

Watergardens - Building a Water Garden



Remember the following points when determining pond size and location:

- A pond should receive at least 5-6 hours of sun a day, if you want waterlilies to bloom. If the pool is in the sun all day, plant grasses and shrubs around the outside edge.
- Protection from strong winds is necessary.
- The site should not be too close to deciduous trees.
- Access to electricity is necessary if you're using a pump or lighting.

Lay out the intended pool shape using a hose. Mark the outline with wooden pegs hammered into the ground. Overall the shape should have smooth and uncomplicated lines without sharp corners. It is also good to peg out your deep water zone and consider where you would like a shelf left for optimum viewing. The shelf should be about 10" wide for placement of marginal plants. If you intend to use a pump or operate night lights consider the placement of an electrical outlet with GFI -Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter.

Excavate the pool and check that the edges are all level using a hose level on large pools or a straight 2x4x8 laid across the pool and level placed on top of the 2x4 to level a small pool. Fill in any low spots to prevent the water from washing out. The sides should slant inward at an angle of 15 to 20 degrees. Remove sharp rocks from the hole and put down a layer of sand followed by a felt type under liner. To calculate the size of the liner, determine the length, width and depth of the pool. Double the depth and add this number to the length and width. Drape a flexible PVC liner (min 15 mm) loosely and evenly over the hole. Fold or pleat the liner to achieve the desired shape. Fill the pool slowly smoothing the liner so it fits snugly. Anchor the edge of the liner with rocks. Consider leaving a sloped area to allow animals that fall into the pool access to crawl out. Wait one week to add plants and two weeks to add fish.

Other Elements

Streams add a number of elements to the garden atmosphere. It will add music and light while connecting one part of the garden to another visually and physically. Fountains, water spouts and bubbler stones are exciting elements and are suitable for any type of pool providing a soft splashing noise. They are best installed in a pool but if plants and animals are in the pool they should not run continuously. Waterfalls are another popular garden feature. When constructing waterfalls it is important to keep its size in scale. It should not overpower other features in the garden while remaining natural looking.

Adding Water Lilies

Lilies require plenty of sun, rich soil and quiet, shallow water. They are planted in heavy clay loam - do not add manure or peat to the mixture. The plants are potted up and sunk to the appropriate depth (8"). They should be fertilized each spring and may be dug and divided after two to three years. Lilies may need a depth of 36" to overwinter safely. They should have from 6 – 12" of water over the soil or crown of the plant - the best depth is 8" - during the growing season.

Suggestions

- Do not change the water in the pool.
- Be sure you have sufficient plants for a balanced pool. Oxygenating plants provide oxygen and help to absorb excess, dissolved nutrients. Lilies provide shade and use up nutrients as well.
- Oxygenating plants grow under water. Set them at the pool bottom. Choices include:
 - Elodea
 - Cabomba
 - Sagittaria natans
 - Hornwort
- Hardy shallow water and bog plants. These are planted at the pond edge - either at water level or up to 6" below water level. Choices include:
 - Arrowhead (2" below water level)
 - Blue water iris (as above)
 - Cattail (as above)
 - Marsh Marigold (plant at water level)

Murray's Info Sheets

P.O. BOX 601, 1525 PORTUGAL COVE ROAD, PORTUGAL COVE, NL, CANADA A1M 3R6
TEL: (709) 895-2800 • FAX: (709) 895-1000 • E-MAIL: murrays@nl.rogers.com • www.murraysgardens.com