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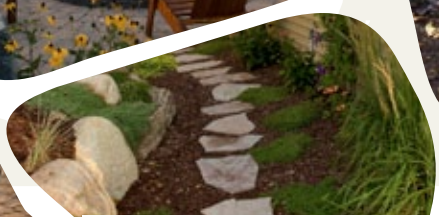
Aftercare Cards



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Care of Newly Planted Landscape Plants

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There is always a period of adjustment when new plants are added to your landscape:

2 - 3 Weeks.....Flowering annuals and garden vegetables

1 - 2 Months.....Perennials

1 - 2 Growing Seasons.....Trees, shrubs

Choose the right spot

Choose a spot where the plant has the specific conditions it needs to thrive, such as the correct level of light, soil composition, soil pH and air circulation.

Gradually Acclimate New Plants and Trees

Introduce new plants to their new environment gradually. For instance, if they are coming from a greenhouse environment keep them sheltered from direct midday sun for a few days and out of the wind until they are ready to be planted.

Water As Needed

New plantings need to develop more complete root systems. While they do that make sure they receive adequate watering. A general rule of thumb is to make sure the planting area is kept moist, but not consistently wet.

Tom's Tip

Pull back the mulch around the plant, stick your finger into the soil around the root-ball, if it's moist you're good, if it's nearly dry give it a thorough, gentle soaking

Enjoy Your Landscape

Following these simple guidelines will get your new landscape plants off to the best start possible—preparing them to be drought resistant, hardy, and low maintenance.

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Watering your Landscape the First Year (Heavy Soil)

In general landscapes need about 1" of water per week (rainfall + irrigation).

Watering can be more of an "art" than hard & fast rules... you'll need to consider many variables, such as:

- Size of the root-ball - if it is larger, it will need more water
- Sun exposure - is it in full sun or shade?
- Wind - is it in an open area where winds may dry out the soil faster than a protected area?

Tom's Tip:

Pull back the mulch around the plant, stick your finger into the soil near the root-ball, if it's moist you're good, if its nearly dry give it a good, gentle soaking.

Climate Conditions	Daytime Highs	Watering Guide
Wet	N/A	Unnecessary to water
Cool	Under 60° F	As needed - once a week
Warm	60° - 80° F	First month after planting: every 4th day After first month: once a week
Hot	Over 80° F	First month after planting: every 2nd day After first month: once a week

Tom's Frequency Tip:

It is better to water less frequently but more thoroughly than to water more often and less thoroughly. Why? Waiting until the soil near the root-ball is almost dry gives the plant an opportunity to grow its roots into the soil in search of water – resulting in healthier, more drought resistant plants.

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Watering your Landscape the First Year (Light Soil)

Watering your Landscape the First Year (Light Soil)

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- Size of the root-ball – if it is larger, it will need more water
- Sun exposure – is it in full sun or shade?
- Wind – is it in an open area where winds may dry out the soil faster than a protected area?

Tom's Testing Tip

Pull back the mulch around the plant, stick your finger into the soil around the root-ball, if it's moist you are good, if it's nearly dry give it a thorough, gentle soaking.

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Caring for New Sod

New sod needs regular watering until the root system is fully established — usually one full growing season, but maybe more in heavy soil.

Weeks 1 and 2:

Soak it daily with ½" of water (about ½ hour)

Week 3:

Soak it every other day with ½" of water (about ½ hour) — or if it is very dry, then every day to ½" (about ½ hour)

Tom's Tip:

Test the sod periodically by checking the underside. It should be consistently saturated during the first 2 weeks.

Week 4 and beyond:

Soak with 1" of water (about 1 hour) once or twice a week as needed.

First mowing:

When the sod is 4-5" high. Mow down to 3".

Fertilizer:

Wait 60 days after the sod is laid to apply fertilizer. Summer sod does well if it is fertilized in September. Sod laid in the fall should not be fertilized until the following May.

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Landscape Mulch

Benefits:
Helps to retain moisture, minimize weed growth and the spread of disease, enrich the soil, gradually transition plants during freeze/thaw cycles, reduce erosion, prevent soil compaction and add beauty to the landscape.

Apply:
Any time during the growing season.

Type of Plant	Depth	Type of Mulch
Perennials	2-3"	Shredded leaves or shredded bark or woodchips
Annuals	1-2"	Organic mulch that breaks down quickly and is tilled into the soil each year
Ground covers	2-4"	Compost, well-rotted manure, woodchips or shredded bark

Minimize weeding:

- Clear weeds from beds before applying mulch and avoid letting grass clippings, tree leaves and seedpods drift into beds.
- Apply a pre-emergent such as Preen around May 1st and again around July 15th.
- Occasional weeding will still be necessary during the growing season
- For very weedy areas apply RoundUp weed killer with a garden sprayer once a month

Replenish:
Over time mulch decomposes and settles. Replenish to the original depth when only a thin layer remains.

Tom's Tip: Avoid fabric weed barriers

They are costly, ineffective, unsightly and counter productive—because they actually contribute to erosion and prevent decomposed organic matter from returning to the soil.

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Pruning Basics

Reasons for pruning

- Promote plant health by removing dead or dying branches that have been injured, diseased or insect infected
- Encourage flower and fruit development
- Maintain a hedge shape or desired tree form
- Improve plant appearance and controls plant size
- Protect people and property from hazards
- Give young plants and trees a strong structure for lasting growth and strength

What needs pruning?

- Large established trees
- Evergreens
- Hedges
- Landscape shrubs
- Some perennials

Types of Tools

- **Pruning shears** - usually short handled; by pass shears (with blades that pass by each other like a scissors) make the cleanest cuts on larger branches
- **Anvil pruning shears** - work more like wire cutters, with a sharp blade that pinches the branch against a wide flat surface
- **Hedge shears** - gas powered, electric, battery operated and manual
- **Lopping shears** – long handled
- **Pole pruners** - to extend your reach
- **Tree saws** – in various styles and sizes

Quick Tips

- The right tool is the one that makes a clean, easy cut
- Avoid removing more than 1/3 of a plant in a season
- In Minnesota stop all pruning between August and the first hard frost. Pruning stimulates plant growth, and late season growth may make the plant less winter hardy.
- Flush cuts can delay healing and allow decay to take hold. The trick is to leave the branch collar intact – without leaving a stub.
- To shorten a branch make a slant cut (45°) about a quarter inch above a bud because new growth will occur at the site of the last remaining bud.
- Learn about the pruning timing, methods, and tools that are best suited to each type of plant, hedge, tree and shrub in your landscape.

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Home Composting

Composting is nature's way of breaking down organic matter into a rich, earthy substance that can be used to amend soil or as mulch in order to improve plant growth.

Benefits

- Reduces organic waste
- Adds nutrients (including nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorus) to garden soil
- Loosens clay soils and helps sandy soils retain moisture
- Reduces need for garden fertilizers

What to compost

- Browns or carbon-material
  (dry leaves, straw, sawdust, office paper)
- Greens or nitrogen-rich material (kitchen scraps, green grass clippings, egg shells)
- Avoid meat and dairy scraps, household pet droppings, oils, diseased plants, or weeds that have gone to seed.

The ideal ratio = 3 parts brown to 1 part green. Too much brown slows the composting process down, and too much green creates odors.

Containers

You can compost in a pile, but a container or bin (plastic or one built from natural materials) helps to retain heat and moisture. You may even want to use 2 bins, so by the time the second one is filled, the first is ready for landscape use.

Add water and aeration

For the process to work and to allow the hundreds of different organisms (including bacteria, fungi, worms and insects) to do their work compost needs water and air. Rain and decomposing greens add moisture naturally – but you may need to water occasionally. Water enough to keep the compost moist but not soggy. For aeration, turn the pile once or twice a month.

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Winter Mulch (optional)

In the Fall

Winter mulch is not a necessity but when you feel it is warranted, apply shredded leaves, straw, or pine needles to a **depth of 4-6"** in the fall after the ground has frozen. In Minnesota mulch does not keep the ground from freezing, but it does put plants into dormancy gradually for the winter, and brings them gradually out of dormancy in the spring.

In the Spring

Pull mulch away from plants in spring as the ground begins to thaw and before molds can grow—but keep it handy in case freezing temperatures reappear and you need to temporarily reapply.

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Paver Care

Snow and Ice Removal

Concrete pavers can be plowed and shoveled just like asphalt or concrete pavements. It is best to use plastic blades on a snow plow and raise blades on a snow blower. Do not use sharp ice choppers, sodium chloride (rock salt), or calcium chloride – as they can harm pavers. Use any product with the active ingredient Calcium Magnesium Acetate to melt ice.

Moss or Mold

Use liquid bleach diluted in water (10 parts water to 1 part bleach). For a more permanent solution correct the moisture or shade problems.

Joint Sand

Magnolia typically uses polymeric sand, so regular maintenance is not required.

Sealer

Magnolia recommends sealer to help with wear and protect stains, but it is not required.

Preventing Weeds and Ants

Remove weeds by hand or with biodegradable herbicides that won't harm adjacent vegetation or pollute water supplies. Sealers and/or polymeric sand can prevent weeds from growing or ants from entering.

Color and Wear

Some wear and loss of color is inevitable over time, but regularly cleaning and sealing the surface of concrete pavers can moderate it.

Removing Oil Stains

Treat stains as soon as possible by wiping the surface and applying liquid detergent such as Dawn. Allow to soak for several minutes, then wash with hot water as needed. Repeat if stain persists. It may pay to have a specially formulated cleaner on hand. Or it may be simpler to replace stained pavers with new ones. Consult with your paver supplier.

For more information consult Anchor Block Company's pamphlet, "Paver Care and Maintenance":
http://www.anchorblock.com/assets/PDF/ABC_PaverCareMaint.pdf

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Water Feature Care

Pondless® Waterfall or Bubbling Rock

These water features are extremely low maintenance, even if run 24/7

- When starting for the season, make sure no water is running over the edge of the liner; adjustments might need to be made
- If you notice an area of saturated moisture next to the water feature check the edge of the liner for areas where water could be overflowing
- Sustain water levels at the recommended level because low water levels will cause the pump to "gurgle" or suck air and may ultimately damage the pump
- Regularly clear debris from the area around the water feature because water loss is rarely caused by leaks in the liner; more often it is due to things changing such as debris that settles and causes the water to overflow
- Remove the pump for the winter and store indoors in a bucket of water

Ecosystem Ponds

The key to maintenance is keeping five elements in balance. They are:

- Mechanical and Biological Filters
- Pumps and Plumbing
- Rocks and Gravel
- Aquatic Plants
- Fish

Preformed and Container Water Gardens

With smaller systems it is more difficult to achieve balance, so more frequent dosages of beneficial bacteria may necessary. Recommended Aquascape products for non-algae problems are:

- **AquaClearer™ Extreme Dry** – reduces sludge, waste and excess nutrients
- **AquaClearer™ Extreme Liquid** – reduces ammonia, nitrites and excess
- Nutrients
- **EcoFoam Away™** – removes foam from the water
- **EcoFloc™** – clumps suspended particles for easy removal.
- **EcoBlast™ Granular Algaecide** – quickly breaks down algae (not temperature sensitive, 100% safe for fish)

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Water Feature Care (continued)

- **EcoStarter™ Plus Liquid** – removes and detoxifies chlorine; removes & detoxifies ammonia; destroys chloramines; detoxifies copper and heavy metals; boosts alkalinity; adds essential electrolytes; adds 3-part skin slime replacer; and reduces stress.

Additional Tips:

- Cracked preformed ponds and barrel liners cannot be repaired and must be replaced
- Evaporation has a significant impact and necessitates more frequent refilling
- Autofill can be added if you have a sprinkler system
- Over-doing plants and lowering the fish load will keep the system in better balance
- Remove the pump for the winter

General Maintenance

Skimmer: Empty the debris basket once every two weeks; more often in the fall

Filter Mat: Replace if they begin to tear or fall apart.

Pump: If you notice a reduction in the water flow over the waterfall simply unplug and remove the pump to clean the screen on the bottom.

BioFalls® Filter: Clean once a year according to the installer's directions.

Water Level: Compensate for natural evaporation as needed. Whenever you clean the debris basket check the water level. If it is lower than ¾" below the top of the skimmer mouth, add water using a garden hose. For less than 20% of the pool's volume a de-chlorination is not necessary. Some ponds are equipped with a water fill valve inside the skimmer that fills the pond automatically from the garden spigot or an underground irrigation system.

Troubleshooting Leaks: Leaks may be caused by the ground settling, causing water to flow over the edge. Find the leak area and pack additional soil under the liner. Also remove debris (leaves, plants, etc.) that may be causing obstructions in slow-moving sections of the stream/waterfall and thin excessive plant growth that may be displacing water. Before starting things up in the spring check for new leaks.

Algae Growth: When ponds are not in balance they give algae an opportunity to grow and thrive. Algae can be controlled naturally by maintaining a balanced eco-system. Keep the water free of debris, consider adding Koi (over 10" in length) to feed on

Water Feature Care (continued)

string algae, and add a variety of plants as they compete with algae for nutrients and sunlight. There are also several artificial products that will help you to help achieve balance. Aquascape EcoBlast™ helps to break down debris. Aquascape A.A.B.™ promotes the growth of beneficial bacteria and enzymes. For more detailed assistance, consult the Aquascape website: http://www.aquascapeinc.com/ownermanualmaintenance

Seasonal Maintenance

Fall and Winter

- Stop feeding fish when the water temperature is about 55° F because that is when their digestive systems slow down for winter
- Clear debris frequently
- Cut back dead plant material and remove tropicals
- Unplug and remove the pump. Store in a frost-free location, submerged in a bucket of water to keep the seals from drying
- If you have fish, use a re-circulating pump that bubbles at the water surface to oxygenate the water
- Consider adding a floating de-icer that your supplier recommends
- If you keep your waterfall running for interesting ice formations monitor for ice dams and replace water loss as needed

Spring

- If the water is a dark color and there is layer of crud on the bottom it is time for a full clean-out. Full instructions are available at the Aquascape website: http://www.aquascapeinc.com/ownermanualmaintenance
- If there is minimal debris that can be stirred up and captured with a net, then just a tidying up is needed

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