

Desert Landscape Cost Comparison

This comparison of the six water-smart landscaping prototypes is designed to help you select the right landscape design for your situation. While all of our landscape designs were created to meet the frugal water budget (40% of ET) recommended for the High Desert areas of Southern California, some designs are thriftier than others. Consider the amount of water needed to irrigate your selected landscape for a year by reviewing the table below.

Water Use Comparison

Design Prototype	Relative Water Use	Landscaped Area (SF)	Estimated Water Use Per Year		
			Total, CCF	CCF/100SF	Gal/100SF
Lush & Efficient		1962	42.35	2.16	1615
Mediterranean		10276	212.94	2.07	1550
Natives & Wildlife		7306	149.41	2.05	1530
Rock Garden/Slope		7306	108.24	1.48	1108
Thornless		1865	32.94	1.77	1321
Desert Ranch		26401	480.00	1.82	1360

These calculations are based on climate data for the Victorville area and plant water use information found in the California Department of Water Resources publication "Water Use Classifications of Landscape Species". In many cases, and especially with native plants, local experience tells us that our selected plants will grow with less water than is indicated in this table. Increase your landscape water efficiency by watering deeply and infrequently once your plants are established.

Water Use Categories	
	Very low
	Low
	Low to moderate

Another consideration in planning for your landscape is the cost of installation. Cost estimates for our six designs appear in the table below. Keep in mind that prices are given in 2009 dollars for contractor-installed and homeowner-installed landscapes. The contractor-installed estimate includes materials, delivery, installation, equipment, coordination of trades, insurance and permits. The homeowner estimate includes materials, delivery by the supplier and a small factor for miscellaneous costs.

Estimated Landscape Installation Costs

Design Prototype	Relative Cost	Landscaped Area (SF)	Contractor Installed		Homeowner Installed	
			Total Cost	Cost/SF	Total Cost	Cost/SF
Lush & Efficient		1962	7558	3.85	3858	1.97
Mediterranean		10276	21737	2.12	10705	1.04
Natives & Wildlife		7306	18928	2.59	9420	1.29
Rock Garden/Slope		7306	26242	3.59	13154	1.80
Thornless		1865	9345	5.01	4850	2.60
Desert Ranch		26401	57810	2.19	28466	1.08

Because prices will vary depending on economic conditions and other local factors it may be more useful to think in terms of relative costs. Keep in mind that the smaller, more densely planted landscapes such as the Lush & Efficient design will be more expensive to install per square foot than the large landscapes with more widely spaced plants. You can reduce your costs by using fewer trees and plants. You may also be able to use rocks (a big landscaping expense) and native plant material from your own property.