Design Your Own Garden

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Design elements of plants:
- Form: three dimensional mass of the plant and it's outline
- Texture: the visual appearance of the plant; determined by the size of twigs and leaves in relation to the size of the whole plant
- Color: from flowers, leaves, fruit or bark

Principles of design (apply to the elements of form, texture and color):
- Repetition: placing like things with like things; using the same element more than once in the design. Ties things together visually. Use in moderation.
- Variety: an absence of uniformity; in design, variety incorporates use of different elements (plants, colors, etc.) to provide some change or interest. Variety serves to combat excessive repetition.
- Balance: general equilibrium of the parts of the design. We use balance to provide a sense of equality on both sides of an imaginary axis and from front to back.
- Emphasis: differentiates a more important item from the less important ones in the landscape. Emphasis is used to provide a focal point or evoke some reaction.
- Scale: the size of an object or the dimension of a space. It can be absolute or relative.
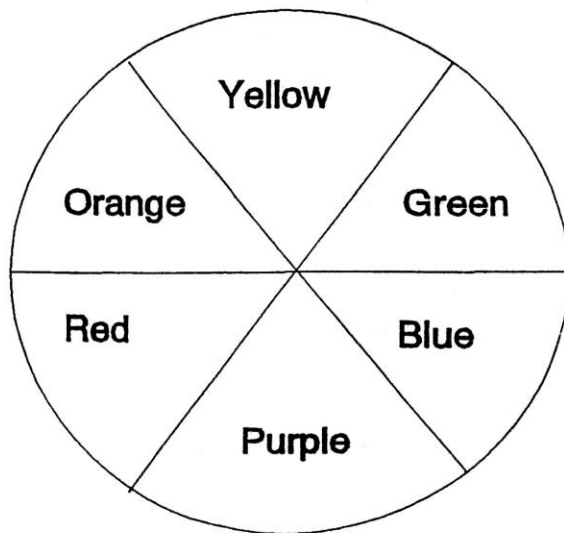
Five basic steps of design:
- Determine the point of view: Look at the site and decide from what side the flower bed will be viewed.
- Consider existing conditions: We need to look at the existing physical conditions to be sure we select plants that will live in the yard. Also consider the visual impact of existing conditions.
- Decide on a style: formal or informal
- Choose the type of display:
  - Border- flower bed that runs along the boundary or edge of something else. Borders can create a feeling of space, since they are along the perimeters and they leave the lawn open and uninterrupted.
  - Island Bed - a flower bed surrounded by an open expanse, such as a lawn. Island beds are viewed from many sides and so present more challenge in that they must look good from all those views. They can be used to break up large open areas.
  - Naturalized areas - putting plants into a natural setting. The viewpoint for such plantings varies as much as the plantings themselves. This type of display allows a gardener to be creative and expressive.
- Select the plants: cold hardy; appropriate the soil and light exposure of the site; consider color, form and texture; bloom time.

Using Color

The Color Wheel:

- Red, orange and yellow are "warm" colors. They stand out in the landscape. When planted at a distance, they can make that distance seem shorter.   These colors also serve as good accents in the garden, since they are so showy.
- Green, blue and purple are "cool" colors. These colors recede into the landscape. They are best used in masses or in areas where they will be viewed close up.
- White is not on the color wheel, but it is still important. White serves two purposes. It can be a good buffer between two colors that clash a bit. White also serves to extend the time that the garden can be enjoyed. As evening comes on, white is the color seen the longest.

Yellow

Orange   Green

Red   Blue

Purple

Color Wheel

Color Schemes:

- **Monochromatic** color schemes are based on one color.   To keep it interesting, use different tints and shades of the same color.
- **Polychromatic** color schemes make use of a variety of colors. Combining a number of different colors can be bright and festive.
- **Analogous** color schemes make use of colors that are adjacent to one another on the color wheel. Imagine a garden where all the flowers are red, orange or yellow (these colors are adjacent to one another).
- **Complementary** color schemes make use of colors that are directly across from each other on the color wheel; red and green, yellow and purple, orange and blue.   When complementary colors are used together, they make each other seem brighter and more intense.