

Mixed Borders
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1. Using Sedge as a Ground Cover- *Carex flacca* - Blue Green Sedge
2. Types of Mixed Garden Borders: Cottage, Naturalist, Woodland, Prairie/Meadow, Formal, Rock, Zen (Japanese), Shrub
3. Components of Borders
 - *Softscape: Trees, plants, grass, mulches
 - *Hardscape: Sidewalks, walls and fences, pavers, rocks, decks and patios
 - *Décor: Water features, statuary, tree hangers, pottery, lighting
 - *Supporting Features: Birdhouses, beehives, feeders, tree houses, trellises
4. Guidelines for Mixed Beds
 - Keep border less than 3 feet or provide a path
 - Plan border at its deepest point to be about 1 ½ times the height of the tallest plant (ex. 9' deep-tallest plant 6')
 - Combine plants with similar requirements
 - Use basic foliage color and plant shape as unifying elements
 - Limit flower colors- too many colors confuse the eye
 - Keep taller plants at the back and low creepers at the front
 - Mounded plants & those with tall bloom stalks can go almost anywhere
 - Limit flowering plants that reseed themselves heavily – they will need continual thinning
 - Avoid flowering plants among edibles that demand pesticides to look good
5. Add a Path
6. Creating a garden border, Right Plant, Right Place, Spikenard, *Aralia racemose*, Native, herbaceous perennial, part-sun
7. Tips on Mixing Edibles with Ornamentals
 - Don't try to make it all edible
 - Mix annuals & perennials but group them for ease of maintenance
 - Keep diversity in mind so beneficial insects can help keep your garden healthy
 - Light Rule of Thumb: If the part you eat is the fruit – needs 8 or more hours per day sunshine, If the part is a root – can tolerate a little less, If the part is the stem or leaf can handle slightly shady conditions
8. Espalier - Best used on plants that have flexible woody branches. Often used with apple trees, Want to know more about this technique – go to this Master Gardener article:
<https://wimastergardener.org/article/espalier/>
9. Pleaching- Flexible linden trees trained into a raised hedge using a plant-shaping technique called Pleaching. Over time, branches are interwoven. Light still reaches plants below.
10. Size—Rule of Thirds: Grouping of 3 plants are more pleasing, Tallest plant should be 1/3 or 2/3 of the backdrop or focal point, then sequence down to next level by 1/3, 3's work better than splitting in half, Width of border should be 1/3 the width of the total area, Each "height" should have equal space in bed
11. Elements of a Garden: Overstory trees for shade, Understory, Tie together with shrubs, Interesting woodland floor, Add a few details
12. Tips to growing sun loving plants in the shade: Plants grow leggier in shade, so buy the bushiest, most compact specimens, If you like a certain sun-loving plant but only have shade – try it there. When buying shade-tolerant plants, pick varieties that bloom early, before deciduous trees block the light during their most active growth

13. Colors: Dominate shade colors: white, blue, mauve, pink, Daylilies can add splash of color, Start with “anchor” plants like hydrangea or viburnum, Light colors will stand out in shade
14. Tips for planting under trees: Avoid damaging tree roots, do not add soil on top of tree roots, gently plant between roots, do not cut into roots 2” or larger, use a layer of mulch no deeper than 2-4” thick, Look to nature for inspiration in plant selection, Be prepared to water the first year or two until plants are established
15. Use containers to add color, Add Containers To provide attractive elements to the garden, To contain aggressive plants like mints, To have some spare plants to move to perennial beds elsewhere, To provide succession plantings

Plants & Combos

16. Four Seasons of Interest: Spring – bulbs, garden art; Summer – perennials; blooming shrubs; Fall – color, color, color; Winter – Evergreens, seed heads and grasses
17. Layers, borders, Drifts Layers: ground level, middle, understory, canopy. Planting beds: mounded, perennial drifts, island, borders
18. Ground Covers: Good alternative to grass, Less competitive than grass under trees and shrubs, Relatively low maintenance, Proper planting prep to avoid weeds, Use instead of bark mulch
19. **Tips on When to Consider Ground Covers:** Problem areas, Transition between lawn and taller plants, Where grass doesn’t grow, Select based on year-round interest and plant needs, Consider height, Prepare soil as for other plants, Look out for aggressive growers
Good resource: University of Illinois <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/groundcovers/about.html>
20. Bugleweed (*Ajuga reptans*): Evergreen, green, bronze or variegated, One plant can fill a 3 foot square, Full sun to part shade, Avoid open or exposed areas – may suffer winter kill, Minimal fertilization needed to keep plants healthy
21. Deadnettle (*Lamium maculatum*), Excellent ground cover for shaded areas, Prefers moist, well drained soil, Part to full shade, Pest free, Lift and divide overgrown plants, Can be aggressive, Cultivars: Beacon Silver, White Nancy
22. Moneywort (*Lysimachus nummularia*), Aggressive-common name: Creeping Jenny, Tolerate wide range of conditions, prefers shade with moist to wet organic soil, Minimal fertilizer needed, Monitor planting, pruning back and pulling plants that have overgrown space, Cultivar: ‘Aurea’ – less aggressive
23. Creeping Phlox (*Phlox subulata*), Full sun, moist well-drained soil, Up to 8 inches high, Trim up after flowering, Slow growing
24. Sedum Stonecrop, Full sun to part shade, Low-growing, can tolerate dry conditions, Easy care
25. Middle Layer
 - Perennials and annuals
 - Create some vertical interest
 - Flowering shrubs
 - Create multiple layers of interest from spring through fall
 - Add annuals for consistent blooms or to fill in a bare spot for a season (can be a container plants)
 - Mounded or plants with bloom stems can go almost anywhere
 - Weave in self-seeders for a natural look
26. Bulb and Perennial combos

Hot, Dry Sun

Bulbs: Daffadil, Hyacinth, Tulip Perennials: Bearded iris, Lamb’s ear, yarrow

Moist Soil (part shade)

Bulbs: Fritillaria, Spanish Bluebell Perennials: Astilbe, Cardinal flower, Goatsbeard, Ligularia

27. "Carefree Turf Blend" – Olbrich Gardens Find a low-mow blend (using a blend of fine fescue grasses): Chewings Fescue, Creeping Red Fescue, Hard Fescue, Slender Red Fescue, Blue Fescue
28. Native Midwest Prairie Grasses
 - Tallgrass species: Big Bluestem, Switchgrass, Prairie Cordgrass
 - Midgrass Species: Little Bluestem, Prairie Dropseed, Sideoats Grama
 - Shortgrass Species: Buffalograss, Blue Grama
29. Understory & Shrub – layer: Provides shelter, windbreaks, background, vertical interest; Can screen unwanted views and create privacy; Creates interest in all seasons
30. Understory-Small Trees & Shrubs: Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*), Black Chokeberry (*Aronia*), Dogwood (*Cornus*), Hazelnut (*Corylus*), Bush Honeysuckle (*Diervilla*), Forsythia, Hydrangea, Winterberry (Ilex), Ninebark (*Physocarpus*), Rhododendron, Sumac, Elderberry (*Sambucus*), Spirea, Viburnum
31. Think about Maintenance

Resources

UW Extension Publications

- www.learningstore.uwex.edu – UW Extension gardening publications
- www.wihort.uwex.edu – UW Urban Horticulture website

All can be downloaded free or a paper copy purchased at the <http://learningstore.uwex.edu>

Books

- ***The Garden Book of Wisconsin***, Melinda Myers
- ***Cold Climate Gardening***, Lewis Hill
- ***Flowerbeds & Borders in Deer Country***, Vincent Drzewucki Jr.
- ***Landscaping with Native Plants of Wisconsin*** and ***Grow Native***, Lynn M. Steiner
- ***The Well-Tended Perennial Garden***, Tracy DiSabato-Aust
- ***The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden***, Roy Diblik
- ***The Layered Garden***, David L. Culp
- W. George Schmid's ***An Encyclopedia of Shade Perennials*** -- book contains an extensive list of shade perennial plants
- ***Planting in a Post-Wild World, Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes***, Thomas Rainer and Claudia West

Web

- www.hostalibrary.org - official directory of the American Hosta Society
- <https://woodyplants.nres.uiuc.edu/>– searchable woody plant database
- <http://garden.org/plantfinder/> National Gardening Association search engine for locating plants
- www.perennialresource.com Online library maintained by Walters Gardens

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