



The TIME LIFE
Complete  Gardener

Perennials



**VIEWS FROM INSIDE
AND OUTSIDE
THE GARDEN**

A bench set amid colorful spring-blooming tulips, pansies, wild blue plox, iris, azalea, and delphinium provides a quiet spot from which to enjoy this Atlanta shade garden. Slightly elevated, with its perimeter edged by curving brick steps, the garden can also be enjoyed from a terrace at the back of the house.

offer a picture of the changing seasons: columbine and candytuft in the spring, daylilies and Russian sage in the summer, Japanese anemone and asters in the fall, ornamental grasses and sedum in the winter.

Creating a Base Plan

Once you've thoroughly analyzed your site, it's time to put your observations on paper and create a base plan—a map of your grounds. The first step is to take a walk around the property and make a rough sketch that includes all structures and features. Then draw a more precise version of the plan to scale (*opposite*). The base plan will let you see both the desirable features of your site and those that need improvement, and will help you create a garden that will play to the strengths of your property and minimize its flaws.

The sample base plan on page 31 shows a home on a site that was once rural but has since been absorbed into suburbia. The L-shaped house consists of an original log cabin with a new clapboard wing on the north side. The log cabin and stone chimneys still convey a rustic feel, as do a few old trees and shrubs. Situated on a quarter acre, the home

is bordered by other similarly sized lots and faces a subdivision street. The house is set back pleasantly within the site, but the presence of neighboring homes is felt.

The fundamental design issue on the sample property is that of coping with a site that wants to look out over farmland but finds a modern subdivision instead. On a more practical level, the site analysis reveals a need to provide privacy for the patio, to enliven views from inside the house, to better anchor the house to its site, to remove an ailing tree, and to fix drainage problems on the southern side of the property.

As you study your own base plan and take stock of existing conditions, you will instinctively begin to think about important fundamental design features and where they can or, more important at this stage, cannot go. By developing a sensitivity to the character of the property, its contours, and its areas of sun and shade, you will produce a plan that works with your site's ecology and is true to the spirit of the place.

Preparing the plan will also put your imagination to work. Old ideas will be either confirmed or discarded, and successful new ones will come to you. Then you will be ready to move to the next step—considering your new garden's style.