

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Why use an AILDM landscape designer?

- **Design expertise** - Make the best use of your land, creating beautiful and practical spaces. Communicating these ideas is just as important as creating them, so AILDM members draw clear scale landscape plans (including sections and elevations) for local government, contractors or your own future use
- **Technical training** - Our knowledge of site surveying, level changes and quality hardscape construction allows us to plan stairs, retaining walls and correct falls for draining all areas
- **Soil and drainage advice** - We understand soil structure, profiles and plant nutrition, so you can avoid your new garden failing
- **Breadth of plant knowledge** - We can take your garden from just the ordinary to something special, with interesting plants chosen to thrive in your soils and climate
- **Environmental management** - Skills and planning to create a garden that enhances your local environment
- **Professional approach** - Your garden design is tailor-made for your needs, your site and your lifestyle and we have appropriate insurance for the professional work we undertake
- **Approval by your local authority** - Local authorities require a landscape plan prepared only by a qualified professional and we understand the complexities of new local and state legislation

### How much does a landscape designer charge?

Each designer sets their own fees. These will vary according to their experience, reputation and level of expertise. Fees may be quoted as a lump sum fee based on a set number of hours, or as an hourly rate.

### Does the landscape designer supervise the builder or landscape contractor's work?

This depends on your contract with them. If the designer is also a licensed landscape contractor and your contract includes installation of the design, then supervision of the building component is included. Some designers offer contract administration as an additional part of their service.

### When do I pay for work done?

This depends on your agreed contract. Your landscape designer will give you a payment schedule at your first meeting or with the fee proposal.

### Does the designer retain copyright on their drawings, plans and documentation?

Yes, even though you are paying for it, all documentation remains the property of the landscape designer. The fee pays for the right to use the design once, on the site for which it was designed.

## ABOUT AILDM

**AILDM is a limited company under the Corporations Law Act, managed by a governing body – the National Council, which is elected by corporate members. You can find further information about office bearers on the AILDM website, or by contacting the administrator.**

**Incorporated in 1994, AILDM has grown into a strong national organisation, with members in all states and major cities as well as many regional centres.**

### OUR MEMBERS ENGAGE IN:

- Landscape consultancy and design
- Environmental management
- Landscape rehabilitation and restoration
- Arboriculture
- Bush regeneration
- Landscape architecture
- Landscape construction
- Horticultural advice
- Landscape heritage consultancy
- Education and training
- Landscape maintenance
- Project planning and management
- Local government
- Wholesale and retail nursery

**Please contact AILDM for further information about our activities, or about individual members.**

## CONTACT AILDM

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**DO YOU NEED  
A LANDSCAPE  
DESIGNER?  
A GUIDE FOR PROPERTY OWNERS**

**Australian Institute of Landscape  
Designers & Managers Ltd**





Landscape design is now a key part of the planning, design and approval process for your building or renovation project. When you submit plans to council for major works, a landscape design prepared by a qualified landscape designer or landscape architect is often required by the local authority.

AILDM, the Australian Institute of Landscape Designers and Managers, is the national professional body for landscape designers. This guide explains how a landscape designer can help you with the approval process, and also help you make the best use of your outdoor spaces.

## WHAT DOES A LANDSCAPE DESIGNER DO?

Landscape designers combine technical, horticultural and design expertise to create and implement beautiful outdoor spaces for private homes, public parks, schools and playgrounds, aged care facilities and many other commercial landscapes.

To become a member of AILDm, landscape design professionals must demonstrate sound knowledge of landscape design principles, plants and environmental management. They are responsible for upholding AILDm's objectives and must comply with its Code of Ethics.

## WHAT SERVICES DO LANDSCAPE DESIGNERS PROVIDE?

Landscape designers offer a range of services including design only, construction of your design and project administration:

### 1 DESIGN - PREPARING A LANDSCAPE CONCEPT PLAN

- Discuss and clarify your ideas to understand your ideal outdoor landscape
- Analysis of the site and any design constraints
- Design development, providing sketches for you to review and approve
- Sourcing and recommending plants and hardscape elements, such as paving, fencing, lighting, decorative features and furniture. They may be able to supply the specified components
- Preparation of the final concept plan for submission to your local authority, as well as detailed drawings for the Construction Certificate application
- Final plans may also include a design philosophy, horticultural notes (soil health), plant details with maintenance information, specifications for contractors and suggested hardscape materials

### 2 DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

- Following the design phase, they can prepare detailed construction drawings and specifications for the Construction Certificate
- Ordering materials
- Overseeing the timetable, budget and installation of all elements of the design

### 3 PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

You can also engage a landscape designer to manage your landscape or builder contracts

- Advice on a suitable contract and the tendering process
- Oversee the quality of works and any rectification as required
- Manage progress payments and variations
- Liaise with you throughout the process and advice on completion and certification

## HOW DO I CHOOSE A LANDSCAPE DESIGNER?

You can be confident an AILDm member business acts with integrity and in a professional manner, complies with all applicable policies and procedures, encourages environmentally sound practices and has relevant insurance.

To find an AILDm landscape designer or landscape architect in your area, visit [www.aildm.com.au](http://www.aildm.com.au) and search 'Find a Member'.

Before you contact them for a consultation or quote, be prepared:

- Make sure you have some clear ideas for your outdoor space
- Have a budget in mind for design and construction
- Confirm their professional credentials on the AILDm website and review their portfolio or website. Bear in mind designers can usually adapt their style to suit your needs

During your first consultation, you can clarify your requirements and ask questions. The designer should explain the design process and explain their fees and payment program. As they are providing professional advice, some designers will charge for an initial consultation.

Following this meeting the designer will submit a fee proposal or letter of agreement, which forms the contract once signed. You should ask for details of their relevant insurance, and also for client references or addresses of completed gardens if you have no knowledge of their previous work.

It is important to feel comfortable in your relationship with your landscape professional, so you may want to outline your project with a few landscape designers to get a sense of different working styles.

## HOW DO I ENSURE MY LANDSCAPE DESIGN PROJECT RUNS SMOOTHLY?

Here are some things to consider at every stage:

### 1 INITIAL CONSULTATION

- Have a written brief and portfolio of ideas - your designer may also provide a questionnaire to complete
- Engage a professional surveyor (if this has not already been done) to provide a detailed plan of your property and current survey of the area - your designer can organise this if you prefer
- Make sure you understand the contract or letter of agreement before you sign

### 2 DURING THE PROJECT

- You should feel confident your landscape designer has the expertise to take care of any complex technical elements or specific site design demands
- Be aware that any changes after the design phase will incur additional charges, either in plan amendments charged by the designer and/or in building and material costs
- Understand that there are factors outside the control of those installing or building your project which could affect completion dates

### 3 HANDLING ANY ISSUES

- If you have any questions during the building or installation phase, ask the person responsible for that contract (your architect, builder, landscape contractor or landscape designer). You can also approach the professional body representing that industry
- Keep written records of discussions and meetings
- If you have any concerns with your landscape design service, talk it through with the designer first. If you need help resolving this issue, and you've engaged an AILDm member, you can contact AILDm via our website

As with any other professional service, paying your designer's invoices within the specified time frame will also help everything run on time.