

How to Plan Your Dream Backyard Makeover



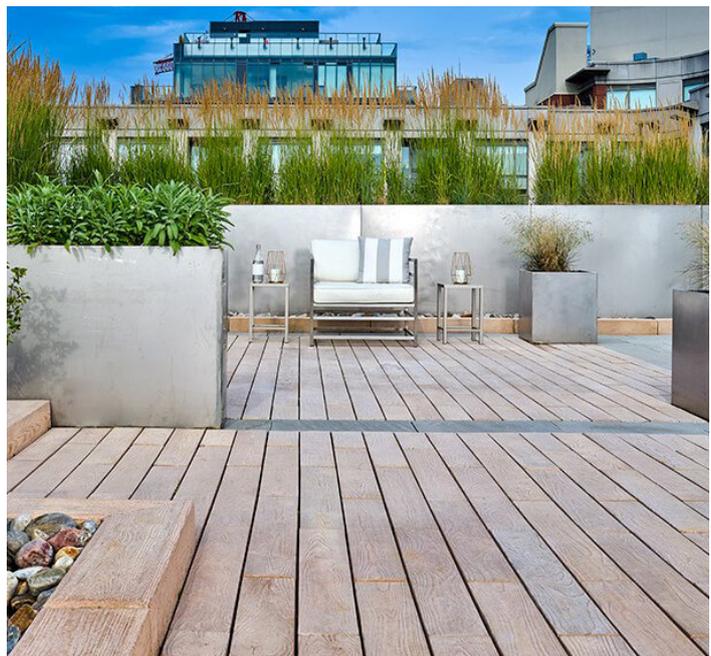
HOW TO PLAN YOUR **DREAM** BACKYARD MAKEOVER

What do you see when you picture your dream backyard? Do you see a large expanse of luscious green grass with a brick patio complete with plush chairs that you can sit in and enjoy a good book? Does it have a stone fire pit that you and your friends can gather around and roast marshmallows on cool summer nights? Is there a stone path leading to a waterfall?

Whatever it may look like, the most important part of any home improvement project is that it fits within the budget that you've allotted for it. According to the 2019 HomeAdvisor State of Home Spending report, spending on home improvement has increased as much as 17% in the last year with the bulk of these costs coming from labor. If your budget doesn't allow for that, you may want to look into do-it-yourself projects that fit your skillset as an alternative.

A DIY outdoor project may seem cheaper and easier than an interior home remodel but even though you are saving money by not paying for professional labor, you should not choose to skimp on bricks, block, and cement that will deteriorate when exposed to the elements.

Batchelder and Collins offers high-quality products because we know how much time and effort you're putting in to create your perfect project. With all that being said, let's get into planning your perfect backyard makeover.



STEP #1: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR BACKYARD?

Is it your goal to get the kids to put their devices down and play in the backyard harmoniously with your pets? Do you want a space to unwind and relax? Are you looking to take up composting and gardening? Or maybe you love to entertain during the summer months and up until now haven't had the perfect place to do so. The first step in building your dream backyard is to determine what exactly you want to accomplish in this makeover. This will help you in determining what projects you want to take on and therefore what products you should be searching for.

STEP #2: CREATE A WISHLIST

As a part of this step, you should take into account both your family's needs and the possibility of selling your home in the future. What project(s) might help to increase your home's value while also serving your family in the present? Don't limit yourself because right now you're just brainstorming; select all the features you wish to have in your space and later we will discuss budget.

STEP #3: CONSULT THE PROFESSIONALS

At this point, you'll want to take your ideas to your nearest Batchelder and Collins location. Chances are that you gathered some ideas on Pinterest during step 2 and showing these to our staff will allow you to get an idea of the price as well as the level of skill required to implement them. You can get a better idea of what you can really afford to do - spatially but also financially - and get a chance to look at the extensive product range.

STEP #4: CONSIDER ALL YOUR HINDRANCES

It's important that you walk around your backyard and identify any hindrances or challenges that you might face with certain projects. For example, maybe you'd love a pool but there just isn't enough space in the yard for that. Instead, you could go for a dipping pool with a stone walkway leading to it from the house. If you want to start gardening, you have to consider the necessity for the plants to be in an area that gets a lot of sunlight and access to water or irrigation. Not really up for lots of maintenance on a brand new deck? Instead of building a wood one which rots over time and requires plenty of upkeep, you should go for a raised stone deck.

STEP #5: FINALIZE YOUR BUDGET

Before you go any further, you should compile the starting prices of all the features you are set on; this list may change depending on how much it costs to finance the different projects. Putting them in priority order will give you a sense of what you truly can afford and what may be a luxury to save up for in the future. You can also determine if there are cheaper alternatives available. For example, if a fireplace is too much of an investment, go for a fire pit instead. Instead of building your walkway in an S-curve shape, build it straight as serpentine patterns require more time and more products - mortar and brick or clay pavers, whatever have you.

STEP #6: CHOOSE YOUR PRODUCTS

Before heading back to Batchelder and Collins, you should choose your color palette starting by matching the primary color of your new landscape projects to the primary color of your house. Select the undertones you'd like to see more of whether it be reds, browns, beiges, grays, black, etc. Then head to the store with these features in mind and bring home samples so you can try before you buy.

STEP #7: START YOUR PROJECT!

Visit your nearest Batchelder and Collins location:

- [2305 Granby Street Norfolk, Va. 23517](#)
- [197 Ewell Road Williamsburg, Va 23188](#)

Don't worry, we're not going to leave ya hanging! We've compiled some of our favorite backyard makeovers from our customers to give you some inspiration and no need to head over to Pinterest!

Give it a Good Clean

Before you start any sort of makeover on your backyard, you're going to want to get things cleaned up. If you're someone that's let your backyard go a bit (completely understandable), this is an absolutely essential step to the makeover process for two reasons:

1. *This will give you the most accurate idea of how much room you actually have to work with before you start the makeover.*
2. *You will be able to assess the space and figure out what you want to do and how you're going to go about executing it.*

Now that you know this is a necessary step towards planning, you can get to work: trim back trees, get rid of dead branches, leaves, and bushes, cut the grass, pull weeds, get rid of junk you no longer see you or your family using. While you're at it, this is a good time to check whether there's any maintenance work that needs to be done. For example, if there are cracks in your existing pavement, this could indicate a foundational issue that you'll want to look into. This is just one example but you'll want to do a thorough inspection of any constructions in your yard to make sure everything is good and can support the work you are about to do.



Start a Garden

Whether you've always been meaning to start a garden but haven't found the time or think you have a black thumb, rest assured that a garden is a great investment, financially, nutritionally, and time-wise. There are a lot of routes to take when it comes to starting a garden: flowering plants will add nice color to your backyard, an herb garden is both functional and aromatic, or you can create a burgeoning jungle with plants like elephant ears and fruit trees.

If you're already an experienced gardener, how about creating a sectional, keeping the garden separated and protected from your walking path like in the picture above.

A fun way to garden is by creating a theme: maybe you want to cultivate all the flowers mentioned in your favorite novels. Or try to stick with one color and see how many different shades of it you can grow. Or if you have kids, you can use stones and paths to create a kid-friendly garden maze; just make sure all the plants are allergen-free.



Create a Path



People often neglect their walkways, not realizing that there are truly endless options beyond basic concrete or simple stepping stones. But if you're putting so much time, effort, and money into improving the outdoor space of your home, why neglect the element of your backyard that leads you to the space?

One idea is to create more walkways (as pictured in the first image above) having them connect the different features of your backyard like your new garden, a seating area, the pool and/or hot tub. It creates a cohesive vibe to your entire outdoor space and invites

guests to wander around (if that's your goal and you host events often).

There are so many elements you can incorporate into your walkway makeover especially if your goal is to make it feel like a nature trail.

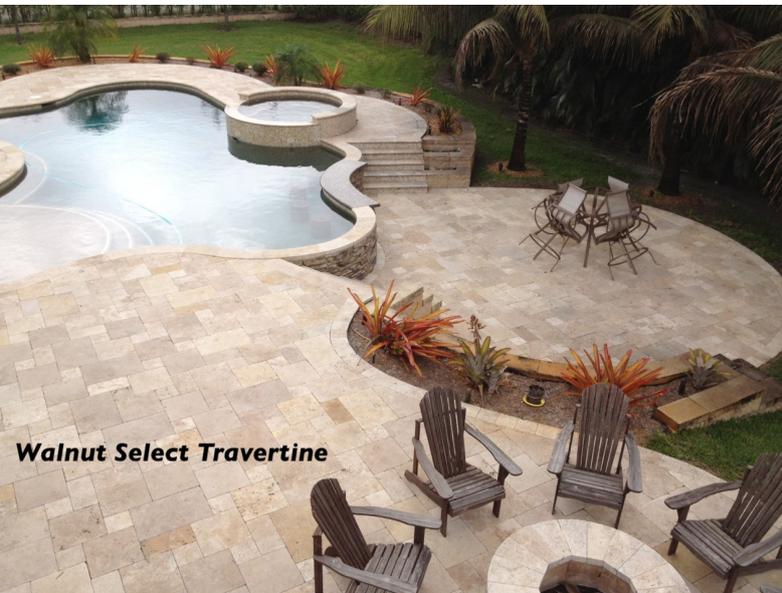


Add Levels

Who said your backyard has to be all one level? There are a lot of ways to incorporate layers into your design. Have steps leading down from the house into the rest of the backyard or create a raised seating area with stairs leading up to it.

Terraced stone steps in a mix-and-match pattern will create a focal point for the backyard without taking away from other strong elements. Plus, you can soften the look of the staircase with other design aspects to add even more interest like plants growing wildly or potted on either side, lanterns decorating the staircase, boulders lining the sides, and thyme or rosemary growing between the stair levels or along the path's edges. Stagger the steps to slow and guide the journey through the backyard.





Walnut Select Travertine

Don't Neglect a Patio

Patios are the heart and soul of any outdoor space so we absolutely recommend making this part of your backyard makeover plans.

If you already have one, you're not quite done yet. First, inspect it and see if any repairs are needed or if anything needs to be replaced. If it's a wooden patio, search for rotting. If it's concrete, check for cracks. Beyond that, just see if there is room for extra construction or improvements.

Bear in mind, however, that you will most likely need to consult a professional unless you are extremely experienced in construction.

A patio makeover doesn't necessarily have to be extensive in order to make a significant improvement to your yard. Something as simple as segmenting off an area for the patio, adding tiles to the floor, and a couple chairs makes a huge difference. If you want to create a more interesting patio area, look into installing a pergola, adding some gorgeous green hanging plants to it, and a seating setup.

Cook Up an Outdoor Kitchen

This will likely be one of the loftier goals on your list of projects for your backyard makeover as it requires a pretty significant amount of time and money. However, it can be one of the most transformative changes you can make to your backyard. It'll make cooking much more serene and enjoyable when you can do it in an outdoor kitchen.

If you aren't looking to invest in a full brick oven, there are plenty of other options. A fire pit has limited cooking options but will make for a great source of heat on cooler nights. Or a barbecue system makes a great start to an outdoor kitchen that can be extended later on.





Walnut Select Travertine



Try Travertine

We couldn't leave these out when it comes to absolute backyard GOALS. Travertine comes in several colorways to match the aesthetic you are going for but no matter which you choose, it's going to give a gorgeous, luxurious look to your outdoor space. There are countless ways you can use this material so it really allows you to get creative.



Ivory Travertine

TRY TRAVERTINE