



Criteria for a Descriptive Assessment of a Garden's Design

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Study Group Leader's comment: The following criteria were developed when some Study Group members were asked to 'judge' gardens in competitions (when the 'judges' don't normally question the owners of the garden.) The criteria were thought to be useful also in assessing one's own garden (for which 'fitness for purpose' is certainly known) and, in addition, those of other members.

Pathways to and from house and through the garden

- Practical in purpose, width, surety of surface
- Pleasing in shape (producing flow and rhythm) and choice of surface

Relationship of house to garden

- Views and vistas from house
- General access from house to outdoor living and garden

Pleasing spaces to look at and be in

- A balance of open (eg. paths, ponds, low ground covers) and closed spaces
- Framed space - vistas and trunk gardens
- Garden seats

Harmony, unity and balance

- Between house and garden and the surrounding environment
- Within the garden (overall structure, visual balance and proportions)
- Blending of hard landscaping and soft

Successful soft landscaping

- Effective screening of external and internal areas
- Framework of trees - balance of shade and sun
- Foliage contrasts and textures
- Appeal to the senses - light, colour, fragrance, sound, touch
- Predominance of Australian plants appropriate to the environment
- Repetition of visual links

Delights and surprises Environmental concerns

- Use of water (ornamental and conservation)
- Inclusion of indigenous plants
- No use of weed species to the area
- Provision for wildlife