



Introduction

Ten years ago, who would have envisioned school landscapes that included butterfly meadows, amphitheatres, rooftop and vegetable gardens, murals and compost bins — and the list goes on. Many of these ideas aren't new; what is exciting is the renewed interest in them.

Design Ideas for the Outdoor Classroom is a collection of practical “how to” fact sheets that provide schools with a variety of ideas to help them transform their grounds into more dynamic play and learning environments. The topics were chosen because they address some of the most frequently asked questions posed to us. Some topics are included because the ideas are just too good not to share!

Design Ideas has been organized into four sections: Gardening Techniques, Natural Features, Built Features and Artistic Elements. Each section includes a number of fact sheets that respond to the following questions:

- 🍃 What materials and methods are recommended?
- 🍃 What are the safety considerations?
- 🍃 What are some examples and where have they been implemented?
- 🍃 Where can I find additional information?

The design ideas presented here have been undertaken on school grounds across the country. We encourage you to adapt them to your site and situation. If you have a design feature on your school ground that might be valuable to other schools, please send us a description. From time to time we will be updating and expanding this collection.

Thanks to the many schools, organizations and individuals who contributed their time, ideas and the wisdom of their experience to this collection.

The only thing that's left to say is... Dig it, Plant it, Build it, Paint it!





Evergreen

Design Ideas for the Outdoor Classroom is one in a series of resources produced by Evergreen as part of the Toyota Evergreen Learning Grounds Tool Shed, a collection of integrated resources detailing physical design, curriculum-based activities and inspirational case studies, to help you realize the dream of transforming your school ground.




CoNtents










Gardening Techniques

Container Gardening	 1
Compost and Mulch	 5
Food Growing	 13
Rooftop Garden	 21


Natural Features

Natural Habitat Communities	 1
Plants for Play and Learning	 13
Windbreaks, Hedgerows and Living Fences	 17

Built Features

Gathering Places	 1
Shade Shelters	 5
Seating	 9
Pathways	 13
Loose Parts Play	 19
Signs, Gates and Fences	 23
Weather Study and Observation Features	 27

Artistic Elements

Murals and Mosaics	 1
Asphalt Painting	 7