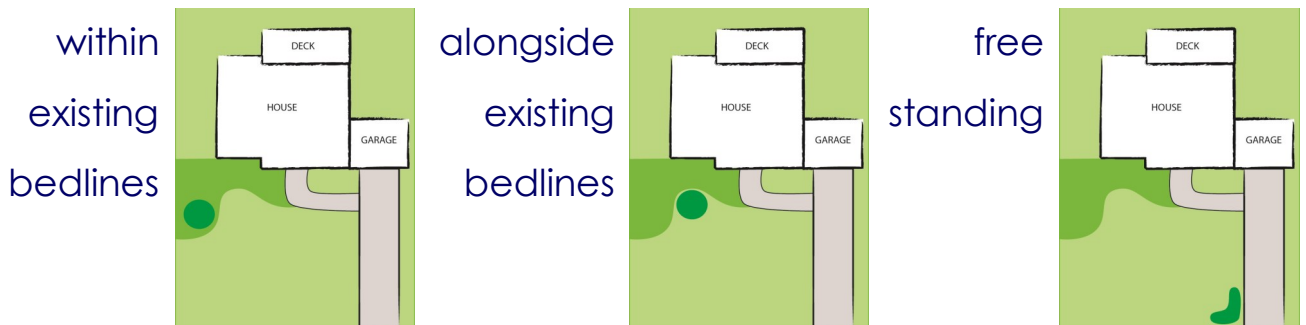
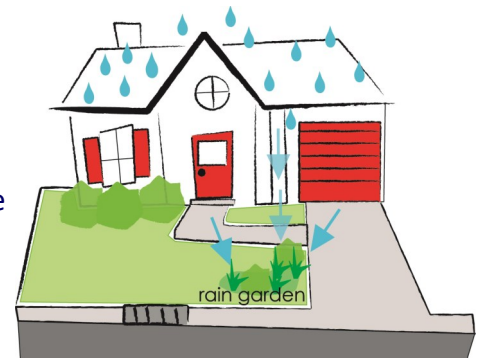


### location, location, location:

The best location for a rain garden is between the source of the runoff and the point where it enters the stormwater collection system. The entrance to the stormwater collection system could be your driveway, the street or maybe a yard inlet. Place a rain garden at least 10' down slope from a house foundation, 25' from a septic field and 50' from a well head. If you have a well or septic tank, check your local ordinances to be sure. A rain garden is not suitable for the low wet spot in your yard. You want your rain garden to drain. Consider how your rain garden will relate to the other planting beds in your yard. The new garden can be absorbed into existing beds or it can stand alone. If it stands alone, relating the shape of the rain garden to your existing garden beds will help with a more cohesive look for your landscape.



### your style, your rain garden:

Our landscapes are unique representations of us — and your rain garden can be too! Gardens are generally informal or formal and a rain garden can be either as well. A formal garden is precise and symmetrical. An informal garden is one with sweeping, gently curved, organic bedlines; asymmetrical plantings or groupings; and natural plant forms.

### water in, water out :

The size of your rain garden was determined using an average storm with one inch of rainfall, so if you need to make it slightly bigger or smaller, that is fine. It will either hold a little more or a little less runoff. The garden will have an inflow area where runoff will enter and an outflow area on the downhill side, in case you receive more than an inch of rainfall at a time. Identify the inflow and outflow areas when laying out your rain garden.

### the ease of planting design:

When it comes to the composition of your rain garden, there are some key considerations to remember before deciding what to plant.

## design considerations:

- Consider the adult size of the plant and space accordingly when planting.
- Plant in odd numbers, unless the individual plants will grow together to form a mass, then the mass of plants will be treated like one plant. BUT, don't get too carried away with the odd numbers!
- Mix up the composition numbers for visual interest.

Overlap your plant masses. This keeps your design visually appealing by simply overlapping the ends of masses so that your plant groupings "hug" each other.

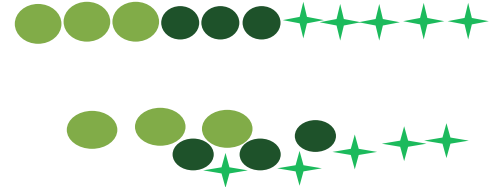
instead of:



try:



viewed from above

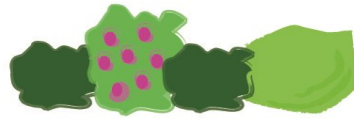


Limit the number of single specimens in your garden. Specimen plants should be used sparingly to create interest in your garden.

instead of :



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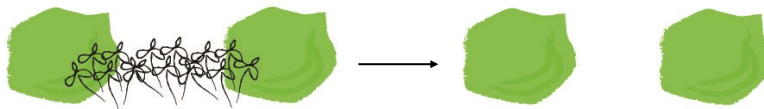


A background of evergreens sets the stage for deciduous shrubs and perennials. This also insures that you will have something of interest in your garden even in the winter months.



No mass of perennials should be big enough to leave a gaping hole in the winter. Remember to layer them with your woody plants/shrubs for year-round interest.

spring/summer:



fall/winter:

Add something for every season. Plants provide interest in every season — from blooms in the spring, to fruit in the summer, to foliage in the fall — so remember to utilize all the seasonal characteristics!

spring



summer



fall

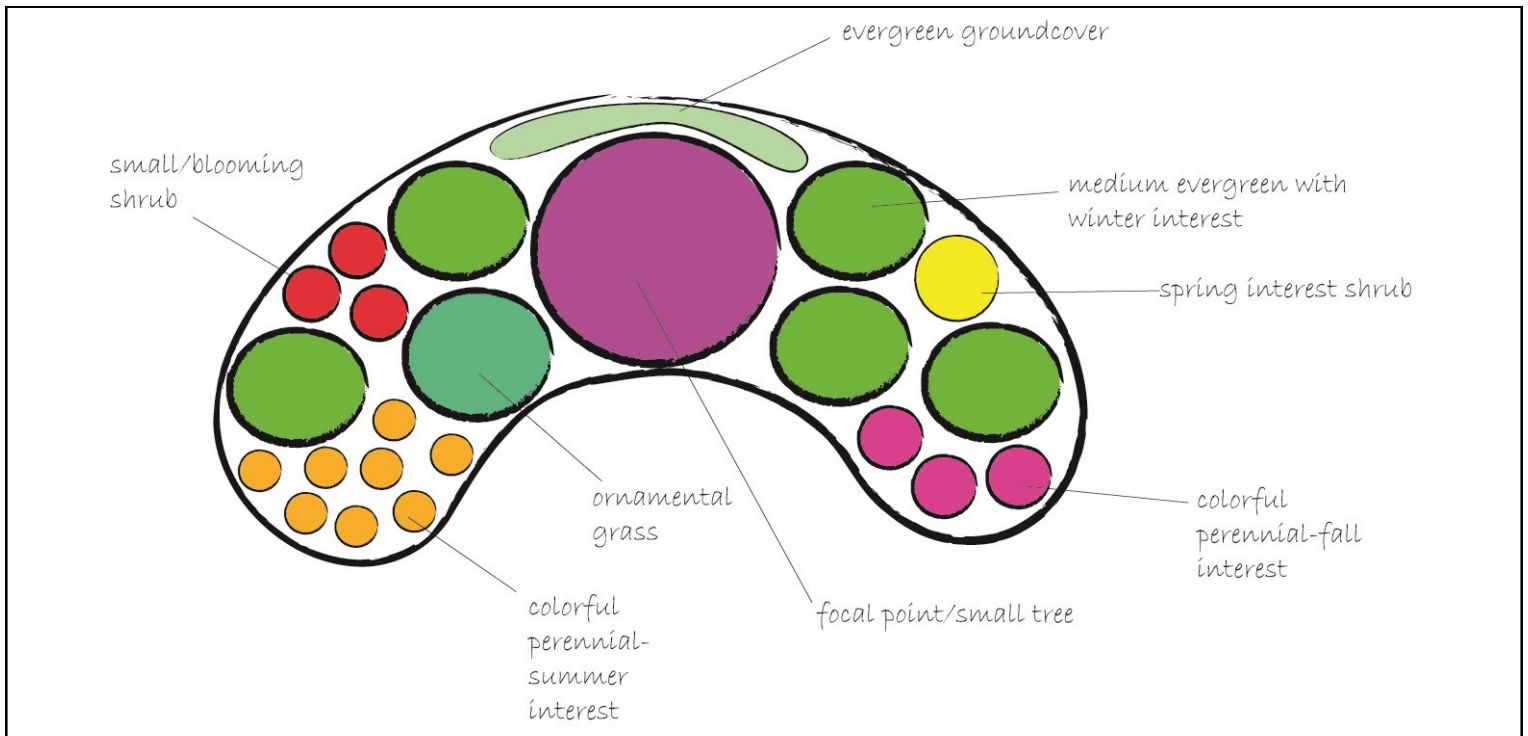


winter



## sketch out your planting plan:

Your planting plan will be a map of your plants. Sketch it like you are looking at it from the sky. Start with design qualities such as shape, habit, size, foliage, color and texture. Then, choose the plant based on the characteristics, such as sun or shade requirements and whether sure it can withstand prolonged dry conditions with occasional wet periods for a few days. If you don't find that exact plant in the store, you can find something that fits those characteristics. The sketch doesn't have to be fancy. Remember: Your bed outline should relate to the surrounding landscape lines, which may be a circle, square, rectangle, oval, triangle or may be long and curvy or small and linear.



## now you try it:

1. Start with the garden outline. Note the location (sun, shade, partial shade).
2. Draw circles representing plants of varying sizes to create visual interest.
3. Label the circles with design qualities you want.
4. Find plants exhibiting those design qualities.

Use the grid on the next page to sketch out your garden. It is a one-inch grid. Each inch represents one foot on the ground. For a larger garden, you can make each inch equal two feet.

### source:

Anne Spafford, Department of Horticultural Science, NC State University

### resource:

Helen Kraus and Anne Spafford. *Rain Gardening in the South: Ecologically Designed Gardens for Drought, Deluge and Everything in Between*. Eno Publishing. 2009

sketch your rain garden

1 inch = 1 foot

