

Principles of eco-friendly landscaping

- **Costs** – an environmentally-friendly approach can also be cost-effective. In fact, in the long run it will be cheaper, because you will not incur the costs of annual chemical cycles and because your yield will be of a higher quality and more volume.
- **Fight weeds and pests organically** – chemical weed control and pesticides are not necessary if you are prepared to work smarter, but not necessarily harder. The reward will be a sustainable, healthy and environmentally friendly landscape that you and your family will enjoy for years to come. Do it right from the beginning with soil solarization, which is a preventive, organic method of killing weeds -- before they even sprout! [Killing Weeds Through Soil Solarization](#)

You can also use insects to control your pests – praying mantis and the Ladybird beetles (ladybugs) are some of most common and efficient ways to manage pests ecologically – but remember to plant their favorite plants too so they will not leave.

- **Fertilize organically** – compost is easily manufactured at home, even in suburban yards. Compost is a mixture of decaying organic matter, such as from leaves and vegetable leftovers from your kitchen, used as an amendment to improve soil structure and provide nutrients. The composting process is largely the result of the activity of aerobic organisms and represents the cornerstone of organic gardening.
- **Using less water in the yard.** Whether it's adhering to an intricately detailed [xeriscaping](#) plan or simply favoring [drought-tolerant plants](#) such as [cacti and succulents](#) when shopping at the nursery, more and more people are keeping water conservation in mind when deciding on what to plant in their yards. This landscaping trend isn't always entirely voluntary, as water restrictions sometimes force the homeowner's hand in this regard.
- **Recycling: saving money while "saving the planet."** Making use of recycled materials in the yard is a landscaping trend "with legs" due to its twofold justification: it is eco-friendly and dollar-savvy. Thus in this article on [recycling ideas](#) for the yard, the focus is on what folks are doing in the recycling arena to save money while "saving the planet."
- **Turning back the invaders.** Invasive plants are exotic (i.e. non-native) plants that exhibit a tendency to escape into the wild and wreak havoc with native eco-systems. Invasive plants can compete so successfully against natives that they can end up crowding them out and putting native populations at risk. But one landscaping trend of the 21st century is to "just say no" to [invasive plants](#).
- **Go native.** Saying no to invasive plants doesn't necessarily mean abstaining from exotic plants altogether, as not the entire latter are deemed a threat to native plant populations. While a vocal sub-section of the gardening community is interested in replacing exotics entirely with native plants, a much larger group of people is seeking the "golden mean" between extremes. That is, a growing group of folks is turning toward natives on a selective basis, using them to deal with problem areas in the yard. For example, this article specifically discusses plants native to Eastern North America that flourish in [wet areas](#) -- areas where as most other plants would struggle to survive.