

## Rock Gardens for Landscaping

Your landscape may not be perfect, but that's just fine; a rock garden can help to improve one in many ways. You may have a space on your lawn that has too much shade and so you can't grow any plants there, or maybe you have a space which is too dry because rain can't get to it or maybe because you're in a drought. On the other hand, you may have too much rain, making your yard very soggy and swampy, too much so to support normal vegetation. A rock garden can help you out in any or all of these areas. Planning well is the first step to success with a rock garden, especially for a novice. If you find that your land is overly rocky, then just get rid of some of those rocks and arrange the remainder in a pattern you find aesthetically pleasing. Including a few shallow-rooted plants can pleasantly break up all that rock with a little green. But the area may have rocks set too densely, in which case, you could border the area with something artificial, like railroad ties, or something natural, like tracing it with small plants. If you have hills on your land, it could cause erosion in your soil. Including a rock garden can strategically stop erosion while improving the appearance of your yard. You should try for rocks which are indigenous to your location; it will provide that demure, natural look. If you have an area which is too dry or has soil which just isn't fertile, you've got another great place for a rock garden. Another option here is the Japanese rock garden. That's the kind where you use rocks and sand to create a pattern in the ground; if your area has a typically dry climate, then this will look completely intentional instead of continuing an ugly spot on your lawn. Some call this kind of rock garden by the name "Zen garden," but that's a misnomer; the two aren't exactly alike. If you have exceptionally shady areas, then include some shade-dwelling plants in your rock garden there. Instead of just plants that grow among rocks, you would have plants that grow in the shade interspersed to provide a more personalized and thoughtful decoration to your yard. But regardless of what sort of land you have, you can benefit from having a rock garden. Is your property vast and seemingly impossible to mow? Breaking some of that up with rock gardens can save you time when mowing the lawn, but it would also provide some lovely decorations to your yard. Just because you break up your land, that doesn't mean you don't care about it or for it; but it gives you time to focus your attention while adding beauty to your landscape. You could even include other rock garden projects, like a pond and waterfall. Lastly, have you ever heard of pointillism? It's an art term. It's what happens when an artist, such as Georges Seurat in his *Un dimanche apr s-midi   la Grande Jatte*, makes a larger picture by making many small dots with his brush. You could do this yourself with stones; turn your lawn into an art gallery for your rock garden paintings!

## About the Author

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