

# **Xeriscape by Design**

Presented by

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# Principles of Xeriscape

- Create a well planned design\*
- Limit turf areas\*
- Select appropriate plants\*
- Improve the soil
- Use mulches
- Irrigate efficiently
- Maintain your landscape properly

# Goals

Conserve water

Create a more interesting and diverse landscape

Move towards a sustainable landscape

- Using less fertilizer
- Using less fuel
- Working with existing/local materials

# The Design Process

Follow these steps regardless of the size of your project. The result will be a well planned design that meets both your conservation and your lifestyle goals.

- Step 1 Site Analysis
- Step 2 Personal Analysis
- Step 3 Conceptual Design
- Step 4 Preliminary Design
- Step 5 Final Design

# Step 1 Site Analysis

Know what you've got – assets and challenges

- Identify existing features (both plants and hardscape) to keep, repair, replace or omit
- Identify microclimates
- Identify potential lawn-free zones
- Identify potential hydrozones

## Map it! Plan from a scaled drawing

- Start with a site survey or “Improvement Location Certificate”
- Transfer to graph paper – 8:1” or 4:1”
- Check for additional right-of-way
- Add all additional permanent features
- Note microclimates
- Note hydrozones

# Step 2 Personal Analysis

Know what you need

- What problems must be solved?
  - Privacy
  - Sun exposure
  - Wind
  - Erosion/drainage
  - Noise

## Know what you need

- How will you use the space?
  - Dining
  - Entertainment
  - Play
  - Pets
  - Gardens
  - Storage
- How much room will these activities require?
  - More than you think!

## Know what you want

- What are your favorite plants?
- What are your favorite colors?
- Any preferences for hardscape materials?
- What special amenities would enhance your enjoyment of your outdoor space?
  - Water feature
  - Fire pit
  - Kitchen
  - Bird feeding station, etc.

## Take time for a reality check

- What is your budget?
- What is your commitment to maintenance?
- Do you have any physical constraints, allergies, or irritants?



- What are your legal restraints?

- Plant location and spacing

- Minimum quantities

- Minimum sizes

- Maximum heights

- Specific species

# Step 3 The Conceptual Design

Define your style

- Formal, informal, or somewhere in between?

Define your gardening lifestyle

- Enclosed or open?
- Active or passive?

## Decide how you will define your spaces

- Ground plane
- Vertical plane
- Overhead plane

Decide if soft (plant) or hard materials will be used for these “architectural” needs

# Step 4 The Preliminary Design

Develop your hardscape design

- Circulation
- Entertainment/dining areas
- Other
  - Privacy, shade, safety, etc.

Keep shapes consistent with your style

Use materials/colors that match your home

Consider permeable surfaces

## Designate planting beds and lawn areas

- Limit lawn areas to spaces that are:
  - A minimum size of 10'x10'
  - Will be used for active play
  - You can mow in 20 minutes or less!

Keep shapes consistent with your theme

Site plants that will be used architecturally to solve environmental problems or to act as focal points.

Designate areas that will be primarily shrubs, perennials, or groundcovers.

- Keep high detail/maintenance plantings in high impact locations
- Remember your hydrozones!

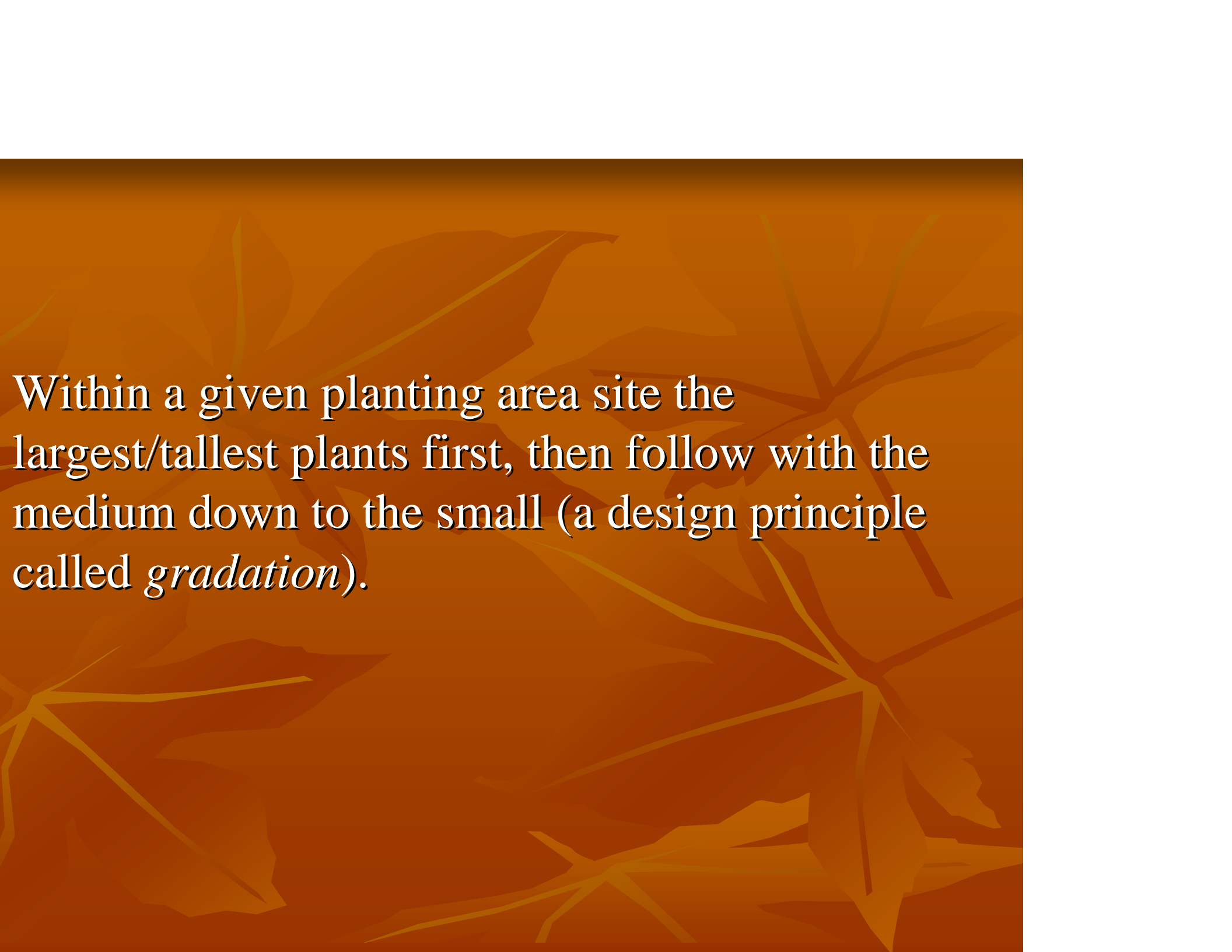
# Step 5 The Final Design

Make appropriate plant choices based on

- Microclimate
- Hydrozone
- Maintenance

## Make eye-pleasing plant choices

- Remember these key design concepts: contrast and repetition
- Consider plant aesthetics: working with size, form, texture and color

The background of the slide is a solid dark orange color, overlaid with a pattern of lighter orange and brown leaf silhouettes. The leaves are scattered across the frame, some overlapping, creating a naturalistic and textured appearance.

Within a given planting area site the largest/tallest plants first, then follow with the medium down to the small (a design principle called *gradation*).



Design an efficient irrigation plan to meet the needs of your plants.

Use local resources to access:

- The best products for the specific application
- The newest water management practices

# Implement your new Design

Demolition

Hardscape construction

Soil prep

Irrigation

Planting

Mulch

Enjoy!

# Summary

Take the time to understand your site, your lifestyle, and some simple plant selection tips, and you can create your own beautiful – and xeric - outdoor environment!