



Steps to Convert from Grass to Xeriscape



Seven Steps to Successful Grass Removal:

1. Have a Plan

- ◆ Evaluate your site
- ◆ Sketch your lot
- ◆ Make a wish list
 - a. Play or entertainment area
 - b. Attract wildlife
 - c. Quiet place to relax
 - d. Color and shade
 - e. Vegetable or fruit gardening
 - f. Pool or spa
- ◆ Top Ten Landscape Tips (see handout)
- ◆ Landscape themes
 - a. Mexican or Mediterranean
 - b. Rustic or tropical
 - c. Formal or natural
- ◆ Consider
 - a. Replace the removed turf with landscaping, don't zero-scape
 - b. Energy conservation - placement of trees
 - c. Group plants
 - d. Include hardscaping
 - e. Function - pool pump, trash barrels, compost piles, etc.
 - f. HOA CC&R's

2. Remove the Turf

- ◆ Thoroughly kill all grass and weeds
- ◆ Methods of grass removal
 - a. Mechanical (bobcat, rototiller)
 - b. Chemical - Systemic herbicide with the active ingredient *Glyphosate* (Doomsday, Kill-Zall, KleenUp, RoundUp, Touchdown)
 - c. Neglect? (may not always work)
 - d. Solarization (lay plastic out on grass in the summer)
- ◆ Best time to apply herbicides
 - a. When grass is green and healthy
 - b. In the summer, when grass is actively growing (mid-June to mid Sept.)
 - c. In the morning when herbicide is absorbed more effectively
 - d. On a calm day to avoid 'wind drift'
- ◆ Increase herbicide effectiveness
 - a. Water the grass to green up
 - b. Spray 3-5 days after mowing
 - c. Spray in the morning
 - d. Do not spray right before an irrigation or rain
 - e. Add nitrogen to spray tank (1 tbl of water soluble nitrogen/gallon)
 - f. Follow label instructions

- ◆ Once grass is dead:
 - a. Scalp grass close to the ground
 - b. Rototill area, rake out grass and roots
 - c. Remove top 3-4" with a sod cutter or bobcat

3. Grade the Yard

- ◆ Before you dig, call Blue Stake to mark utilities, 602-263-1100
- ◆ Evaluate site
- ◆ Are drainage or other improvements required?
- ◆ Create gentle mounds, not too large
- ◆ Create swales too (depressions in soil to capture water)
- ◆ Consider water harvesting
- ◆ Do not use plastic!

4. Rework the Irrigation

- ◆ Retrofit or install new irrigation
- ◆ Plan on a good design using quality products
- ◆ Place different plant types on separate valves
 - a. Trees different from shrubs
 - b. High water use from low water use

5. Plant and Mulch

- ◆ Tips for plant selection
 - a. Location, location, location
 - b. Color, form & function
- ◆ Focus on native plants
- ◆ Plant selection resources
 - a. Books (see library book list)
 - b. Botanical gardens and demonstration gardens
 - c. Neighborhood landscapes
- ◆ Plant and stake properly (see pg 36 of Xeriscape booklet)

6. Take Care of It

- ◆ Water properly (see *Landscape Watering by the Numbers*)
- ◆ Fertilize sparingly
- ◆ Prune properly (see pg 47 of Xeriscape booklet)
- ◆ Spot spray any turf that returns

7. Enjoy It

- ◆ No more mowing
- ◆ Watch it grow and change with the seasons
- ◆ Enjoy the wildlife

