



## TOP TEN LANDSCAPE TIPS

10. **GRADE YARD** - Grading your yard gives it a more natural look and creates more dimension and interest in the landscape. It will also capture rainfall better. Don't make mounds greater than 1' in height over grade or it may look unnatural. Make mounds irregular in shape, not perfectly symmetrical and sloped. Create swales (low spots) to capture water, and direct water to your plants not the street.
9. **BOULDERS** - Use boulders to accent the landscape. A grade of boulders called "surface boulders" look more natural and the color usually matches the natural colored granites. Bury boulders by at least 1/3; place plants close to them to soften them.
8. **GRANITE** - Use 1/4 or 1/2 inch minus granite (not screened granite), this provides a more natural desert look, and is easier to walk on. Use natural colors like desert gold or beige.
7. **GROUP PLANTS** - Place plants in natural plant groupings as you would see in the desert. Don't space plants evenly around the yard. Plant groups in odd numbers. Open space is OK.
6. **VIEWS** - Block or enhance views. You may want to block an unsightly view, such as the truck your neighbor parks on the street, or enhance a scenic view you have of the mountains, or place plants to provide a view of your landscape looking out of a window.
5. **COMMON THEME** - Don't plant one of every plant you like in a small landscape, it will tend to look like a botanical garden. Use the same plant in different locations of the yard to unify the look.
4. **ENERGY CONSERVATION** - Be sure to block southern and western exposures of your home from the summer sun. Use deciduous trees for these exposures so that you can take advantage of the sun's warmth in the winter.
3. **HARDSCAPE** - Hardscape is the inclusion of any non-plant features for the landscape, such as patios, benches, flagstone walkways, sculptures, boulders, bird features, etc. These areas can provide sitting areas, BBQ space and will extend your living space to the outdoors. It is usually best to plan and install these areas before plant installation.
2. **FLOWERS** - Plant wildflowers that will reseed themselves and provide seasonal color and charm to your landscape year 'round. Some suggested flowers are penstemons, desert marigold, golden dyssodia, tufted evening primrose, poppies, and lupines.
1. **NATIVE PLANTS** - Use plants that are native to the Sonoran, Mohave or Chihuahuan deserts for best performance. These deserts are all found in the Southwestern U.S. and in Mexico. Plants from deserts from other continents (i.e. Africa or Australia) will usually perform well but the look may not always fit (i.e. large Eucalyptus trees).

(Note: There are many other considerations for landscape design. Consult [Sunset Western Landscaping Book](#) or talk to a Landscape Designer/Landscape Architect for more information.)