

Five easy steps to a low maintenance eco-friendly landscape

Written by Melinda Myers, Gardening expert
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It's possible to create a beautiful landscape and be kind to the environment even with a busy schedule and while staying within budget. "All it takes is a bit of planning and a few low maintenance strategies," says gardening expert and author Melinda Myers.

Myers recommends these five strategies to create a low maintenance eco-friendly landscape this season.



Be Waterwise

Save money on the water bill, time spent watering and this precious resource, water. Start by growing drought tolerant plants suited to your growing environment. Once established they will only need watering during extended dry spells.

Mulch with shredded leaves, evergreen needles, woodchips, or other organic matter to conserve moisture, reduce weeds, and improve the soil as they decompose.

Fertilize with a low nitrogen fertilizer, like **Milorganite**, that promotes slow steady growth instead of excessive greenery that requires more water. Plus, it won't burn even during drought.

Put rainwater to work all season long by using rain barrels to capture rainwater off your roof or directly from the sky.

Recycle Yard Waste in the Landscape

Minimize the amount of yard waste produced, reuse what can be in other areas of the landscape and recycle the rest as compost. These are just a few strategies that will save time bagging, hauling, and disposing of yard debris. And better yet, implementing this strategy will save money and time spent buying and transporting soil amendments, since it will be created right in the backyard.

Start by leaving grass clippings on the lawn. The short clippings break down quickly, adding organic matter, nutrients and moisture to the soil. Grow trees suited to the growing conditions and available space. That means less pruning and fewer trimmings that will need to be managed.

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www.melindamyers.com