

Share: [f](#) [t](#) [in](#)



## An Interior Designer's Guide to Plantscaping

# An Interior Designer's Guide to Plantscaping

Plants add interest and a natural intrigue to interior designs, and there's nothing quite like walking into an indoor jungle oasis. An increased focus on biophilic design means interior designers and their teams are frequently tasked with bringing nature into the spaces where we live, work, learn, heal and play. From live plant walls to large plant installations and designs, there is a fine art and balance to planning out a space and ensuring that desired plants are given the environment and continued resources they need to sustainably thrive.

As plants become an increasingly integral part of the built environment, it is crucial for interior designers and plantscapers to unite to collaborate and develop partnerships to create truly stunning and sustainable biophilic design.

To ensure lush, long-lasting plants and a seamless process when it comes to plant installation and maintenance, experienced interior plantscapers collaborated and compiled a few best practices on how to best leverage their expertise for thriving biophilic interior design projects.



## The Benefits of Biophilic Design:

- ✔ Improved Productivity
- ✔ Increased Concentration Levels
- ✔ Increased Creativity
- ✔ Enhanced Psychological Well-Being
- ✔ Increased Cognitive Function & Physical Health



St Tropez Tall Round Planter [↗](#)



*By fully committing to incorporate plants and partnering with an interior plantscaper, planning and installation can be turned into an effortless process with stunning results.*

## Consult Interior Plantscapers as Expert Project Contributors

*Planning space for a verdant indoor jungle? Or simply adding plants as an accent?*

In either case, be sure to integrate interiorscaper expertise starting at the very beginning of the design process.

There are many considerations that need to be addressed, especially when using plants as an integral part of an overall design. From plant recommendations and placement to lighting and containers, interior plantscapers can guide interior designers on best practices to ensure greenery thrives long-term.





## Ask Interior Plantscapers to Join Projects Early

For a more streamlined process of bringing plants to built-spaces, ask for an interior plantscaper's expertise early. Not only does this help from a resource planning and scheduling standpoint, but it can help prevent more costly issues down the road.

For example, there are several essential components that need to be considered before installing a live plant wall. Questions surrounding how the live plant wall will be secured, irrigation, plant varieties, lighting, and surrounding utilities must be answered to allow for successful installation and ongoing maintenance.

By bringing interior plantscapers on early to projects, these types of concerns can be discussed, addressed and preemptively solved – minimizing costly changes later in the project.



Share attributes about the desired look of the plants included in a design. *Want a spiky modern plant display? Or soft and delicate greenery accents?*

An interior plantscaper can help to guide successful plant selections that form a cohesive look, while keeping both design and care needs in mind.

## Picking Plant Varieties

The type of plant selected for a space can change an entire design scheme. However, depending on the space, the desired plants may not thrive or be practical.

For example, a fiddle leaf fig placed in a dark area will quickly wither and die, while a staghorn fern will burn if placed somewhere with too much sunlight. Some tree varieties when used indoors drop leaves, and create messes and slip and fall hazards in spaces with lots of foot traffic.

Though some plant varieties may look amazing in some spaces, they may not be great choices unless clients are prepared for listless plants or paying for constant replacements.





## Plants First, Planters Later

Planters are an excellent way to accent both plants and spaces. However, the size and scale of desired plants often determine the size and specifications of the plant container needed for a design.

If planters are intended to be a standout element and help to pull the rest of the space together with a bold color, texture, or material, make sure to coordinate with an interior plantscaper. Grow pots, sub-irrigation, roots, growing space, and soil all need to be considered along with the plant variety before plant containers are selected and purchased for an installation.



Interior plantscapers can best guide the size, material, shape and finish of planters and proposed containers that meet the needs of the plants while also matching aesthetic and installation requirements.

Additionally, the proposed placement and usage also informs the type of planter material that should be used.

Fiberglass, plastic, metal, ceramic and faux concrete planters all have varying durability and differing aesthetic looks. Built in planters must be planned to account for waterproofing and drainage.





# Pick Placement Wisely



For completed buildings, it's easy for an interior plantscaper to walk the floor with an interior designer and determine appropriate plants and placement based on lighting, care and overall look of a space.

Determining plant placement when a building is in the design or construction phase is a bit more challenging and requires a bit more planning.

Detailed floor plans—particularly of the furniture layout—allow interior plantscapers to plan and work out design and logistical issues before funds are spent on plants, containers, delivery and equipment needed for installations.

Unfortunately, some places just aren't good spots for plants. For example, most interior plantscapers advise against placing plants in the way of foot traffic, near outdoor exits, and in windowless corners due long-term damage concerns.



**Work with an interior plantscaper to help determine ideal plant placement that takes overall looks and plant care and maintenance into consideration.**



Additionally, don't assume that just because a plant could be placed somewhere, that a plant should be placed there.

For example, avoid placing planters over pipe or electrical runs, as plants may need to be moved to be accessed. Spots above doorways or on ledges can be used, but are often more troublesome for plant maintenance.



# Plan for Lighting

Plants need light, soil and water to thrive. Though interior plantscapers have a bit more control over the amount of soil and water a plant receives, indoor lighting can be a bit more of a challenge.

For designs that heavily incorporate plant material, planning for lighting is key for healthy plants. Though artificial light can do wonders, natural sunlight is always preferred. Windows and skylights incorporated into a building design are wonderful aids to make sure a plant gets the light they need.

However, window placement, tint, glass thickness and the distance between where a plant is placed and the light reaches can affect the lighting needs of greenery.



Though lighting needs often change depending on the plant species, plants more than 15 feet away from a window will typically not get enough natural sunlight to survive, and will need to be supplemented with artificial light sources.

In the built environment, floor space near a window encompasses only a small percentage of a building's square footage. Additionally, blinds, drapes, and other obstacles can shield plants from sunlight so artificial light solutions must also be considered.

Collaborating with an interior plantscaper ensures plants receive enough light from natural and artificial sources, all while creating a balanced lighting scheme for building occupants.



## Offer Early Installation Access

Offering interior plantscapers early access to install sub-soil structures and plants before final finishing touches are implemented in an interior design saves everyone time, money and stress, especially on large installations.

By allowing early installation access, interior plantscapers can best estimate the time, tools and resources needed to fully complete a plant display.

It's projected that 70 percent of the world's population will live in cities in the coming decades. As more people continue to live, work, learn, heal and play in built environments, access to nature and greenery will increasingly become a necessary feature to include in our surroundings.



Working together, interior designers and interior plantscapers can offer a unified vision of the maintenance, associated costs, and return on investment that biophilic design can offer, and can help make the world we live in just a little bit more beautiful.