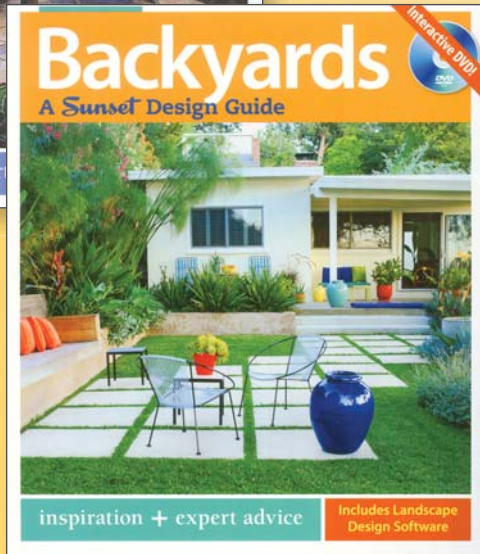


CASE STUDY:

SUNSET BOOKS



MISSION

Create a production structure while maintaining creativity and staying within the client's budget.

THE CLIENT

Sunset Books produces gorgeous full-color books that inspire readers to be creative with their living spaces. These books are available in home improvement stores across the nation, not traditional bookstores, so Sunset relies on eye-catching photos and book design to assure the do-it-yourself crowd that these books will help them create something extraordinary.

THE CHALLENGE

When Sunset came to PG with these books, they were bogged down by a time-intensive and expensive process, but they were wary of giving up oversight of their product and new to working with outside vendors. The team at Sunset selected almost two hundred live pages from previous books and set us the task of creating a design document and specs based solely on the appearance of those existing pages.

PRECISION

Case Study Concrete Cool

THIS PAGE With its subtle surface textures of by grass and trees, Zeland fits well to water views without overpowering the landscape. The design and color scheme is subtle, with a focus on texture and color.

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP The ever-changing patterns of the sky and the ever-changing textures of the grass and trees create a dynamic and ever-changing scene.

OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM A linear wall with a glass surface creates a right angle with a white finish. Concrete steps, a water feature, and a concrete wall create a modern and functional space.

Landscape designer Bernard Traylor designed this modern garden in San Jose, California, just south of the San Francisco Bay. Created in the view from the living room windows, a recirculating fountain followed from a shallow bowl forms a subtle focal point. Curving around it is a concrete wall that in the perfect height for seating, it also separates the space near the house from the wider landscape beyond without obscuring the view. The wall structure between two pairs of Chinese elms originally planned decades ago by the celebrated landscape architect Thomas Church. A second, lower wall serves as a boundary between the entry and the pool area beyond.



The Elements

- **Curving Wall.** The U-shaped concrete wall was placed in place in two sections. After the forms were removed, the surface was hand finished to give it a smooth, organic surface with natural variations in color.
- **Shallow Fountain.** A wide, shallow concrete bowl constantly overflows into a bed of grass. The bowl rests on a square that conceals a water reservoir containing a recirculating pump.
- **Pool with Fountain.** A rectangular swimming pool surrounded by stepped plants fits the landscape's aesthetic perfectly. To bring the sound of running water to the garden, a bronze pipe arches from a possible ledge of steel above and spills water into the pool in a never-ending stream.






PRECISION GRAPHICS

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Chapter 2

Backyard Spaces

Backyard hardscaping includes patios, decks, and paths, which define activity areas and lead you from one destination point to the next. The materials you build with will influence the style and function of your outdoor living spaces and will indicate whether your garden is meant to be traveled through efficiently or leisurely. This chapter discusses all of your hardscaping options, including suggestions on giving your garden height and drama with trellises and arbors. It also covers the pros and cons of incorporating a traditional lawn into the backyard when water is increasingly precious.

30 Backyards



ABOVE Contained within this back-lined pond is a variety of water plants to bloom.

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP The small, shallow pond is not too small to make a large pond that looks like a single unit.

OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM The sophisticated pairing of stone and water, paired with a variety of submerged plants, provides a beautiful backdrop, and a wonderful edge.

Pond Life
If you plan to have fish and plants in your pond, place it where it will get at least 8 hours of sunlight per day. To protect fish from predators, design your pond so that its sides drop at least 2½ feet straight down, or place pieces of wide drainage on the bottom so the fish can hide there. If you want to overwinter goldfish where temperatures get very low, part of the pond should be at least 2 feet deep. You need an area that's 3 feet deep.

Check with your local nursery about which water plants are best suited by your area, or purchase one of the collections of pond plants offered by suppliers over the Internet. These are grouped based on climate and pond size, and they typically include all the plants you'll need for a well-balanced pond. Some plants are most useful for oxygenating the water, particularly important if fish are making a home there; these often float on or just beneath the water's surface. Other pond plants, including the popular lotus and water lily, are grown in submerged pots. Plants that float on the pond's surface, like water hyacinth and water lettuce, can multiply rapidly. This is not a serious problem in your own pond (you can scoop out the excess), but be sure they don't wind up in local waterways.

156 Water Features (Photo)

Water Bowls
One of the simplest yet most effective water features you can add to your garden is a stone bowl filled to the brim. The water's surface acts as a mirror, bringing a bit of sky down to ground level. Some bowls have natural depressions that will hold water if the stone is colored correctly, and these are especially weather-looking. Place a water bowl next to a bench or at the top of steps—anywhere you want to encourage people to pause for a moment. Be sure to refresh the water frequently to discourage mosquitoes.

Some bowls, like the one shown above, have a small hole in the bottom to allow water to drain away.



PRECISION



Designing with Containers

When it comes to the scale of patio containers, a common mistake is to purchase ones that are too small. Landscape designer Bernard Trainor has some advice: "When you're shopping for a patio container, pick one in a style you like, then double the size! A too-small pot can look pitiful against the large scale of a house or patio. Also, the smaller the pot, the more often it will need watering."

In a formal patio design, identical pots may be placed symmetrically around the space; for a more casual look, choose a variety of containers. Choose ones with a common thread that ties them together; for instance, five pots of a similar color but of different shapes and sizes.

OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT A white cube filled with a broad-leaved shrub makes a bold statement against a contemporary fence.

OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT Pots of different shapes and sizes, in a similar warm color, hold a lively mixture of plants in burgundy, white, and green.

ABOVE LEFT Set off by a lemon-yellow wall, this concrete pot of gun-metal gray is a perfect match for the leaves of a bronzy phloxium.

ABOVE RIGHT This stuffed ceramic bowl can be easily moved around the patio, and as individual plants outgrow it, they can be moved into the garden.

OUR SOLUTION

From the first two finished books, the PG team developed a set of templates, each with a particular arrangement of photos and text. These templates were turned over to the writing/editing team at Sunset in the form of annotated PDFs. Each template included word and character counts, and indicated specific photo placement. The writers and developmental editors then used these templates as they finalized the manuscript by selecting an appropriate template for each spread, then choosing photos to fit the layout and writing text to fit the text space allowed in the template. This allowed for page layouts that had great variety and yet could still be produced efficiently.

THE FINAL RESULTS

- Two great books
- A satisfied client

