

12 TIPS FOR DESIGNING AN URBAN GARDEN



Living in a built-up area or city doesn't mean sacrificing the joys of gardening. Urban gardens offer unique opportunities to create green retreats in limited spaces. Creative planning and design can transform even the tiniest areas into beautiful, functional outdoor havens. Whether you have a rooftop, balcony, or small backyard, here are some tips on designing an urban garden.

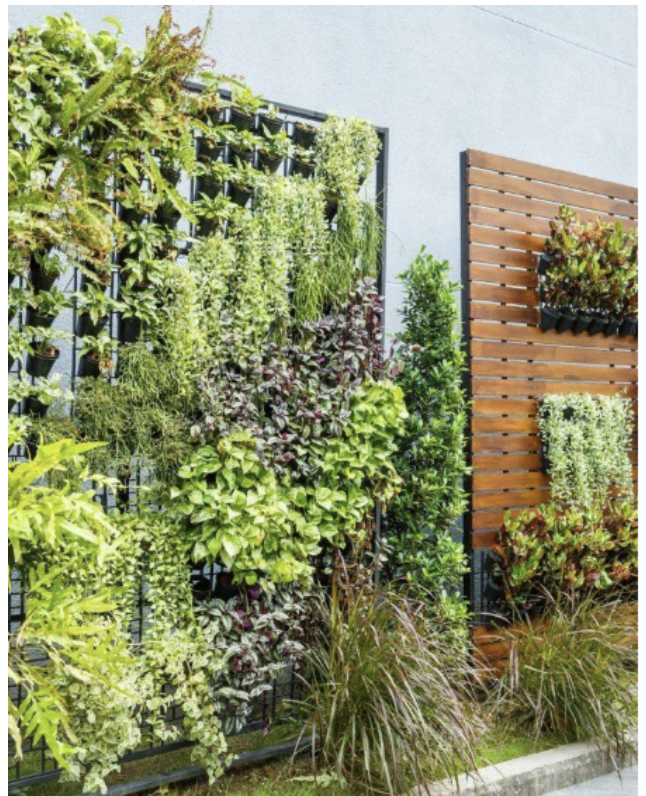
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1. Creative use of vertical space

One of the key strategies for designing an urban garden is maximising vertical space. Install vertical gardens, trellises, hanging baskets, or living walls to maximise the limited ground area. Climbing plants and shade-loving varieties can thrive on walls and fences, adding greenery and beauty. Consider painting or rendering walls in light colours to brighten dark areas, and choose glossy-leaved and variegated plants to enhance the visual appeal further.

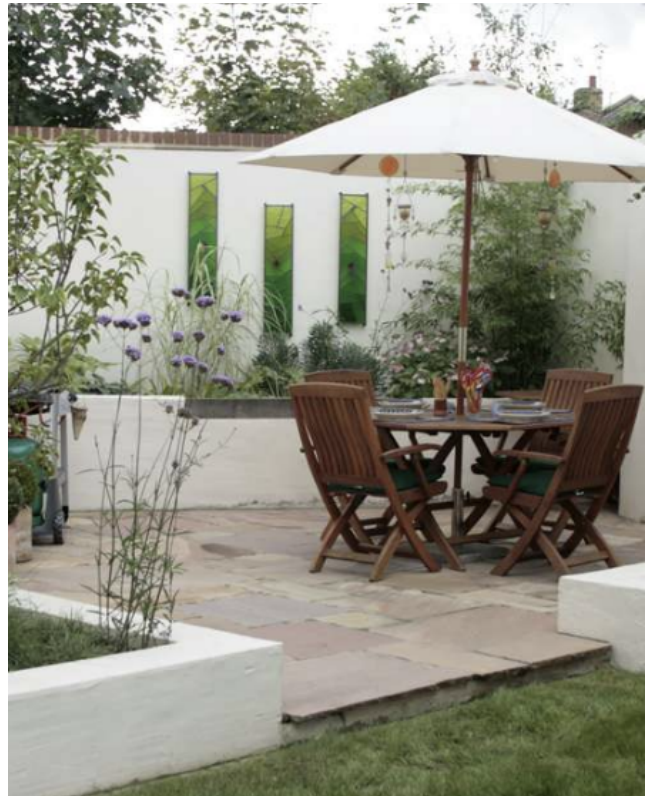


2. Incorporating decorative elements

Urban gardens can benefit from adding decorative features that enhance their aesthetic appeal. Use colourful pots, garden sculptures, or fairy lights to bring a touch of personality and charm to your garden. These ornamental elements can transform your urban space into a visually delightful oasis.

3. Maximising functionality and aesthetics

It's important to balance functionality and beauty in urban garden design. Consider incorporating seating areas, pathways, and water features to create an inviting and practical space. Seating areas provide a place to relax and entertain guests, while well-designed paths guide visitors through the garden. Water features, such as fountains or small ponds, add a soothing element and attract wildlife.

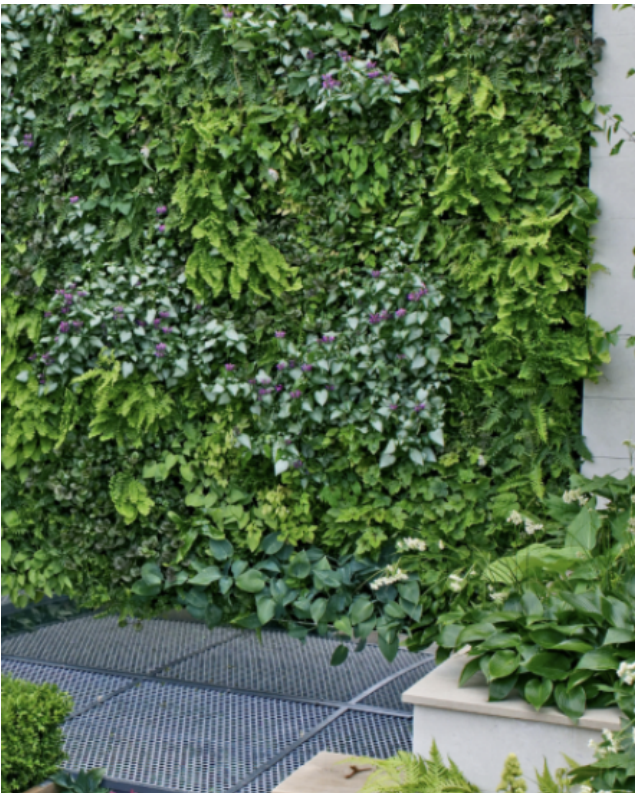


4. Embrace the limitations

Urban gardens often have restrictions, such as high walls, lack of soil, or limited access. Rather than seeing these as obstacles, view them as design opportunities. High walls and buildings can provide a backdrop for climbing plants and shade-loving species. Use raised beds or containers to overcome the lack of soil, allowing for a wider variety of plant choices. Privacy can be achieved by strategically placing trees, climbers, and fencing.

5. Take advantage of the urban microclimate

Urban gardens often benefit from extra warmth and shelter compared to their rural counterparts. This allows for cultivating exotic plants that might struggle in more extensive gardens. Embrace the warmth and create an inviting outdoor entertaining space. Incorporate elements such as fire pits or outdoor seating areas to make the most of your urban garden's unique microclimate.



6. Optimise space with a well-designed layout

Due to limited storage space and access constraints, alternatives to traditional lawns are worth considering. Ditching the lawn in favour of a well-designed layout featuring evergreen plants can create a stylish and low-maintenance space. Deep borders and raised benches underplanted with ferns can maximise the use of every inch of your urban garden.

7. Embrace modernity with hardscaping

Urban gardens can take inspiration from modern design trends by incorporating a sense of formality. Clean lines, asymmetric layouts, and contrasting materials can reflect the surrounding architecture and create an integrated aesthetic. Combine structured raised beds with natural and wild elements to balance architecture and nature.



8. Blur the boundaries between indoors and outdoors

Choose the same flooring materials to create a seamless flow between indoor and outdoor spaces. Using consistent materials can make even the smallest urban gardens feel more spacious and connected to the house, whether it's decking or patio tiles.

9. Switch flower beds for stylish containers

Container gardening is an excellent alternative to traditional flower beds, particularly in urban environments. Cluster pots of different sizes and heights to create depth and texture. This approach works well on balconies or rooftops, adding greenery and interest to confined spaces. Consider adding unique features like a pond in a pot for added charm.



10. Embrace the uniqueness of awkwardly shaped gardens

Urban gardens often have unconventional shapes, such as narrow or triangular areas. Embrace the quirks and create interest by painting walls or fences in light tones to expand the perceived space. Introduce levels and use climbers to distract from awkward angles, adding depth and visual appeal.



11. Plant vertically for space optimisation

If your urban garden is particularly small, avoid solid walls or fences that can cramp the space. Instead, cover vertical surfaces with greenery, such as climbers or living walls. Doing so frees up valuable floor space for other purposes, such as a lawn or decking area.



12. Make the most of light gardens

Light wells or tiny internal courtyard gardens can still be transformed into beautiful outdoor spaces. Opt for light-coloured walls and pale floor tiles to create a brighter atmosphere. Choose a few large plants rather than multiple small pots for elegance and simplicity. Incorporate seating areas and decorative elements to make the space inviting and cosy.

