvement to the exterior of your home.

- 1 the visibility of the improvement
- 2 its relative value to other homes in the area/neighbourhood
- 3 its degree of desirability according to buyer preferences

This 'n That

Calling all Volunteers!

Don't worry if you feel you don't have the time to volunteer on a regular basis. Many organizations and groups will welcome your assistance whether you have time to help for one season, a special event, a single day, or even a single afternoon. Maybe it's to help out at an annual fundraiser or special event, an afternoon spent sorting donations for the local library's table sale, a day spent helping to groom a walking or hiking trail, or an afternoon spent selling tickets at an area mall.

Need a reason to volunteer?...here are just a few

- ❖ Give back
- ❖ Learn new skills
- ❖ Build friendships and have fun
- ❖ Believe in/support a cause
- ❖ Make a difference in your community
- ❖ Be a good role model for your children
- ❖ Satisfaction from accomplishment
- ❖ If not you then WHO?



In the Garden

One of the benefits of having a perennial garden is picking fresh flower bouquets right outside your door! If a supply of summer long bouquets is something you'd like more of - keep these pointers in mind when choosing shrubs and perennials for your garden and landscaping beds. There are three main elements in a floral arrangement - the ideal cutting garden will incorporate all three.

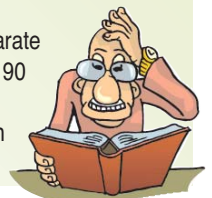
- ▶ Line materials; branches like forsythia, japonica, peony which add shape and drama to an arrangement.
- ▶ Greenery; ferns, lady's mantle, herbs, even some vegetables like asparagus lend themselves well to cut arrangements.
- ▶ Flowers

For a cutting garden, you'll want plants with long, strong stems and flowers that lend themselves to a variety of arrangements. Here are a dozen or so favourites - suitable for all Canadian zones.

**Globe Thistle & Sea Holly Coneflower Siberian Iris
Lilies Shasta Daisy Foxglove Yarrow Asters
Coreopsis Hybrid Tea Roses Peonies**

Words

- ◉ The study of word origins is called etymology.
- ◉ **'Second string'** meaning 'replacement or backup' dates back to the Middle Ages when an archer always carried a second string in case the one on his bow broke.
- ◉ **'Long in the tooth'**, meaning 'old', was originally used to describe horses. As horses age, their gums recede, giving the impression that their teeth are growing. The longer the teeth look, the older the horse.
- ◉ **'Strengths'** is the longest word in the English language with just one vowel.
- ◉ The word **'set'** has the largest number of separate definitions in the English language, with over 190 definitions according to the Oxford Dictionary.
- ◉ The shortest complete sentence in the English language is **'Go'**.



Parenting

The quickest way for a parent to get a child's attention is to sit down and look comfortable.

Lane Olinhouse

Few things are more satisfying than seeing your own children have teenagers of their own.

Doug Larson



"I'd like to take an adult-ed course. It doesn't need to be educational - as long as there are adults."

If evolution really works, how come mothers only have two hands?

Milton Berle

Human beings are the only creatures on earth that allow their children to come back home.

Bill Cosby

It is amazing how quickly kids learn to drive a car, Yet are unable to understand the lawnmower, snowblower or vacuum cleaner.

Ben Berger



'That's it...good boy, find the floor.'

Mother's Day - Sunday May 12th ~ Father's Day - Sunday June 16th

DO-IT-YOURSELF



Do-it-yourself projects can be enjoyable and very rewarding, but, you must take proper precautions to prevent injuries.

Safety comes first!

Protect your back

- ✓ When you need to move heavy items, use the tools the pros rely on; a wheelbarrow, dolly, or an extra set of helping hands.
- ✓ When you do lift - lift properly. Keep your back straight and your legs bent whenever lifting anything; whether it's lightweight or heavy.
- ✓ When carrying materials or supplies, do so in a way that's least harmful to your back. Usually this means keeping materials waist high and centered between your legs.

Dress properly

- ✓ Wear long sleeves and pants. Use safety gear; gloves, safety glasses, ear plugs, for certain projects a hard hat is warranted.
- ✓ Proper footwear is important - choose footwear suited to the task at hand; running shoes are well suited when you're painting - if you're handling lumber or drywall, steel-toed work boots are the better - and safer - choice.

Ladders

- ✓ Set the ladder close to your work. If your hips go outside the ladder's side rails, you are overreaching and risking a fall.
- ✓ When setting up a stepladder, make sure all four legs are supported and the spreaders are fully opened.
- ✓ Lean a straight or extension ladder against the house so that the distance from the foundation of the ladder's base is about one-quarter of the ladder's height. Check to see that the tops and bottoms of both ladder rails are making firm contact.
- ✓ Always face the ladder when ascending or descending. Grip the ladder firmly with both hands and place your feet squarely on each rung.
- ✓ Do not turn around on the ladder or proceed as if you were on a conventional stairway.
- ✓ Don't stand on the top of a stepladder. On a straight or extension ladder, stop when your shoulders are even with the top of the rails.
- ✓ Don't carry tools loosely in your pocket; they could fall on someone below. Before carrying any materials up a ladder, make sure you have a secure place to put them when you get to the top.
- ✓ Wear slip-resistant footwear when working on any ladder.



Protect your skin

- ✓ Pros always exercise extreme caution when working with chemicals - so should you. Even if a chemical appears harmless, the chances it could rub off someplace else, such as in your eyes or on the kids or a pet, is great enough that extreme caution should be practiced at all times.
- ✓ Avoid touching your eyes and even your clothes, as you might forget you rubbed off some chemicals on your clothes and then use your shirt to wipe sweat off your face.
- ✓ Sand and aggregate can be abrasive to your skin. Wear long sleeved shirts and pants, and water-proof gloves.

Protect your eyes

Whether you're welding, laying cement, working with a compressor, sanding drywall or working on a rooftop, be very aware of the dangers and **always, always**, wear safety goggles or glasses.



House Plants

Last minute reminder

If you have house plants needing to be transplanted - now is the time to do it. The best time to repot indoor plants is from February through May. Your plants should be transplanted into a 'slightly' larger, and deeper, container if roots are; stretching out of the drain holes, or, taking up more than 3/4 of the container. **Here's how to Repot.**

Cover the drainage hole(s) on the 'outside' of the new planter with a piece of tape. Fill the pot with enough potting soil so that the top of the root ball of your plant will sit appx 2.5cm (one inch) below the rim of the planter.

Remove the plant from its original pot and centre it in the new container. Fill in around it with more potting soil - but be sure not to cover the top of the root ball with the new soil. Gently work the soil in around the sides of the plant in order to

loosen any clumps of soil and remove air pockets, but don't compact or try to pack down the soil.

Remove the tape and water the plant thoroughly - until excess begins seeping out of the drainage hole(s).

Before putting away your potting soil, check the soil level in your new container, watering will likely have caused the soil to settle, if so, top it up with a bit more soil.

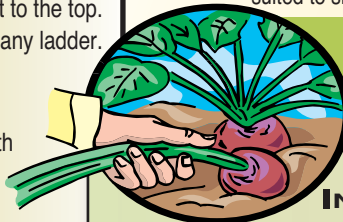


To encourage birds to nest in your yard this spring, be sure to make nest building materials like string, yarn, and fluff from your dryer screen available. Since birds will defend their nesting territories, put the materials out in more than one location. Keep nesting materials available all summer, since some birds build more than one nest during breeding season.



Fast Facts Radishes

- ▶ Radishes are a member of the mustard family (Cruciferae) - explains their sharp taste!
- ▶ Radishes are related to broccoli and watercress.
- ▶ Radishes can be red, white, black, purple, rose and even lavender.
- ▶ Nutritionally; although more than 90% water, radishes contain as much potassium as bananas, are an excellent source of vitamin C and folate, and a good source of magnesium.
- ▶ Storage; remove and discard leaves, place radishes in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator for up to a week.
- ▶ In the garden; radishes are a cool-season crop and do not do well during hot summers. They will tolerate partial shade, require very little room and mature quickly. They are well suited to small vegetable gardens, mixed into flower beds and containers.



Garden Fresh! Radish Pickles

A quick, easy, and crunchy side dish....Makes 6 portions.

INGREDIENTS

6 cups	1.5 Litres	thinly sliced radishes
3/4 tsp	4mL	salt
3 Tbsp	45mL	rice vinegar
1 1/2 tsp	7mL	sugar
1 1/2 tsp	7mL	sesame oil
1 1/2	1 1/2	green onion sliced, green part of the onion only

PREPARATION

- Into a bowl, toss radishes and salt.
- Let stand for 15 minutes.
- Drain and gently squeeze out liquid.
- Add vinegar, sugar, sesame oil and green onion.
- Toss to combine.
- Refrigerate covered until ready to serve.

Nutritional Info per serving Calories: 30

Sodium: 171mg Calcium: 2mg Iron: 3mg Vitamin A: 1mg Vitamin C: 45mg Folate: 15mg

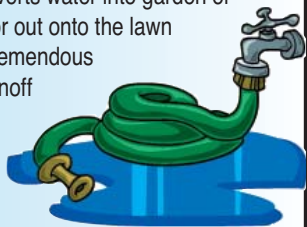
WATER

Homeowners know that water around a home can lead to problems - including leaks, flooding and mold growth - all problems that negatively impact a property's value. When we don't manage the water on our properties with care, we can damage the environment. Runoff water that doesn't get absorbed into the ground finds its way into storm sewers or directly into waterways - carrying sediment that can clog streams and chemicals from cars, fertilizers and other human activities that damage aquatic ecosystems.

One of the biggest problems with runoff is that it has no where to go if the ground around your home is covered by hard surfaces like cement or asphalt.

Every homeowner can help by simply making use of rainwater.

- Consider replacing impervious surfaces around your home with something the water can seep through to enter the soil below. Paving stones or interlock bricks are good alternatives to concrete or asphalt.
- Make your yard a sponge. When beautifying your yard, consider using plants native to your area - they develop a more extensive root system and absorb more runoff than a lawn.
- Planting trees is also helpful, their immense root systems effectively absorb water over a large area. But, only a small amount of water goes for producing food. The rest is returned to the atmosphere through a process called 'transpiration'. A mature white birch tree with approx 200,000 leaves can give off as much as 3,400 litres (900 gallons) of water throughout a summer day!
- Bare soil can be as hard as concrete. If you have bare areas but don't want to create more lawn or garden beds, cover the ground with mulch, wood chips or gravel. This will help control runoff by allowing water to seep into the soil rather than running over it.
- Litres of water come off your roof over the course of a year. Divert it for your own use.
 - ✓ Use rainbarrels to collect water that you can then use to water your garden, flower boxes or deck planters.
 - ✓ Extending leaders from downspouts effectively diverts water into garden or shrub beds or out onto the lawn - keeping a tremendous amount of runoff out of the local drainage systems.



Watering. Water your lawn deeply enough to soak the roots. This promotes deep root growth which increases its ability to resist drought. Whether using water from your rain barrel or sprinkler, water slowly so that it penetrates the lawn rather than running off onto your driveway or sidewalk. Best to water in the morning.

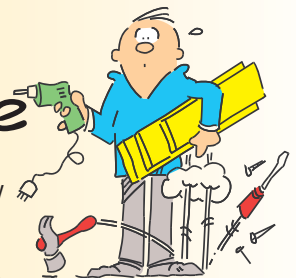
Natural Lawn Care

Grasscycling... is leaving grass clippings on your lawn after you mow. Any lawn mower will cut clippings short enough to grasscycle. You should only take 1/3 of the grass blade height when you mow so that the clippings will not be too long. If clumping occurs simply run over the clippings a second time, or rake clumps out into a thin layer. Grass clippings are rich in nutrients that are returned to the soil about 14 days after you mow.

Fertilizers. Lawns need fertilizing in order to remain healthy, lush and green. Nitrogen produces rich green growth, phosphorus stimulates root growth while potassium fortifies the plants. Your own compost, composted leaves and composted manures are good sources of natural fertilizer for your lawn. Avoid chemical fertilizers - if you do buy commercially, choose only natural source products.

Around the House Maintenance

Spring is the ideal time to perform an exterior check of your home...catching - and correcting - minor problems before they become **Bigger - and much more expensive** - problems!



Air Conditioners

Disconnect electric power to the outdoor condenser on your air conditioning unit and clear it of matted clumps of leaves and debris using a vent brush, power blower, or the brush attachment on your vacuum cleaner. If the cooling fins are exposed, be careful not to bend them. Vacuum the grille and register inside the house to ensure good airflow, and change your furnace filter.

Doors and Windows

Now is the time to wash the windows, both inside and out. Remove and wash screens. Clean window and door frames - while cleaning, check outdoor caulking on windows and weather stripping around doors. If they've suffered damage over the winter, remove and replace the caulking and/or weather stripping. On doors, check and lubricate hinges and locks.

Eavestroughs & Gutters

Clear gutter of leaves and debris and check them for corrosion, joint separation, and loose fasteners. Flush out downspouts and leaders. Ensure leaders extend at least 1.25 metres (4 feet) to direct water away from the foundation.

Foundations

Hairline cracks in foundation walls might be the result of concrete curing or minor settling and are not automatically cause for alarm. Mark them with tape and check them again in a few months. If the cracks are stable, fill them with an epoxy-injection system - if the cracks have worsened, it may be a good idea to contact a professional.

■ Check that the ground around the foundation slopes away from the house (4 centimetres per .5 metre - about 1 inch per foot and a half). Be particularly vigilant if you have shrub and flower beds butting up against foundation walls - seasonal raking, hoeing, planting or mulching can significantly alter the slope - causing water to collect and seep in against foundation walls.

■ Clear the area of leaves and other debris in which rodents and insects can nest.

Roofs

Leaks typically occur around chimney flashing, skylights or other openings into the roof surface. Leaks are often easiest to spot in the attic; inspect the rafters for water stains. If you notice staining, keep in mind that roof 'patching' is often a job best left to a professional.

■ Examine the siding under roof eaves, and the ceilings in the rooms below, for water or discoloration, - indications that ice dams might have created leaks along the roof edge.

■ Using a pair of binoculars, inspect the roof for cracked, curled, or missing shingles. If there are parts of the roof not visible from the ground, you'll have to get out a ladder to visually check those spots.

Wooden Decks

Rid your deck of moss, mildew and mold. A brisk scrub, using a stiff bristled brush with a bit of an environmentally responsible mildew or mold remover, should do the trick. Pressure washers are also effective - but remember to use caution - pressure washing wooden decks can cause damage.