

Worksheet: Getting Started — Research, Prep and Design



livingonthepatio.com
hello@livingonthepatio.com

Instructions: This worksheet will help you to plan the development of your outdoor space. In completing this worksheet you will detail your current outdoor situation and what you'd like your future outdoor space to include. It will generate discussion, help to prioritize elements, and help you decide what dollar amounts to dedicate to each element in relation to your project budget.

Who are you?		Current Family	Future Family	
Identify some basic information about your family that will help in getting started to determine needs and wants for your patio/garden.	Number of adults and their ages			
	Number of children and their ages			
	Number of pets and types			
	Length of time in house (years or months)			
	Other			
	How will the family change in the next 3 years?			
	How will their needs change?			
	How long do you plan to stay in this house?			
Any home remodeling needed or planned?				
Home usage?	1. Identify HOW patio/garden/yard is used:	Current Use	Future Use	
How is your house currently being used and how do you see it being used in the future?	Entertaining area?			
	Play area?			
	Dining area?			
	Relaxation area?			
	Grill/kitchen area?			
	Pool/hot tub/spa?			
	Work area?			
	2. Identify WHEN patio/garden/yard is used:			
	Seasons?			
	Weekdays/weekends?			
	Time of day, night, or both?			
	3. Identify issues or concerns:			
	Privacy?			
Security?				
Noise?				
Water?				
Pests?				

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Home usage? <i>Continued from Page 1</i>	What do you like most?		
	What do you like least?		
	How do you want to use the yard?		
	HOW do you want to use the patio?		
	WHEN do you want to use the patio?		
	HOW OFTEN do you want to use the patio?		
	What family or friends may visit?		
What's on Hand? Identify what elements already exist in your outdoor environment that should be considered as resources in developing a plan for a new or improved outdoor living space.		Existing Conditions	Future Conditions
	Fence?		
	Patio?		
	Paving/bricks?		
	Plants/garden beds (plants, shrubs, trees)?		
	Pergola/gazebo?		
	Grill/kitchen area?		
	Play structure?		
	Pool/hot tub?		
	Shed/storage?		
	Irrigation?		
	Utility?		
	Pet run?		
	Compost bin/heap?		
	Greenhouse?		
	Garage?		
	Extra Parking?		
	Walkways?		
	Yard art/sculpture?		
	Water feature?		
	What features will remain; be reused; moved?		
What absolutely MUST change?			
What do you want to highlight or showcase?			
Will you trade design over function or cost?			

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What's on Hand?	Existing Conditions	Future Conditions
<i>Continued from Page 2</i> How do you want your garden to look? How do you want your garden to feel?		
Practical Considerations	Current Considerations	Future Considerations
What issues are there that may have to be resolved before proceeding with your patio/garden/yard design and construction?	1. Topography: Yard views? Erosion issues? Drainage issues? Soil conditions? Bank/slope/elevation? 2. Hazards: Weather (flood/wind/fire)? Infrastructure (downspouts/sprinklers)? Utilities (gas/electric/telephone/water/sewer)? Security (safety/crime)? 3. Maintenance: Homeowner? Professional? Adjust plans due to topography and hazards? Does this require professional evaluation? Time/energy available for homeowner maintenance? Which elements can homeowner install or DIY? Which elements require professional services?	
When Completed	1. Design Themes:	
Identify your expectations of what elements will be in your patio/garden and what it will look like.	Asian? English? Country or Cottage? Beach? Mediterranean?	

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When Completed <i>Continued from Page 3</i>	2. Plant Preferences: Native?		
	Hybrids?		
	Wild?		
	Vegetable?		
	Grasses?		
	Flowers?		
	3. Extras: Water saving devices?		
	Solar energy?		
	Budget What dollar amount can you allocate to your patio/garden development?	Less than \$10,000	
		\$10,000 — \$20,000	
\$20,000 — \$50,000			
\$50,000 — \$100,000			
What can you afford to install now?			
What needs to be phased-in over time?			
What professional can you or must you afford?			
Will your budget allow mature shrubs and trees?			
Are you willing to wait for seed starters for foliage?			
Time Frames and/or Deadlines Identify your desired time lines or any hard deadlines. Prioritize what needs to be accomplished in Phase One in relation to your budget.	1. Time Frames: Start building now?		
	Start building in the next 3 months?		
	Start building in the next 6 months?		
	Start building in the next 12 months?		
	Must be completed by?		
	2. Phase One Priorities by Element: Phase One #1 element?		
	Phase One #2 element?		
	Phase One #3 element?		
	Phase One #4 element?		
	Phase One #5 element?		