

# Dogscaping: Landscaping With Your Dog In Mind

Dogscaping is landscaping keeping your dog's safety and enjoyment in mind. It's about sharing that outdoor space you love with the four-legged member of your family. You may enjoy a perfectly groomed lawn, or a picture perfect flower bed, but your dog may be a breed that enjoys digging. So, keeping their instincts in mind is what we call dogscaping!



## **Before you start your project take this into account:**

- Think about how you want to use the space.
- Draw a map of your yard and identify the spaces and their uses, this will help you visualize how much space you have for your dog's activities. Make a list of some of your dog's behaviors and habits.

## **The details**

**Consider your space.** Think about the breed of your dog and its characteristics, as well as their personalities. Their breed can tell you general inherent characteristics and certain behaviors. Work with them instead of against them, this will be much less stressful for you and your dog.

### **A fence for safety is essential.**

Different dogs and different breeds prefer different types of fencing, but in general, a fence that the dog can see through is nice because they can patrol their territory. It's less stressful for most dogs to see what's on the other side of their enclosure. Also, when planning the landscape, you may want to leave a 3-foot "run" around your property's perimeter, without plants or flowers, so your dog has room to patrol.

### **Observe your dog's behavior.**

Some dogs love to run and some other love to dig, some love mud or maybe water. Find creative solutions so the gardener in you and your best friend are both happy.

### **Train your dog to use a potty area.**

**Watch out for toxic or poisonous plants.** This doesn't mean you can't have any plants toxic to your pet, you just need to be aware of your dog's surroundings and habits. Some dogs like to chew on plants and others only chew up a few blades of grass from time to time. Plan and plant accordingly.

**Add a water feature your dog can enjoy.** Even an inflatable pool with cool water is enjoyable for them on hot summer days.



**Dixie Sandborn**  
Michigan State  
University  
Extension