

Stunning Country Retreats

The ultimate guide to crafting jaw-dropping landscapes that
celebrate the wonders of nature




HILL N DALE
LANDSCAPING



Rural Ontario is a place of rare beauty. It's full of natural charm and tranquillity, and the potential for your landscape is nothing short of spectacular!

We've been designing and building beautiful country landscapes in Mulmur, Creemore and the surrounding areas since 1994. We know it takes a lot of care and planning to create an amazing landscape that fits into your lifestyle and celebrates the natural beauty of your surroundings. That's why we created this guide.

In this Guide, we provide practical tips, advice and plenty of inspiration to push the boundaries of your creativity and help you envision an exciting new landscape — one that works with your property's unique characteristics, harmonizes with nature and provides an amazing space to relax with family and friends!

Ready? Let's get started!

James Godbold, CLP, HLT

Founder

Here is what you will find inside.

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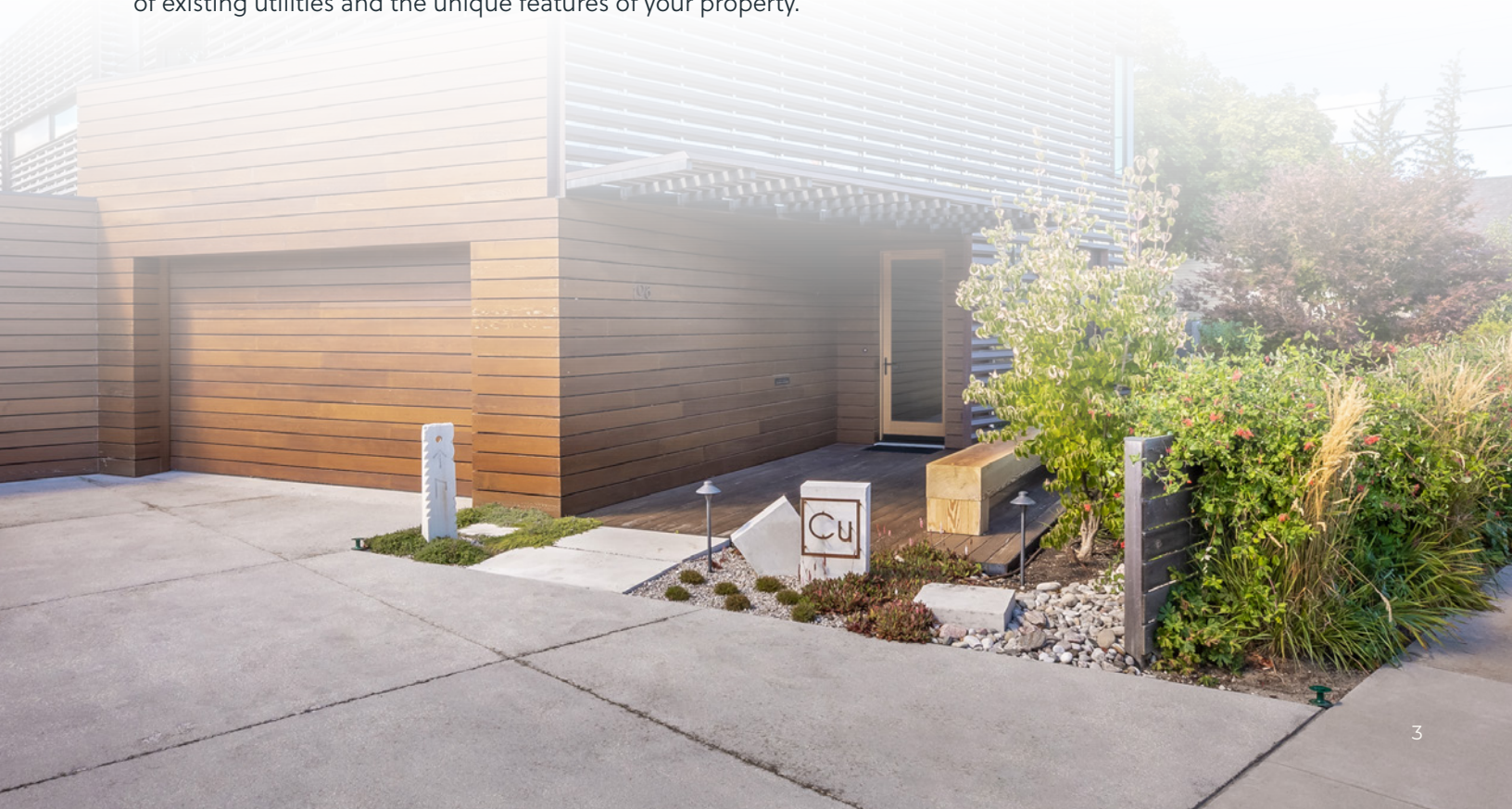
Plan Before You Build

Constructing your dream home on a country property is generally more complex than building a home within the city limits, with contractors facing some unique challenges:

- Limited access to utilities and infrastructure, including electrical grids, water supply and sewage systems.
- More complex site conditions, such as uneven terrain, rocky soil and poor drainage.
- Unique zoning restrictions, environmental regulations and land-use considerations.
- A closer connection to natural environments requires contractors to consider environmental factors, such as preserving natural features, protecting wildlife habitats and managing erosion.

If you're building a new home, working with a professional landscape company like Hill'N Dale Landscaping can take the stress out of the process and will make your life a lot easier. We'll help you plan where to place your septic, driveway, well and other features when deciding on your home's location. This will ensure you get the best results with the least headaches.

If there is an existing home on your property, our professional landscape designer will help you optimize your space by taking into account the location of existing utilities and the unique features of your property.



Embrace Challenging Landscapes

Our region's undulations and rugged terrain are beautiful, but they also come with some challenges. An expert Landscape Designer can help you avoid problems such as poor water drainage, unwanted snow drifting, wind protection and grading for ease of access and flow around the property. As experts on local topography, we know how to work around even the most challenging issues to create stunning landscapes that complement and enhance the natural features.

Emphasize natural contours

Instead of attempting to alter or flatten the land, we work with the natural contours and slopes. Highlighting the existing undulations create a visually captivating and dynamic landscape. Terracing or retaining walls can be installed to help define various levels and create usable spaces.



Choose natural materials for hardscapes

Hardscape elements such as stone walls, steps, patios or pathways look best when constructed using natural materials that complement their surroundings. These elements also provide structure and guidance while adding aesthetic appeal.



“Thank you and your wonderful Hill’N Dale team for the remarkable work you’ve done to transform our property. We’re so pleased with the quality of work, the speed with which it was done and with your great receptivity and quick response to all our questions, concerns, revisions etc.” — D.V.

Add a water feature

If it makes sense for your property, consider including a cascading waterfall or meandering stream in your landscape design. These elements can enhance the natural beauty of your property, making it feel like an organic part of the environment. At Hill'N Dale Landscaping, we have extensive experience in designing, planning and building ponds and other water features.



Choose appropriate plants

Choose plants that are adapted to the local environment and can withstand the challenges posed by the climate and soil conditions on your property. Use the slopes and varying elevations to create layered planting schemes that add depth and interest.



Balance beauty and function

While it's important to create visually stunning designs, you must also consider practical aspects. Ensure that the landscape design allows for proper drainage, erosion control and accessibility. These are typically "unseen" details that professionals help manage.



“It has been great working with Hill'N Dale. The communication has been open and straightforward with the quality of work being excellent.” — B.T.

Assessing Your Property

Identifying issues and challenges in landscaping projects is crucial for successful design and implementation. Here are some methods to identify and address these concerns, along with some basic solutions.

Poor drainage

To identify areas with poor drainage, look for standing water, spongy ground or signs of erosion. Depending on the underlying cause, there are several ways to solve drainage problems.

- Install French drains or subsurface drainage systems to redirect excess water
- Grade the landscape to create a proper slope and direct water away from structures
- Use permeable paving materials or create rain gardens to promote water infiltration
- Amend the soil with organic matter to improve its structure and drainage capacity
- Strategically shape the land and create swales to channel water away from low-lying areas or towards drainage outlets
- Plant grass or other vegetation to help absorb and filter water

Slopes or uneven ground

Steep slopes or uneven terrain can pose challenges even for professional landscapers, but there are several ways to increase the usable space on your property.

- Construct retaining walls or terraces to create level areas, prevent erosion and help manage slopes while adding structure and accessibility
- Use erosion control methods, like planting ground cover or installing erosion control blankets
- Build multi-level decks or patios to maximize the available space and take advantage of the views
- Incorporate stairs, ramps or pathways to connect the different levels and provide safe and convenient access

Utilities

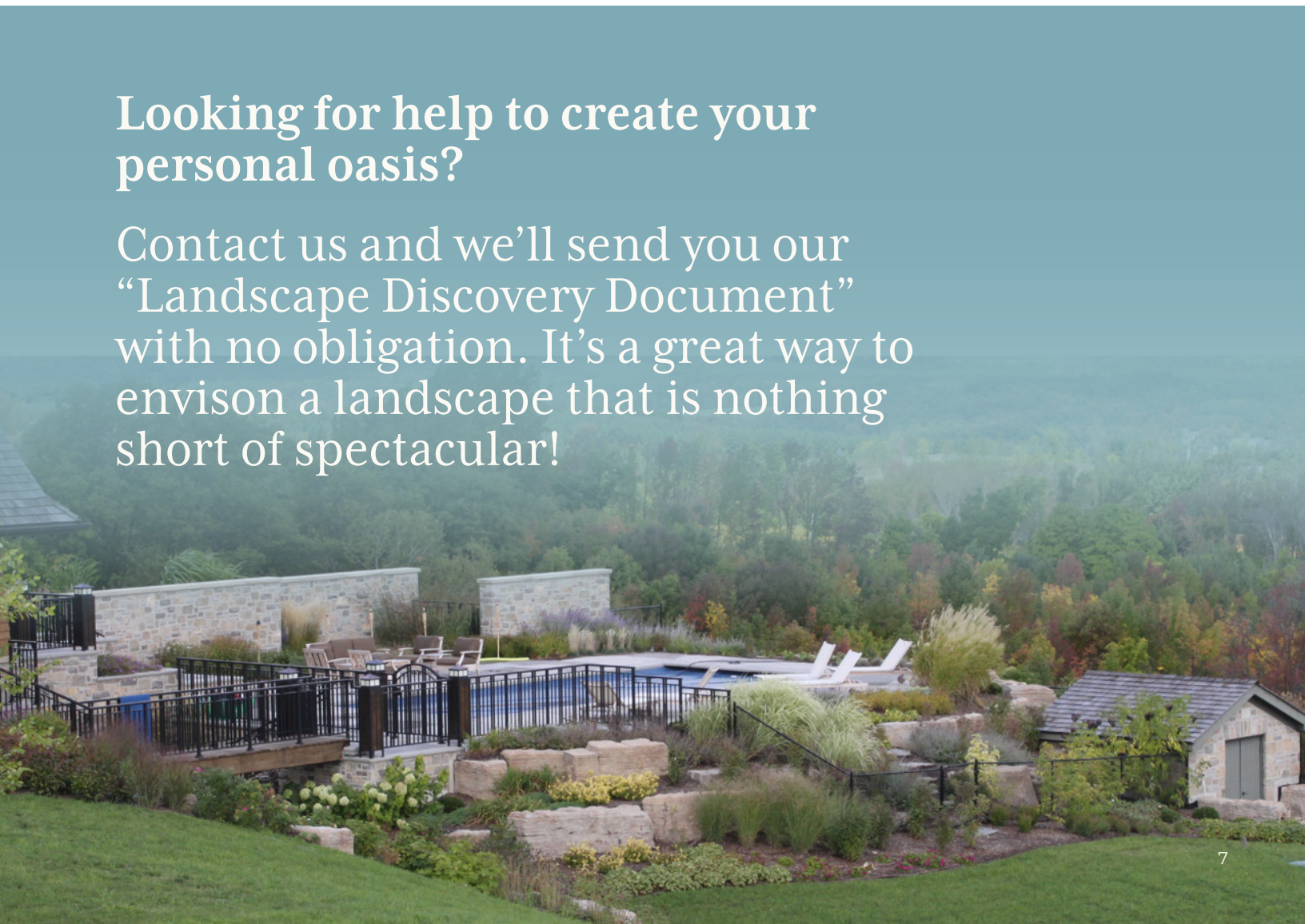
Identify the location of underground utilities like water lines, gas lines or electrical wiring. Check to see which services are available if you're building a new home.

- Contact utility companies to locate and mark underground lines before any excavation work begins
- Design landscaping elements that do not interfere with utility lines, and be sure to include electrical and plumbing when planning outdoor kitchens or living areas
- Allow access points for utility maintenance and repairs, such as utility boxes or panels

It's important to note that you may experience other site-specific challenges. For more complex issues, contact us. We are here to help!

Looking for help to create your personal oasis?

Contact us and we'll send you our "Landscape Discovery Document" with no obligation. It's a great way to envision a landscape that is nothing short of spectacular!



Creating Your Personal Oasis

When assessing your space, you need to think about how you plan to use it, as this will affect your design choices.

How much time do you spend outdoors?

Your needs will vary based on how much time you plan to spend outside.

- Under 5 hours per week
- 5-10 hours per week
- As much as possible

How do you like to spend your time outdoors?

Check all that apply.

- Working/relaxing in the garden
- Lounging by the pool
- Soaking in the hot tub
- Relaxing by a fire
- Playing sports and games
- Cooking and dining al fresco
- Hosting parties and gatherings
- Reading under a shady tree
- Exploring nature
- Other

Who will be using the property?


Consider everyone who will be using the yard when creating your design.

- It's just us
- Kids/grandkids
- Pets
- We like to host large gatherings

Why are you upgrading your landscape?

The reason you're upgrading or changing your landscape will influence where you'll spend the bulk of your budget.

- Our landscape needs refreshing
- We want to spend more time outside
- We want to make better use of our space
- Our front entrance needs to be more inviting
- We've just moved in and need a new landscape that reflects our lifestyle
- We're selling and want to increase curb appeal
- Other



Hill'N Dale is a Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association member and proud recipient of their Awards of Excellence in multiple categories.

Creating Your Wishlist

With newfound insights into your challenges and your property's intended use, it's time to unleash your imagination and start dreaming! Don't limit yourself... we can help you work through logistics later.

Hardscapes & Other Surfaces

- Patios
- Decks
- Paths & Walkways
- Driveways & Entrances
- Retaining/Garden Walls
- Pool Deck

Softscapes

- Gardens & Plantings
- Lawns/Turf Area

Lifestyle Features

- Landscape Lighting
- Outdoor Audio
- Ponds & Water Features
- Swim Ponds
- Open Shade Structures
(Pavilions, Gazebos, Arbours etc.)
- Closed Shade Structures
(Cabana, Pool House etc.)
- Privacy Screens
- Outdoor Kitchens
(Bars, Pizza Ovens, Barbecues, etc.)
- Outdoor Living Rooms
- Pools
(Gunite, Fiberglass, Concrete/Vinyl)
- Swim Spa/Hot Tub
(Prefab or Custom)
- Fireplace, Fire Pit or Firebowl
(Wood-Burning or Natural Gas)



Outdoor Games & Sports

- Playground/Play Equipment
- Trampoline
- Sandbox/Beach Area
- Sports Court
(Volleyball, Basketball, Pickleball etc.)
- Lawn Games
- Putting Green

Sustainable Options

- Rainwater Harvesting/Rain Gardens
- Permeable Paving
- Composting
- Irrigation



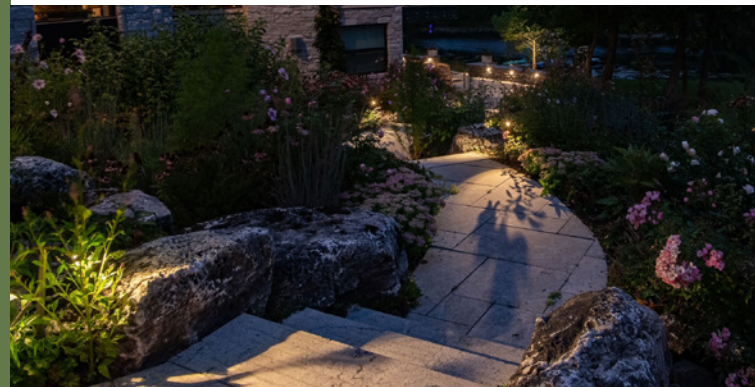
Don't forget about landscape lighting...

A lighting system entices you to spend more time outdoors, increases your home's property value and keeps everyone safe after dark. Lighting is essential in country settings.

- Highlight your stunning gardens and specimen plants
- Walkway lighting to increase visibility and safety
- Downlighting to add some ambiance to your space
- Accent & uplighting to shed light on your favourite features

You can choose from one of our pre-designed packages or customize a unique lighting design for your property so it shines in a whole new way — and enjoy even more time outside!

All of our pre-designed packages include installation. For more information about our pre-designed packages please **contact us**.



Landscape Design

Landscape design provides a framework for creating visually appealing, functional and harmonious outdoor spaces. While the core principles remain consistent, designing for country properties often requires some specific considerations.

Unity and harmony

For country properties, achieving unity involves aligning the design with the property's natural surroundings, such as the existing landforms, vegetation and views.

Scale and proportion

Country properties often have vast expanses, so each element, such as structures, plantings and hardscapes, must be carefully sized and arranged to maintain visual balance and avoid overwhelming the natural landscape.

Sustainability

Country landscape design should prioritize sustainability to help preserve the country environment's natural resources and ecological balance. This includes using native plants, implementing water conservation strategies and considering renewable energy options.



Understanding and respecting the unique characteristics of the country setting is paramount when designing for country properties. This involves considering the local climate, soil conditions, plants and wildlife before finalizing your design.



Landscape Design Styles

When it comes to landscape design styles, several options complement the stunning natural beauty of country properties. Here are a few to consider:

Woodland Retreat

Take inspiration from the lush countryside with a woodland-themed landscape. Use a variety of plants, ferns and shade-loving flowers to create a natural and serene environment. Incorporating meandering paths, rustic stone features, and wooden structures like pergolas or arbours add depth and character to this design style.



Country Contemporary

This design style incorporates native plants, natural stone and sustainable materials to create a country setting with a modern twist. It embraces simplicity, clean lines, and minimalist design principles emphasizing open spaces, functional layouts and a deep connection to nature.



Natural Canadiana

This design style celebrates the beauty of Canada's natural surroundings, creating outdoor spaces that blend harmoniously with the surrounding environment. Its bold, relaxed approach embraces curves and flowing lines to complement the landscape's natural contours.



Rustic/Natural

Naturalized or rustic landscapes are relaxed in structure, prioritizing native plants and textured shrubs that reflect the randomness already present in nature. This style blends seamlessly with the surrounding environment and helps support local ecosystems and wildlife.



Choosing A Landscaping Company

Now that you understand your needs and wants, it's time to find a company to help transform your property. Entrusting your vision to a landscape designer you've just met may make you uneasy. We understand where you're coming from, so we included this section to help make your decision easier.

Good listening skills — Good listening skills are crucial when choosing a landscape company. They should practice active listening by asking you probing questions to help clarify your vision.

Professional training — A great landscaping company invests in its staff and helps them obtain the proper qualifications. At Hill'N Dale, our employees receive clear career and growth plans, learn from experienced team members, and receive apprenticeship opportunities. They also have access to ongoing education to upgrade their skills in various aspects of the horticulture industry.

A beautiful portfolio — Along with social media, a great website makes it easy to see examples of past work and gauge a company's experience level. Check out our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts, along with our [website](#), for some insights into our company.

Wide range of services — Working with a company that provides all services in-house rather than coordinating with multiple companies is much easier and more cost-effective. With a full lineup of design, construction, landscape lighting, irrigation, and maintenance services available, Hill'N Dale has everything you need to transform your landscape.

Clear communication — You should expect open communication from start to finish so you can feel confident throughout the process. Consider your first contact experience. Did you receive a prompt and courteous response? Do you get the sense they're excited about your project?

Questions to ask your landscaping company

Once you've chosen a landscaping company, ask them questions to better understand what it will be like to work with them.

What is your process? You should have a clear idea of the entire process to know what to expect during each phase, from design to installation to finished product.

Will the result be true to my vision? During the initial consultation, you'll share your vision with us, and we'll help you identify any challenges. Our team will present a plan based on your vision for your approval before work begins.

How long will construction take? Construction times can vary depending on the size and scope of your project. At Hill'N Dale, we provide a timeline so you know what to expect.

How do you handle changes in scope? Changes could affect the budget, timeline or both. If you change your mind about something in the middle of the project, or unforeseen issues arise, we can provide a budget for the change before we proceed.

Seeing Your Dream Take Shape

What to expect during construction

Your project will be scheduled once you have your design, a signed contract and have made an initial deposit. Depending on the scope of your project and the availability of the crew, it could be several weeks or months before construction begins.

During this time, we'll order materials and obtain the necessary permits so there won't be any obstacles when construction begins.

Here's an overview of the construction process from start to finish.



1. Construction timeline

Our team will present a plan of the work we will complete and the timelines for each installation phase. All efforts will be made to adhere to the timeline, but factors such as the weather could alter it.



2. Meet your project manager

You'll be introduced to your project manager and other members of our team. You'll be given a number to call if you have any questions or concerns.



3. Clearing the site

Includes removing features not included in the new design and protecting existing structures from damage. It could also involve clearing away vegetation or other natural obstructions.



4. Site cleanliness

Once scheduled, our crews will arrive on time, act courteously while on-site, and leave the site clean and tidy at the end of the day.



5. Final walkthrough

After construction, your project manager will walk through your new landscape to ensure nothing is amiss.



6. Property care

You'll have the option to sign up for property care to protect your investment. Our enhancement team will keep your landscape looking fresh and inviting as it matures.

Maintaining Your Landscape

Maintaining a country landscape differs from maintaining an urban landscape in a few key aspects:

- Country landscapes often have a large expanse of vegetation to care for in addition to their gardens, including grass, shrubs and trees. Maintaining this extra vegetation can be challenging, requiring regular mowing, trimming and pruning to keep the landscape tidy and prevent overgrowth.
- Controlling weeds can be an ongoing task due to the natural surroundings, requiring regular weeding, mulching or the use of herbicides to prevent weeds from taking over your landscape.
- Country areas often have more wildlife, including deer, rabbits, squirrels, and coyotes. These animals can damage gardens, trees, or property structures, requiring strategies for wildlife management or deterrents.
- Seasonal cleanup is often more involved, including managing fallen leaves, branches or other debris throughout the property.

Getting Started

When you work with Hill’N Dale, you’re working with a company that understands the intricacies and challenges of country landscapes. We use our passion and ingenuity to transform natural environments into inspiring and enriching places to share with family and friends.

Once you’ve scheduled your initial consultation, the rest of the process will unfold smoothly. Here’s what you can expect after you first contact us.

1. Design Discovery Questionnaire & Initial Interview

You’ll be sent a questionnaire to complete and we’ll set up a meeting to discuss your project and ensure we’re a good fit.

2. Design Process Begins

Our designers will work with you to create a landscape design that celebrates your lifestyle and enhances your property. At this point, we’ll also work out a budget and timeline.

3. Construction

Watch your landscape transform before your eyes and get ready to enjoy your newly installed landscape!

4. Care

Our enhancement team will keep things looking fresh so you can concentrate on creating memories!

Ready to get started?

We look forward to helping you transform your property into a stunning country retreat!

Call **519.925.3238** or email letsstart@hndland.com to get started today!



Enhancing the beauty outside.

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