

OUT ON A LIMB

‘What is Xeriscaping?’

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A Xeriscape is a planting that has the ability to withstand dry conditions. No, it's not rocks, junipers, cactus and yuccas. A Xeriscape doesn't have to look like the Arizona desert. You can still have grass and irrigation. The purpose is to achieve a significant reduction in water usage.

There are seven basic principles to apply when installing a Xeriscape.

- Planning and design
- Soil analysis
- Practical turf areas
- Efficient irrigation
- Use of mulches
- Appropriate maintenance

Start with a plan. This plan will be done as any other except the turf areas should be small and reasonably shaped. Grass will require more irrigation than the shrub areas. Long narrow strips are more difficult to irrigate than compact blocky, square areas. Select a grass such as Bermuda which is more drought tolerant than most of the other grasses. Create water use zones. Mass all of the plants that demand higher uses of water in the same area. Generally select plants with a lower demand for water. Shrubs such as Nadina, Indian Hawthorn, Junipers,