

FBMG Help Desk
Question of the Week

Every summer I struggle to maintain my grass. I have seen & heard about xeriscaping. Should I replace my lawn with it?

Consider flowerbed conversion as a more manageable project to start.

Consider Your HOA

What are the rules?

**Many Homeowner Associations have requirements in their bylaws about grass.
Make sure to check yours first.**



- *While it sounds like a wonderful fantasy to remove all of your grass, many Homeowner Associations have restrictions on what you can do, especially in the portion of your yard that is seen by the public.*
- *Make sure to check your restrictions before making any drastic changes.*
- *We have 3 HOA demonstration gardens on our campus and tours are available.*
- *However you would still need to check your individual HOA restrictions.*

A Widely Used Term!

What is the actual definition of Xeriscaping?

While xeriscaping means different things to different people and its implementation varies from person to person and place to place it is actually an amazing concept.



drier more desert area



more tropical area

Xeriscaping

- *Simply stated its purpose is to reduce or eliminate the need for irrigation, through implementing a landscape design using resource efficient planting materials which are native or adaptative and require little to no additional water than what occurs naturally.*

Benefits to environment:

- *water conservation*
- *decrease pollution*
- *self renewing*
- *support native wildlife*

Consider Naives

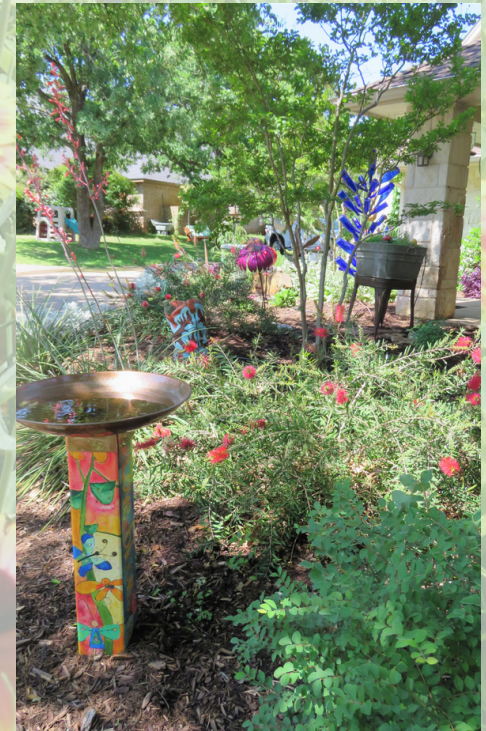
Seven Basic Principles

The Texas Agricultural Extension Service is engaged in educating Texans in Xeriscaping.

With principles that provide quality landscaping which help protect the environment and conserve water resources.

Seven basic principles which lead to saving water resources:

- *Planning and design - group plants with similar needs together*
- *Soil analysis - have your soil tested before getting started*
- *Practical turf areas - look for turf grass varieties that require the least amount of water and maintenance*
- *Appropriate plant selection - look for natives*
- *Efficient irrigation - use the correct type of irrigation for the situation ie sprinkler, drip or subterranean*
- *Use of mulches - conserve water and can add nutrients to the soil*
- *Appropriate maintenance - mow lawn to correct height, fertilize only when necessary and at the correct time*



Utilize Your Water Harvesting!

By utilizing your rain barrels or other methods of harvesting rainwater, you can irrigate your Xeriscape design



Rain barrel utilized as an irrigation source



Funnel utilized within a Texas Xeriscape

Rain Barrels

In addition to storing water for a non-rainy day, you can utilize your rain barrels to drip irrigate your Xeriscape

Other harvesting ideas

Utilize some visually interesting objects to assist with rain harvesting and irrigating your Xeriscape

- *Galvanized funnels or gutters*
- *Water troughs*
- *Large watering cans*
- *Rain chains to collect and direct water*
- *Whimsical or visually interesting - add some 'eye candy' and maybe even some sound*



Rain Chain

Economic and Ecologic Advantage

Two main advantages of incorporating Xeriscape designs within your landscape include a reduction in resources that equate to a Win-Win scenario

Economic Advantage

Xeriscape concepts reduce the need for using municipal or well water - utilizing the water harvesting techniques can provide much of the water requirements of your space.



Ecologic Advantage

Xeriscape designs are more ecologically conservative since they utilize plants that are native to the area, thus requiring much less maintenance including pesticides.

*Do you have questions
about your home
landscape and plants?*

*Contact the Fort Bend
Master Gardener Help Desk*

*Email:
FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu*

*Phone:
281-341-7068*

*The Help Desk is manned
Monday thru Friday,
9am-Noon*

<https://plantdatabase.uconn.edu/>
<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/xeriscaping/>
<https://www.thespruce.com/xeriscape-landscaping-meaning-2131129>
<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/collection/water-wise-home-landscape-xeriscape>
<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/techniques>
<https://aggiehort.tamu.edu/extension/xeriscape/table1.html>
<https://aggiehort.tamu.edu/extension/xeriscape/table3.html>
<https://aggiehort.tamu.edu/extension/xeriscape/table2.html>
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<https://aggiehort.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/drought/drought4.html>