

Defensive Gardening Workshop

Defend with Design: Security Doesn't Have to Sacrifice Style


With the right plants, layout, and visual cues, your outdoor space can be both beautiful and deter crime. This approach uses the principles of *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)*—a strategy that reduces crime and enhances safety by thoughtfully designing the environment through natural surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance.

Suggested Sketch Legend

■ or □ = Structure (square or rectangle)


○ = Tree

 = Cluster of trees or wooded area

 = Flower (circle with petals)

 = Power box / Electrical service

 = Well / Water source

 = Gas

 = Oil tank

(S) = Sewer / Septic

 / ← / ↑ / ↓ = Directional flow or traffic

Natural Surveillance

- Clear sight lines (to and from inside the home) increase visibility and reduce hiding spots
- Trim shrubs and trees near windows and walkways
- Use lighting to eliminate dark zones like alleys or side yards (motion or solar lights recommended)
- Avoid creating hiding spots around doors, sheds, or corners

Natural Access Control

- Guide movement with landscape features (paths, hedges, fences)
- Place thorny or dense plants under windows to deter entry
- Avoid overgrown plant tunnels or "green corridors"
- Use creative barriers such as rock walls, raised planters, or arbors to direct traffic

Territorial Reinforcement

- Define boundaries with fencing, plant beds, paving changes, or rocks

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- Personalize your space with signs, seating, or garden décor
- Use signs to indicate private property or delivery instructions

Maintenance & Management

- Keep landscapes pruned, tidy, and free of debris
 - Maintain lighting, cameras, and signage
 - Overgrown or unkempt areas may signal vacancy and attract misuse
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Entrapment & Isolation Hazards

- Avoid tight, enclosed spaces where someone could be cornered
- Ensure fences and plantings provide visibility and escape options
- Don't place benches, sheds, or garden features in secluded, hard-to-see areas

Design with Intent and Purpose

- Every plant and path should serve a purpose
 - Layered planting can offer depth while preserving views and control
 - Consider proximity to boundaries, power lines, and structures when planting
 - Keep utility access points (HVAC units, wells, crawl spaces, fuel tanks) accessible yet protected
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For more security related guidance and information, please contact:

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