

decisions about plants in their environment. If you have koi in your pond, you will have to anchor your water plants in their pots, because koi are curious creatures who will nuzzle your plants out of their pots. If you have dogs that like to crash around your shrubs, you will need sturdy shrubs, possibly with discouraging thorns, or plants that don't mind being stepped on. If you have cats, you may want to plant some catmint to distract them from other plants. Cats will also sit in your lower grasses, although I have found that my grasses typically bounce back after the cats have had their way with them. Different plants take up varying amounts of space, so it is helpful to have some idea if there will be plants serving a special purpose.

### Necessary avocations

If there are hobbies you need to make room for the sake of someone's health and well-being or to earn additional income, list the requirements for each activity (for example, an outdoor exercise area, a carpentry shed, a beekeeping area). Consider how much space the hobby will occupy. Are utilities required? Think about maintenance issues with having the hobby outdoors. If you need to build a structure, it could require a special permit to comply with local codes and regulations. It is wise to check with your local jurisdiction during the planning stages of your design. At a minimum, you will also need to consider how to access the structure, its exposure to the sun, and how to get utilities to it.



Installing a greenhouse does not always mean the purchase of a manufactured kit. Here is a great example of a greenhouse built with recycled materials. Garden of Michele Eccleston, The Purple Garden. Photo by Brian Libby. Greenhouse construction by TJ Juon.

### Outdoor work space and storage

If you are a gardener, you may need an outdoor work space. You may want the space to accommodate a compost pile or a greenhouse, tools and materials, or a workbench for potting plants. What are the requirements for each of these? Think about whether you will need electricity and water. Compost piles need to be a minimum size in order to function properly. Alternatively, will you purchase composting equipment? If so, how large will it be? Will you locate it so that the materials that go in and out of it are close by?

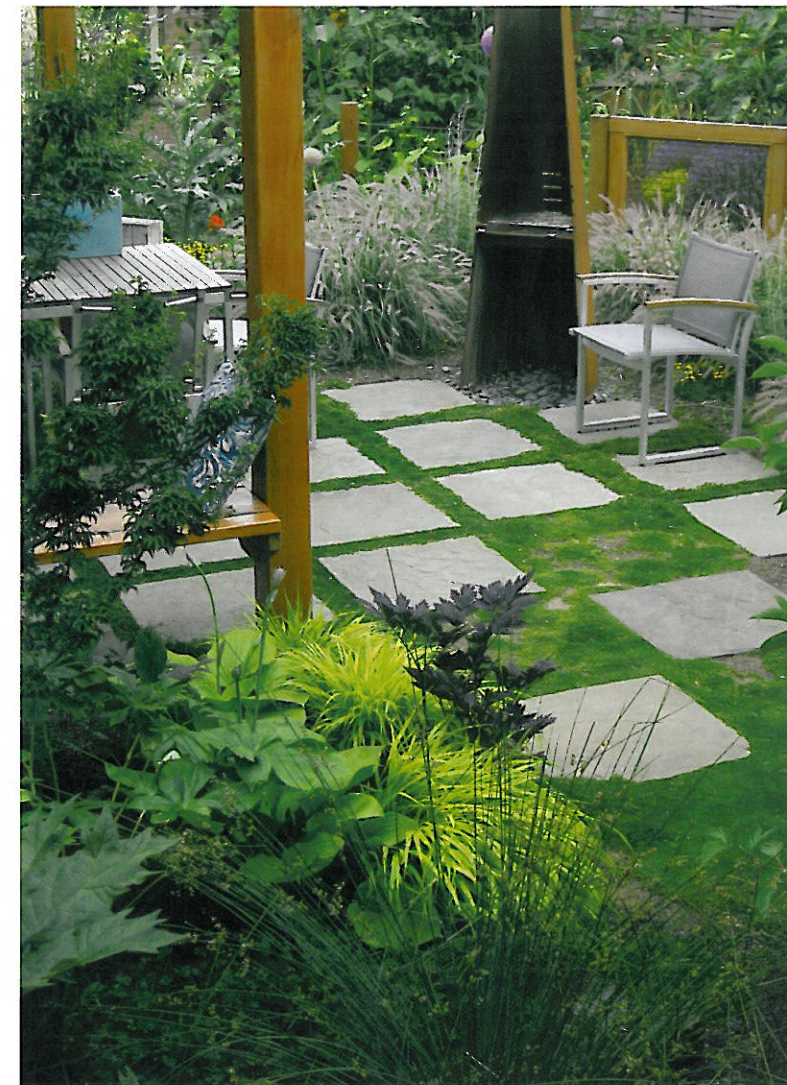
If you like to cook, want to trim your food budget, or need to control what is in your food, a kitchen garden may be necessary. Find out what will grow well in your garden and make a list of which foods you would like to grow. You can talk to your local extension service or master gardener to learn which food plants grow easily in your area. You can also find out by visiting local farmers' markets, if you are so lucky, to see the produce they bring to market. Don't forget to evaluate how to improve your soil to successfully grow edible plants.

### What You Desire in Your Garden

You began your project by envisioning a garden. Now that you have documented your site and listed what you need, return to those dreams. This is the time when it is important to allow your mind to wander and invoke the muse. Thumb through gardening magazines and books. Collect the ideas that speak to your situation or that you just like. Visit other gardens, public or private, because these will have a wealth of ideas. Local arboretums are an excellent place to see just how large trees and shrubs can become in your area. There might even be a garden club you can join as a resource. Keep your mind open and discover your bliss. Brainstorm ideas with

your family and friends. Put everything on the table; do not eliminate anything you might want—yet.

What you require and what you desire in your garden will be a source of discussion if there is more than one decision maker. If you are wisely including every member of your family in the planning of



A tiny garden uses its space efficiently and beautifully for growing edibles, dining, cooking, and sitting, and includes a small rain garden in the foreground. Garden of Kristien Forness, owner of Fusion Landscape Design, LLC.