



Nursery News

July 2004 - Research & Development
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The Art of Screening with Plants Blocking and Blending your Environment

Plants are the perfect door or moat to your property. A screen is a functional landscape, a living fence with many benefits-making the most of plant beauty by mixing color, form, texture, seasonal interests -while being a low cost alternative or compliment compared to many hardscape fencing methods. Screens can also be used for a variety of purposes with fewer zoning restrictions than constructed barriers.

You can find a screen scheme from our list below for difficult screening sites. See our plant character tables at www.beesongrows.com/ArchivePage.html for other siting considerations.

Estate Screen

Use a loose border to attain a tiered or layered look that will be a lower maintenance alternative to a hedge.

Examples:

- Back Row:* Small tree with a wide top - crabapple or Taller evergreen - pine or fir
- Middle Row:* Medium height shrubs - Viburnum, taller Spirea or a Mix of evergreen, and deciduous shrubs
- Front Row:* Groundcover type shrubs or Low evergreens

Pocket Screen

In small areas use odd numbers of a few types of plants to create a mini-screen.

Examples:

- 2-3 small trees or tall shrubs like Roses and Potentilla
- A medium size weeping tree
- Low evergreen shrubs

Wall Screen

In a narrow space where a medium to tall screen is needed.

Examples:

- Tall shrubs
Amelanchier
Viburnum
Lilac



Gossip Screen

Between houses or house and street, a 4-5 ft screen can be a gossip fence.

Examples:

- Roses
- Spirea

Patio privacy

A row of small trees or large shrubs in large containers creates an instant screen.

Examples:

- Trellis trained plants
- Small trees

In Your Face Security Hedge

In small yards, hedges can be used as screens and barriers; from very low to very high (15ft+). Higher maintenance compared to other screens.

Examples:

- Thick or thorny plants for security or windbreak
Hawthorn
Juniper
Arborvitae
Hornbeam

Castle Screen

Columnar forms for narrow areas, rows, or against buildings- also formal/classical look.

Examples:

- English Oak
- European Hornbeam



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Sprawl Mall Screen

Use plants with round or pyramidal forms for sites with limited root areas but plenty of overhead space such as parking lots, street medians, sidewalks.

Examples:

- Crabapples

Winter Screen

Mix evergreens and deciduous plants to create a year round screen

Examples:

- Evergreens or deciduous trees and shrubs - with curly or multiple stems for winter interest

Silence Screen

Use plants with thick dense foliage or ground level branches - block a view of fence or wall, control noise, block wind and snow

Examples:

- Pears
- Magnolia
- Unpruned evergreens
- Weeping cherries
- Weeping willows

Peek -A -Boo Screen

Use plants with thin wispy needles or small leaves or leaflets- soft filtered light for shade plants underneath

Examples:

- Evergreens
- Honeylocust

Bloomin' Screen

Select plants with colorful flowers, mix plants with different bloom times for seasonal color.

Examples:

- Spirea
- Lilacs
- Viburnum
- Weigela

In Your Nose Screen

Select plants with fragrant flowers to screen with scents.

Examples:

- Lilacs,
- Linden
- Fragrant Viburnum

Where the Wild Things Are Screen

Use plants that attract birds or other wildlife with flowers, fruits and habitat.

Examples:

- Amelanchier
- Crabapples
- Oaks

The Blushing Screen

Select plants with unusual or colorful foliage. Use plants with reddish colored leaves in spring or summer.

Examples:

- Barberry
- Spirea
- Weigela



When choosing your plants for the landscape, remember to pay close attention to plant roots as well as the health and structure of the top half. Many of the site requirements for the plants will pertain to roots and the continuation of their healthy growth. Roots will often forecast how well a transplant can perform in its new site.

Choosing plants from a local provenance or grow zone is like buying insurance for a successful transplant. At MCN, we strive to balance our plants and our environment with sustainable practices that ensure a healthy plant that survives and thrives in your design.