

# CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESSFUL RAIN GARDENS

## **1 Find a site**

Take a walk in the rain to find a good site for your garden

## **2 All on board?**

Consult with municipality, neighbours, “BC One Call”

## **3 Size it right**

Make sure you have a workable ratio of impervious area to garden area (5:1 is generally a “sweet spot”), given the specifics of your site. Keep in mind that your garden’s ability to absorb water will increase as it matures.

## **4 Get water in**

Decide how to get stormwater runoff into the rain garden

## **5 Let water out**

Make sure there’s a safe overflow route for any excess

## **6 Play in the dirt**

Excavate (usually 12” to 18” deep will do), backfill about ¾ full with mixture of excavated material & compost, create contours & meanders to slow the water & provide maximum opportunity for retention & absorption

## **7 Add structure**

Anchor the garden physically & visually with boulders, large woody debris and a thin layer of gravel in areas where water will be flowing and would cause erosion

## **8 Define edges**

Use strong edges to make your garden look intentional

## **9 Provide access**

Plan for access to &/or passage across the rain garden

## **10 Plant effectively**

Right plants (and plenty of ‘em), right places, no invasives

## **11 Mulch bare soil**

Cover any bare soil with woodchips or other mulch. Bare soil is a magnet for weeds; it also gets easily compacted and then can’t absorb water

## **12 Look & tweak**

Take another walk in the rain to see how things are working; make adjustments as needed

## **13 Maintain**

Check for sediments blocking intake or outflow; prefer low-impact manual maintenance techniques

## **14 Inform**

Advertise rain garden function with signage

## **15 Observe & enjoy!**

Watch your garden become more beautiful and its performance improve over time, as plants grow and roots & soil biota open new porosities for water absorption

**CALL BEFORE YOU DIG !!**

**BC One Call  
604 257-1940**