

The Bones of the Landscape

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The bones of a landscape are the plant material that ties together the area during all seasons of the year. They establish the structure of the area. Once the bones are established the designer-home owner- can tweak areas to fit their own personal ideas. Such as adding perennials, annuals, specimen shrubs, etc. A landscape with well established bones will eliminate the problem of too many plants and other assorted embellishments strung out through the area.

Bones are created by

- Repetition of
 - Plant material
 - Evergreen foliage
- Using plant material that can hold its own
 - Full foliage
 - Good stem structure
 - Easy to maintain and grow
 - The chosen plant size fits into the area with minimal pruning
 - Try to avoid material that needs to be tightly pruned into geometric shapes
 - Evergreen material like Boxwood, Yew, Juniper and Arborvitae all work in Zone #5
 - Plants that have structure in the winter
- Only a few shrubs are needed in an area

A landscape with well established bones will

- Eliminate the “to many different plants” problem
 - Avoid the “if it is on sale “ it will find a place in my yard
 - “If it is on sale” tactic of acquiring plant material will work once you establish the bones and once you become more familiar with the plant material
- Eliminates the area from becoming a collection of yard sale artifacts
- Will visually be tied together during the entire year