



The Less Is More Garden: Big Ideas for Designing Your Small Yard

Susan Morrison

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“Gives homeowners solid ideas to help transform small gardens into a personalized, thoughtful, and unique destinations.” —*Gardenista*

When it comes to gardens, bigger isn't always better. A smaller space requires fewer plants and less time to design, install, and maintain. *The Less Is More Garden* shows you how to take advantage of every square foot of space. Designer Susan Morrison offers savvy tips to match your landscape to your lifestyle, draws on years of experience to recommend smart plants with seasonal interest, and suggests hardscape materials to personalize your space. Inspiring photographs highlight a variety of inspiring small-space designs from around the country. With *The Less Is More Garden*, you'll see how limited space can mean unlimited opportunities for gorgeous garden design.

The Less Is More Garden: Big Ideas for Designing Your Small Yard Details

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Author : Susan Morrison

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From Reader Review The Less Is More Garden: Big Ideas for Designing Your Small Yard for online ebook

Cathymw says

Actual rating 2.5. I was hoping for ideas for a small yard and was disappointed. The diagrams and examples she had were for yards that are huge in comparison to a small city yard. I would have to knock down several neighbor's houses to get a yard that big!

Because of this big discrepancy, it was not working (for me, at least) to try and adapt her advice to our small yard. The pictures were beautiful, though.

Jacqueline says

Got to page 140. Liked it so far overall; some good general tips and ideas.

Emma says

This book is full of useful ideas, hints and tips for designing your garden and making the most of the space available. It is full of handy diagrams and charts as well as beautiful photos of real life examples. The author focuses a lot more on what people want from their garden than on how to make it look a certain way or fit a particular style.

My only issue with the book though is that none of the gardens in the photographs are actually small. Some of them are massive!

[Free ARC from Net Galley]

Andrea says

Susan Morrison provides the reader with various gardens and you can pick and choose what works best for your garden. She provides questions and solutions for unique gardening dilemmas you may come across.

Received an advance copy through Net Galley.

Randal White says

Excellent Resource! An excellent resource to gardeners like me, with smaller yards. While other books concentrate on grandiose plans for large, expansive yards, Morrison explains how "less is more" for the more common, urban sized yard. She offers practical advice to design the smaller areas, without "busting the budget". I will be using this book extensively for a long time! Wonderful photographs and ideas!

Pam says

I really liked this book but down graded my rating because of the book's subtitle, "Big Ideas For Designing Your Small Yard." There really aren't any small city lots photographed for this book, most are small to medium sized suburban lots. Other than that this book is great for anyone buying a new home and looking to create a new garden. Susan Morrison does a great job asking the "right" questions to insure your garden is designed for your family. There are a few areas she skipped over or completely neglected like children, play sets, pools, pets, trash cans, potting areas...in other words she focused on the pretty stuff. Morrison gardens in California so while she tried to address colder regions she did not do it very well. While she provides some plant lists they are very limited. The book had a great mix of written text and photographs.

Ita says

This is a Timber Press book so it's quality all the way: sturdy cover, quality paper, LOTS of gorgeous pictures to give you ideas and inspiration. I confess I didn't actually read it. I've read a lot of gardening books and they say mostly the same thing. So I skimmed the writing and mostly looked at the pictures to get ideas I could implement in my garden. There were a handful which I liked enough to consider.

This book is definitely a good resource for people with a small space for gardens.

Lorilin says

As the title suggests, this book is focused on making the most of a small backyard space. It's divided into eight sections and covers a good amount of information. Here is a breakdown of each chapter:

- Chapter 1 -- intent (what will you be doing in the garden? when will you be outside? who will be with you?)
- Chapter 2 -- design
- Chapter 3 -- guidelines for specific elements (like patios, decks, pathways, stairs, etc.)
- Chapter 4 -- how to make the most of a small space (through vertical gardening, diagonal gardening, lawn alternatives, focal points, etc.)
- Chapter 5 -- how to engage the senses
- Chapter 6 -- hardscape elements
- Chapter 7 -- low maintenance plants
- Chapter 8 -- how to give your garden a sense of space that connects it to whatever region you're in

If you've read a lot of gardening books, much of this info will probably be familiar to you. But author Susan Morrison has a knack for delivering advice in a positive, creative, and engaging way. I found myself excited to change up certain elements of my garden and outdoor living space.

I was especially surprised to realize that I haven't been utilizing our backyard in a way that lines up with our lifestyle. For example (and this is so embarrassingly obvious, but oh well), I watch my kids play outside basically all summer. I love to sit in the sun and relax, but our backyard chairs are uncomfortable and smushed in the corner. Why do I do that to myself? You better believe that, come spring, I'm going to move our comfy chairs out to help make our yard more functional and cozy.

I've also decided I'm going to plant something fragrant by our backyard window, so the scent will waft through the backyard and even into our living room, the most used room of our house.

Little details like that make a difference---sometimes even a really big difference. I loved the quote from Steve Aitken (editor for Fine Gardening magazine) in the preface:

When confronted with something that isn't turning out the way we'd hoped, our impulse is to add something. [And when that doesn't work,] we add something else. What we wind up with is something so full of competing flavors, colors, tchotchkes, or plants that we can't even tell what the problem is anymore.

It's true. We don't need more stuff. We just need clarified and focused intent. An honest look at our own needs coupled with a simple but clear plan can help turn a dysfunctional space (whether sparse and cold or chaotic and overgrown) into a comforting oasis. I love that.

ARC provided through Net Galley...but then I bought the book anyway.

See more of my reviews at www.BugBugBooks.com!

Patti says

When I check out Timber Press Books from my library usually I read and re read them, however this book held no interest for me. It's for professional landscape designers I suppose.

Marzie says

I received an Advance Reader Copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

The goal of this book is to help the homeowner design beautiful gardens for smaller spaces. Whether you're in a townhome or a freestanding home with a small yard, Morrison offers ideas for how to develop rich-looking, inviting garden spaces. The idea of carefully assessing the scale of what you can do in your space, by selecting plants, accessories/features, and especially furniture that fit the space but doesn't make the user feel, as Morrison puts it, like an adult squeezing into elementary school furniture. Morrison skillfully addresses the error of thinking that one large patio surrounded by a bit of lawn will feel larger than a number of smaller well-designed nooks or regions in your yard. She also examines planning for your year-round climate and its importance with regard to actual outdoor use. Climate should be what determines the features you elect to use in your garden. For example, do you really need a firepit in South Florida? The same space might be better served with a quiet water feature, like an urn fountain.

There's much to be learned from Morrison's suggestions. This is a useful book that helps the gardener understand the vital importance of scale in design.

Joan says

This garden book shows many different and unique ideas for using your front and backyard space to fit your needs. It asks questions such as, what are you doing to do in the yard, how often do you cook outside, need a play area, pet friendly, entertaining guests, and more. These make you really look at how you want to use your space. Includes garden plans and plant suggestions for all the settings. Pictures are beautiful and engaging. Lots of practical and easy to put into place ideas to make your garden work for you, not you working in it all the time.

Psusan says

The Less Is More Garden lives up to its name of Big Ideas for Designing Your Small Yard. Susan Morrison gives the homeowner with a small yard plenty of ideas, along with questions to ponder as they consider their landscaping. Besides the tips, and ideas, there are the important aspects of focusing on the people, pets and activities in which the area will be used as well as maintenance involved. These are extremely helpful in gardening planning besides the usual region or climate of where the home garden is located.

The photographs certainly drew the eye to the lovely possibilities there are suggested. However, the charts and templates were even more helpful. This is not a definitive how-to but more of guide that ask practical questions, gives possible solutions and allows the gardener to put their own personal stamp on the area around their home. While the entire focus is on small areas which is great, those with larger yard space would also benefit from considering much that is in this book. My home is located in a rural area on several acres, but I still found the tips, suggestions, ideas and thoughts to ponder valuable.

The publisher through Net Galley provided a copy.

Ryan says

The book says it's the less is more guide to garden design, but it doesn't look like it. All the gardens pictured are beautiful and full. The author goes through lots of things on how you too can do this at home. The things she wants you to consider are the usual, such as location and season, but also who will be using it and who will be with you, when you use it. It's not a definitive guide, but it is a well done and gorgeous book.

Dixie says

I requested an advanced review copy of this book because my home sits plunk in the middle of a small lot with tiny front and back yards and I was looking for ideas. Boy, did I get ideas!

This book has an incredible amount of information to take in. Ms. Morrison provides lots of design theory (and the whys behind it) as well as sample designs. She speaks to the many uses for all types of plants, containers, paving materials, etc. to provide outdoor living space that you and your family/friends will truly enjoy. I loved the many pictures, the design and planting information, the charts and diagrams, and the

advice for working in small sections. This is a great book to have around for reference and/or for inspiration. I voluntarily read an advanced review copy provided by the publisher via Netgalley and I offer my honest opinion in response.

Cyndy says

Great ideas for my own yard.
