

Find a look that fits your style with one of our three regional designs.

# A Fabulous Foundation Garden

**The situation:** A 25-ft.-long bed in front of a south-facing urban or suburban home. The homeowners want a colorful design that looks good in every season but is relatively low-maintenance.

No matter what style your house is, a foundation garden is a terrific way to make your yard more welcoming. A great-looking foundation planting frames your house *and* blends it into your yard. And it needs to be easy care. When you've been out of town for three weekends in a row, you don't want to come home to a ratty-looking garden that everyone else can see, too!

But all foundation plans certainly don't look alike. Travel around the country and you'll see as many different garden styles as you do house styles. And obviously we can't all grow the same plants.

That's why we asked garden designers from Colorado, Tennessee and Michigan to work up some gardens for you. All of the designs are based on the same footprint and general guidelines (see "The situation" above). But as you can tell, each has its own regional flair and personal aesthetic.

For each garden, the designer chose the style of the home, plants that do well in the region, and hardscaping of locally available materials. And though all three plans look good year round, we've shown each one in its peak season. As you look at the illustrations on the following pages, you'll see an explanation of

the why and how for the design, the plant list and some specific tips on how to take care of the garden.

Despite their very different looks, the plans use many plants that can be grown in several areas of the country. And the design ideas translate to many different regions and styles: Maybe you like Tom Peace's yuccas, Karen Petrey's wall fountain or Susan Martin's ranch update. So feel free to pick and choose plants and ideas from any of these plans, along with ones that reflect your personal taste, to create a special foundation design of your very own! □

— Deborah Gruca

## Colorado



## Michigan



## Tennessee





*The irregularly shaped, buff sandstone path harmonizes with the house color and complements the informal style of the garden.*

## TOUGH-AS-NAILS NATIVES

**Tom Peace, Denver, Colorado**

This design reflects the relaxed attitude of this simple, buckskin-colored stucco bungalow. And in the arid mountain climate, it's important that every plant you choose is drought-tolerant and cold-hardy.

The tallest plant reaches to just 5 ft. — taller ones would be out of scale with the one-story house. For a two-story home, you'd want to include some larger shrubs and maybe even a small tree so the planting would have better proportions compared to the house.

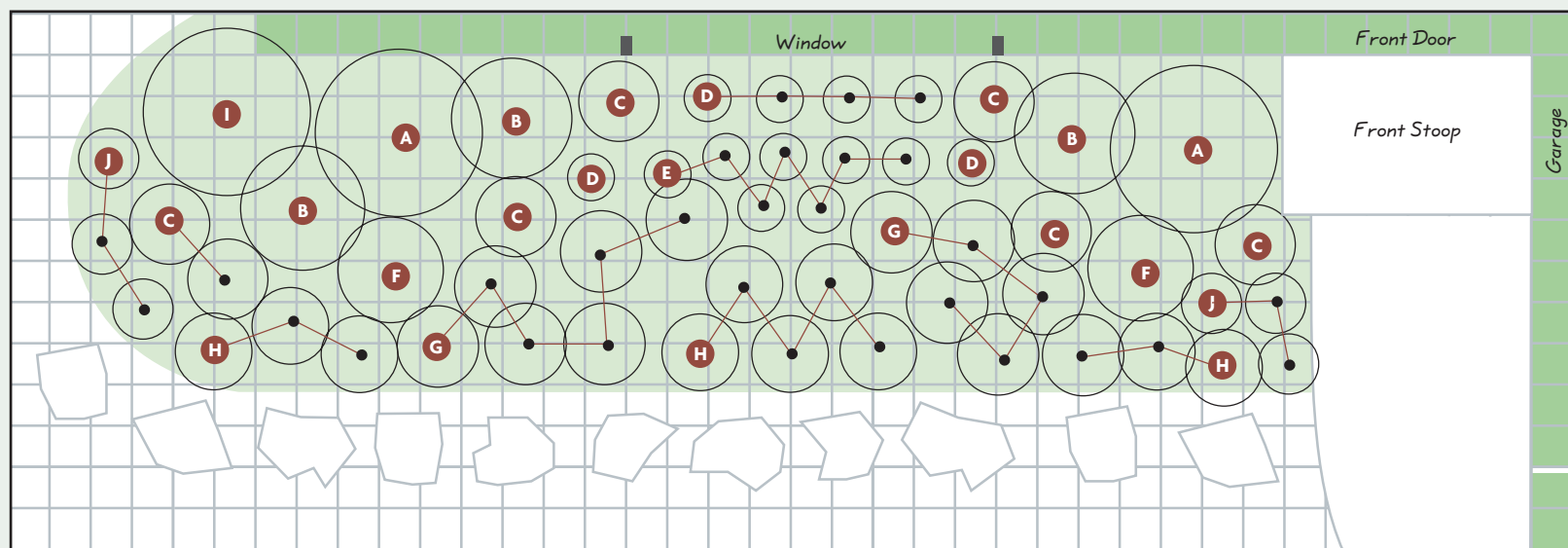
You could do this plan with or without the path. As it is, it frames the bed, gives you a good spot to work from and helps the mail carrier move between houses. Get locally

available stone (in this case sandstone) and don't worry about having it cut in regular shapes — this continues the casual look and will save money, too. If you wanted, you could even add more yellow sunrose and rock soapwort on the other side of the path so the path goes *through* the garden instead of bordering it.

This garden peaks in summer, which is what you see here. To blend the planting into the local landscape and to keep maintenance simple, Tom chose native plants that easily take the dry conditions of the area.

Most of these plants, such as the grass and the blue yucca, have a striking winter form whether the snow flies or not.





## TOUGH-AS-NAILS NATIVES

Tom Peace, Denver, Colorado



Scale: 1 square = 1 square feet

Code	Plant Name	No. to Plant	Type	Bloom Time	Bloom Color	Cold/Heat Zones	Height/Width
A	Tall blue rabbit brush <i>Chrysothamnus nauseosus</i>	2	Perennial	Summer	Yellow	4-9/9-2	4 ft./4 ft.
B	Russian sage <i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	3	Perennial	Late summer	Blue	4-9/9-1	3-4 ft./3 ft.
C	Tall pink hyssop <i>Agastache 'Firebird'</i>	7	Perennial	Summer-fall	Coral-pink	6-10/10-1	3-4 ft./2 ft.
D	Yellow coneflower <i>Echinacea 'Sunrise' (Big Sky series)</i>	6	Perennial	Summer	Yellow	4-10/10-1	2 ft./1 ft.
E	Variegated iris <i>Iris pallida 'Aureo-Variegata'</i>	7	Perennial	Spring	Blue	5-9/9-1	1 ft./1 ft.
F	Blue yucca <i>Yucca pallida</i>	2	Perennial	Spring	White	7-10/10-9	18 in./30 in.
G	Rock soapwort <i>Saponaria ocymoides</i>	11	Perennial	Spring	Pink	4-8/8-1	6-8 in./2 ft.
H	Yellow sunrose <i>Helianthemum 'Wisley Primrose'</i>	11	Perennial	Late spring	Yellow	6-8/8-6	6 in./2 ft.
I	Giant sacaton <i>Sporobolus wrightii</i>	1	Grass	Summer	Silver plumes	5-9/10-4	5 ft./4 ft.
J	Catmint <i>Nepeta racemosa 'Walker's Low'</i>	6	Perennial	Spring-fall	Blue	4-9/9-1	18-24 in./18 in.

### Plant tips

Keep in mind that even drought-tolerant plants need consistent moisture until they're well established.

For a more structured look, prune the blue rabbit brush, Russian sage and catmint in late spring for a dense, compact habit later in the year.



## SHOWY SHRUBS IN SPRING

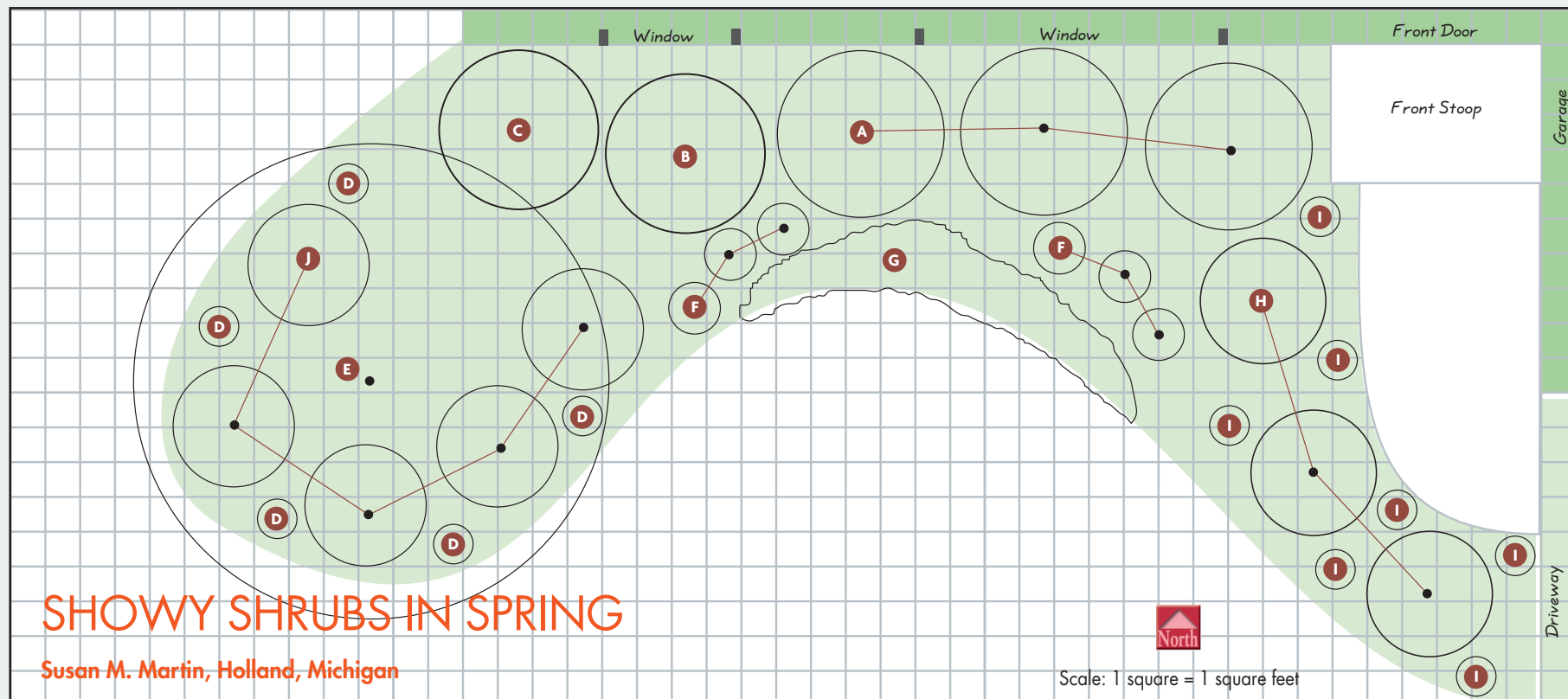
Susan M. Martin, Holland, Michigan

The bold, curving lines of this bed add interest to the foundation of this 1950s ranch. But the depth of the bed is less than half its length, so the garden doesn't overwhelm the single-story house.

A vase-shaped kousa dogwood at the corner of the house creates an instant focal point for this design, especially in spring. But the dramatic sweep of the bed's curved edge brings your eye toward the sidewalk and the front door, where most of the growing season, you'll get a burst of color from the three Knockout roses. Lots of rounded shrubs repeat that curve, with some spiky foliage here and there to echo the vertical windows.

Gardeners make the most of the short growing season in northern Michigan, so this plan uses several shrubs to ensure that there is something of interest at all times. If you're planting in stages, start with these shrubs, even though it's tempting to put in the smaller perennials first. Beginning with the garden's "bones" will get you to a finished look more quickly.

Finally, when it comes to edging, save yourself some money — don't buy any. Instead, since this is a flat lawn, a trenched, or English, edge works just fine and won't distract from the house or garden.



Code	Plant Name	No. to Plant	Type	Bloom Time	Bloom Color	Cold/Heat Zones	Height/Width
A	Dwarf lilac <i>Syringa</i> Sugar Plum Fairy® ('Bailsugar')	3	Shrub	Spring	Lavender	3-7/7-5	4-5 ft./4-5 ft.
B	Holly <i>Ilex xmeserveae</i> 'Blue Boy'	1	Shrub	NA	NA	5-9/9-5	8-10 ft./6 ft.
C	Holly <i>Ilex xmeserveae</i> 'Blue Girl'	1	Shrub	NA	NA	5-9/9-5	8-10 ft./6 ft.
D	Weigela <i>Weigela florida</i> 'My Monet'™	5	Shrub	Late spring	Pink	4-9/9-1	12-18 in./18 in.
E	Kousa dogwood <i>Cornus kousa chinensis</i> 'Milky Way'	1	Shrub	Late spring	White	5-8/8-1	15-25 ft./15-25 ft.
F	Siberian iris <i>Iris sibirica</i> 'White Swirl'	6	Perennial	Late spring	White	3-9/9-1	32 in./18 in.
G	Lamb's ear <i>Stachys byzantina</i> 'Big Ears'	13	Perennial	Late spring	Lavender	4-8/8-1	8-10 in./spreads
H	Rose <i>Rosa</i> Pink Knock Out®	3	Rose	Late spring-fall	Pink	4-9/9-1	3-4 ft./3-4 ft.
I	Spurge <i>Euphorbia hypericifolia</i> Diamond Frost™ ('Inneuphe')	7	Annual	Spring-fall	White	10/9-1	8-12 in./10-12 in.
J	Hydrangea <i>Hydrangea macrophylla</i> Forever & Ever® ('Early Sensation')	5	Shrub	Summer-fall	Pink	4-9/9-1	3-5 ft./3-5 ft.

## Plant tips

Prune your holly and hydrangea to keep them compact. Do the holly at any time of year, but clip the hydrangea in early spring. And be sure to remove the faded hydrangea blooms throughout the summer to keep it flowering.

When you plant a young kousa dogwood, give it plenty of room. It'll look upright when it's young but will eventually branch out horizontally.





*Japanese fatsia trained up the wall and a stone path draw attention to the wall fountain.*

*Add in soft yellow pansies and lantanas to bridge the seasons.*

## FRAGRANCE IN THE FALL

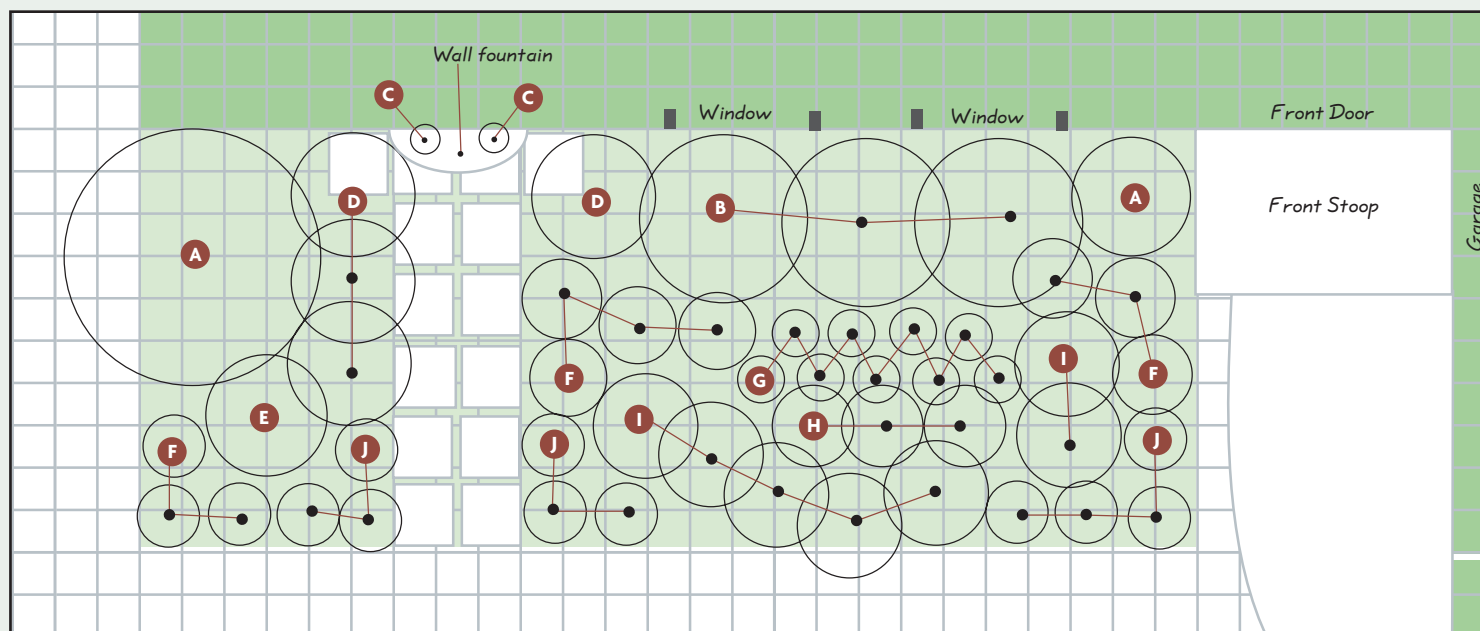
**K. Petrey Gardens, Maryville, Tennessee**

Late summer and fall in this USDA zone 7 garden are awash with pastel colors and lots of texture contrasts. The straight lines of the bed and stone path reflect the style of this formal Federal-style brick home. A focal point — a traditional dolphin-head wall fountain — is reminiscent of Southern courtyards. It might seem odd that the stone path in front of the fountain doesn't lead anywhere other than the wall. But it's acting more as a device to draw your eye to the fountain, and it gives the courtyard flavor to this garden without having an actual courtyard. If you wanted to, you could widen the path enough to make room for a small bench or a couple of chairs.

Although you don't want your plants to totally block the view out of your windows, it's a nice touch to have some of them poke up slightly above the bottom edge to help tie the house to the garden.

This garden is beautiful, but is designed with fragrance in mind, as well. Milder fall days are perfect for throwing open the windows, especially when the camellias' fragrance wafts into the room. Roses and lilies add their perfume earlier in the summer.





## FRAGRANCE IN THE FALL

K. Petrey Gardens, Maryville, Tennessee



Scale: 1 square = 1 square feet

Code	Plant Name	No. to Plant	Type	Bloom Time	Bloom Color	Cold/Heat Zones	Height/Width
A	Boxwood <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> 'Fastigiata'	2	Evergreen shrub	NA	NA	6-8/8-6	14 ft./6 ft.
B	Camellia <i>Camellia sinensis</i>	3	Shrub	Fall	White	7-9/8-7	4-6 ft./5 ft.
C	Japanese fatsia <i>Fatsia japonica</i>	2	Shrub	Fall	White	7-10/10-8	5-12 ft./5-12 ft.
D	Southern shield fern <i>Thelypteris kunthii</i>	4	Perennial	NA	NA	6-9/9-6	3-4 ft./3-4 ft.
E	Noisette rose <i>Rosa</i> 'Natchitoches Noisette'	1	Rose	Late spring-fall	Pink	7-10/10-6	3-5 ft./3-5 ft.
F	Siberian iris <i>Iris sibirica</i> 'Caesar's Brother'	10	Perennial	Late spring	Violet	3-9/9-1	2-3 ft./18-24 in.
G	Formosan lily <i>Lilium formosanum</i>	9	Perennial	Late summer	White	6-9/8-1	2-6 ft./1 ft.
H	Rosemary <i>Rosmarinus</i> 'Hill Hardy'	3	Perennial	Summer	Purple	7-10/12-8	2 ft./2 ft.
I	Hardy mum <i>Chrysanthemum</i> 'Country Girl'	7	Perennial	Fall	Pink	6-9/9-1	24-30 in./30 in.
J	Catmint <i>Nepeta racemosa</i> 'Walker's Low'	10	Perennial	Spring-fall	Blue	4-9/9-1	18-24 in./18 in.

### Plant tip

Though 'Fastigiata' boxwoods can reach 14 ft., they take pruning well. Clip them every year for the more formal look that's perfect for this setting.