CONSTRUCTION *Even the smallest plot of land can have greenery*



Palms and small shrubs are preferable because their roots spread so far away



For commercial buildings, more space should be allocated for parking

Landscaping a 30ftx90ft plot

BY UMAR NSUBUGA

Sam Kambugu, a landscaper with IKM, a gardening and landscaping company in Wakiso district, says no amount of space is small for one to enjoy greenery in their home.

"Even with as small as 300msq left, you can have lots of green and a relaxing corner for those warm days. In a home, emphasis should be put on greenery," he says.

Suzan Akello, an architect, says with commercial buildings, the focus should be on parking. However, it would be good to have green cover to soften the hard look of concrete walls.

If one owns a 30ftx90ft plot, Akello says such a plot of land would be 30m long and 10m wide. This space is small. So, right from the planning and actual selection of plants and planting, a homeowner has to be clear on what they want.

According to Kambugu, for a small plot, one has to opt for palms and shrubs.

"You cannot have trees. They would be too close to the house and would damage the structure because you are not sure of the wind direction or how far and deep the roots grow," he says.

However, that does not mean avoiding all trees. You can have bottle brush trees for a shade. This is because bottle brush trees do not have disastrous root systems.

Sarah Kawunde, who works at Kawanda Flowers Centre, says many people love flowers because of the colours, but in case you have a small plot and you want to plant palms, choose Alexandria palm. It grows to a height of 12m and has small stems.

These palms can be found at many roadside nurseries. The palms are fit to have near walls and house verandas, as the root system is safe near buildings.

Once the trees have been selected, Kawunde says the grass or lawn should be next. For this piece of land, Zimbabwe palm is the best option. It is easy to grow and maintain.

According to Kawunde, it has very fine leaves and looks good in small areas. However, it needs a lot of weeding and needs high maintenance compared to other grasses.

To have a nice look, one may consider adding flowers. However, to make the landscape stand out, you need to have a lot of flowers and yet for a small space, you cannot have a lot of flowers as they would occupy a lot of the would-be lawn area.

A few flowers will seem lost and would make the garden appear unkempt. The safer thing to do is avoid flowers and maximise on the number of shrubs. So the garden will have grass, shrubs and palms.

Abdu-Wahab Nyanzi, an architect, says the landscape plan should start by demarcating the parking area by using pavers, concrete or stone to separate it from the green area.

He says the parking space has to be next to the garage, direct from the gate.

"This will help you drive straight into the garage and easily reverse out when leaving. There might be no room for turning, if you are to maximise on the green in such a home," he advises.

Plant palms and shrubs

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