

NEW BRUNSWICK LANDSCAPING

General Landscaping

General landscaping questions, planning advice,
and property improvement in New Brunswick

14 Expert Answers from Landscape IQ

newbrunswicklandscaping.com/construction-brain

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How do I choose a reliable landscaper in New Brunswick?

Choosing a reliable landscaper in New Brunswick starts with verifying three non-negotiable credentials: proof of liability insurance, active WorkSafeNB coverage for their employees, and a current New Brunswick business registration. These aren't just formalities — if an uninsured worker is injured on your property, you could face significant legal and financial liability under NB law.

Start your search by asking for recommendations from neighbours and checking online reviews. In NB's smaller market — particularly outside Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John — landscapers build their reputations through word of mouth, and a strong local reputation is the single best indicator of reliability. Check Google reviews, Facebook recommendations, and the Better Business Bureau of the Maritime Provinces. Look for companies with at least 3-5 years of operating history in the NB market. Be cautious of companies with no online presence at all, as well as those with suspiciously perfect reviews.

Request at least three written quotes from different companies. A professional NB landscaper will visit your property in person before quoting — anyone who gives a price over the phone without seeing the site isn't taking the work seriously. The quote should itemize materials, labour, and timeline, not just provide a lump-sum number. Compare the quotes carefully: the cheapest option isn't always the best value, and significantly low bids often indicate corners will be cut on materials, soil preparation, or plant quality.

Ask specific questions during the quoting process. How long have they been operating in NB? Can they provide 3-5 references from recent projects similar to yours? Do they carry a minimum of \$2 million in general liability insurance? Are their workers covered by WorkSafeNB? Do they offer any warranty on plantings and hardscaping? Will they pull any necessary permits from your municipality? A professional company will answer these questions readily and provide documentation. If a company becomes evasive or aggressive when asked about insurance and references, move on.

Verify what you're told. Call the references and ask about work quality, timeline adherence, communication, and how the company handled any problems that arose. Drive by previous project sites if possible — seeing two-year-old landscaping tells you much more about quality than seeing a freshly completed project. Check that their insurance is current by requesting a certificate of insurance naming you as additionally insured for the project period.

Understand the contract before signing. A professional landscaping contract should specify exactly what work will be done, what materials will be used (including plant sizes and species), start and completion dates, payment schedule (never pay more than 30-50% upfront), and warranty terms. In NB, reputable landscapers typically warranty plants for one growing season and hardscaping for 2-5 years. The contract should also specify who is

responsible for obtaining permits, utility locates, and property line verification. Taking the time to choose carefully upfront saves significant frustration and expense compared to hiring the wrong company and dealing with poor workmanship or an abandoned project.

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Q2

What questions should I ask before hiring a landscaping company in NB?

Before signing with any landscaping company in New Brunswick, you should ask at least ten specific questions covering insurance, experience, materials, timeline, and warranty — and evaluate the quality of their answers as much as the answers themselves. A professional company will welcome these questions and answer them confidently with documentation, while fly-by-night operators will dodge, deflect, or pressure you to "just trust them."

Insurance and legal compliance questions come first. Ask: Do you carry general liability insurance, and what is your coverage amount? Most reputable NB landscapers carry \$2-5 million in coverage. Ask for a certificate of insurance — don't just take their word for it. Ask: Are your employees covered by WorkSafeNB? This is legally required in New Brunswick for construction and landscaping workers, and if they're not covered and someone is injured on your property, you could be drawn into the claim. Ask: Is your business registered in New Brunswick? You can verify this through Service New Brunswick's corporate registry.

Experience and capability questions reveal whether they can actually deliver. Ask: How long have you been doing landscaping in New Brunswick? NB's climate, soil conditions, and seasonal challenges are specific enough that experience in the province matters significantly — a company from outside the Maritimes won't understand NB's acidic soils, frost depths of 1.2-1.5 metres, or the nuances of Zone 4-5 plant selection. Ask: Have you

completed projects similar to mine? Request photos and references from 3-5 recent projects that match your scope.

Material and method questions protect your investment. Ask: What specific plants, soil, stone, or other materials will you use, and where are they sourced? NB-grown nursery stock is typically better acclimated than plants trucked in from Ontario or further south. Ask: What is your soil preparation process? Proper soil preparation is the most commonly cut corner in landscaping — a company that says "we'll just plant right in the existing soil" is setting you up for failure, especially in NB's acidic, often clay-heavy ground. Ask: Will you do a soil test before planting?

Timeline and logistics questions prevent misunderstandings. Ask: When will you start, and when will you finish? Get specific dates in writing, not vague commitments like "sometime in June." Ask: Who will be on-site daily — will you personally supervise, or will a crew leader manage the project? Ask: What happens if weather delays the project? NB's unpredictable spring weather can easily push timelines back, and a good company has contingency plans.

Financial and warranty questions protect you after the work is done. Ask: What is your payment schedule? Never pay more than 30-50% upfront, with the balance due upon satisfactory completion. Ask: Do you warranty your plants and workmanship, and for how long? Standard NB industry practice is one growing season for plant material and 2-5 years for hardscaping. Ask: What does the warranty cover specifically — replacement plants, or just labour to reinstall? These questions collectively take 15-20 minutes to discuss but can save you thousands in avoided problems.

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Q3

How do I get the best value from a landscaping quote in New Brunswick?

Getting the best value from a landscaping quote in New Brunswick means looking beyond the bottom-line number to understand what's included, what's excluded, and where the real costs of quality versus cutting corners diverge. The cheapest quote is rarely the best value, and in NB's landscaping market, a price difference of 20-30% between quotes often represents a significant difference in material quality, soil preparation, and long-term durability.

Always get at least three quotes for comparison. Contact 3-5 landscaping companies and have each one visit your property in person to assess the scope. A reputable NB landscaper will never quote sight-unseen — your property's soil conditions, drainage, sun exposure, and access all affect the price. Be consistent in describing what you want to each company so you're comparing equivalent scopes of work. Provide the same wish list, property sketch, or inspiration photos to everyone.

Insist on itemized quotes rather than lump-sum pricing. A professional quote should break down costs into categories: site preparation (demolition, grading, soil amendment), materials (plants with species and sizes specified, stone or paver quantities, soil and mulch volumes), labour hours, equipment rental, and any subcontracted work like electrical or irrigation. This itemization lets you compare apples to apples. If one company quotes \$5,000 for "complete backyard landscaping" and another quotes \$8,000 with detailed line items, the second company isn't necessarily more expensive — the first company may simply be planning to do less work.

Pay close attention to plant specifications. There's an enormous price and quality difference between a 2-gallon shrub and a 5-gallon shrub, or between a 1.5-inch caliper tree and a 3-inch caliper tree. NB homeowners often don't realize that the "same" landscaping plan can vary by thousands of dollars depending on plant sizes. Ask each company to specify container sizes or caliper measurements for every plant. Larger plants cost more upfront but establish faster and look mature sooner, which is especially valuable in NB's short growing season.

Question soil preparation practices closely. This is where NB landscaping value is won or lost. NB soils are typically acidic (pH 4.5-6.0) and often heavy clay in river valley areas. A company that includes soil testing, lime application, and compost amendment in their quote is providing dramatically better value than one that plans to plant directly into existing soil, even if the second quote is lower. Plants installed in properly prepared soil grow 2-3 times faster and have far better survival rates.

Negotiate strategically. Consider timing your project for early spring or late fall when NB landscapers are less busy and may offer better pricing. Ask about package discounts if you bundle multiple services — for example, combining a patio installation with garden bed planting. Offer to handle demolition or site clearing yourself to reduce labour costs. And ask what substitutions could reduce cost without reducing quality — a local NB granite product might look similar to imported stone at a fraction of the price. The goal isn't to beat the company down on price but to optimize where every dollar goes.

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What is the best time of year to start a landscaping project in NB?

The best time to start a landscaping project in New Brunswick is late May through June for most types of work, though hardscaping projects can begin as early as mid-April once the ground has thawed and firmed up. NB's relatively short construction season — constrained by frost at both ends — means timing your project correctly is essential for both quality results and contractor availability.

Hardscaping projects (patios, retaining walls, walkways, driveways) can start earliest. Once the frost has left the ground and the soil has dried enough to support equipment — typically mid to late April in southern NB and early May in the north — hardscape construction can begin. In fact, spring is ideal for hardscaping because the work involves excavation and compaction that isn't affected by plant dormancy, and completing it early frees the site for planting later. NB's frost depth of 1.2-1.5 metres means proper base preparation for patios and walls requires digging to at least 18-24 inches, and this work is best done when the soil is fully thawed.

Planting projects should wait until after the last frost date for your area. That means mid-May in Saint John and the Bay of Fundy coast, late May around Fredericton, and early June in northern NB around Bathurst and Campbellton. Trees, shrubs, and perennials can go in as soon as the ground is workable and frost risk has passed, and the earlier in the season they're planted, the more root establishment time they get before winter. Annual flowers and tender plants should wait until night temperatures reliably stay above 5°C.

June is the sweet spot where everything comes together. The ground is fully thawed and dry, frost risk has passed across the entire province, nursery stock is at peak availability, and there's a full growing season ahead for plants to establish before winter. For major landscaping projects that combine hardscaping and planting, starting the hardscape component in May and transitioning to planting in June creates an efficient workflow.

Fall (September to mid-October) is an underrated alternative for many projects. Trees and shrubs planted in fall actually establish root systems better than spring plantings because soil is warm, air is cool, and fall rainfall is reliable. Perennial division and transplanting is ideal in September. Fall planting also avoids the summer heat stress that can challenge new plantings during NB's July-August hot spells. The main limitation of fall projects is the shorter window — you need to complete planting by mid-October to allow 4-6 weeks of root growth before the ground freezes.

Book your landscaper well in advance regardless of timing. NB's compressed construction season means the best companies fill their spring and summer schedules by March or April. Contact landscapers in January or February for spring projects, and by June for fall work. Expect project durations of 1-3 weeks for a typical residential landscape, though complex projects with hardscaping, grading, and extensive planting may take 4-6 weeks. Plan around NB's unpredictable spring weather by building schedule flexibility into your contract.

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Q5

How long does a typical backyard landscaping project take in NB?

A typical residential backyard landscaping project in New Brunswick takes 1-3 weeks of active work for most scopes, though the total timeline from initial consultation to finished project is usually 6-12 weeks when you factor in design, permitting, material ordering, and weather delays. NB's compressed construction season and unpredictable Maritime weather make realistic timeline planning essential.

Small projects — a new garden bed, a simple patio, or a basic planting refresh — can be completed in 2-5 days of active work. A garden bed installation including soil preparation, amendment, planting, and mulching takes 1-2 days for a 200-square-foot area. A 200-square-foot paver patio with basic excavation, base preparation, and installation takes 3-5 days. Basic shrub and tree planting across a residential property typically takes 1-2 days. These projects often require minimal lead time and can sometimes be scheduled within 2-3 weeks of signing a contract.

Medium projects — a backyard redesign with a patio, planting beds, and some grading — typically take 1-2 weeks of active work. The breakdown usually looks like: 2-3 days for site preparation (demolition of existing features, rough grading, utility locates), 3-5 days for hardscaping (patio, walkway, or retaining wall construction), and 2-3 days for soil preparation, planting, and finishing touches. Add a buffer of 2-3 days for weather delays — NB can deliver rain at any point during the construction season, and hardscape base work can't proceed in wet conditions.

Large or complex projects — full backyard transformations with multiple zones, retaining walls, water features, outdoor kitchens, or significant grade changes — take 3-6 weeks of active work. These projects

often require subcontractors for electrical, plumbing, or structural engineering, which adds coordination time. A project involving a large retaining wall system needs 1-2 weeks just for the wall construction, before any decorative landscaping begins. Grading and drainage work on NB's often clay-heavy soils takes longer than on well-drained sandy soils.

Several NB-specific factors affect timelines. The short construction season (roughly May through October) means contractors are juggling multiple projects simultaneously, so your project may not have a crew on-site every single day. NB's soil conditions can add time — hitting bedrock during excavation (common in parts of Fredericton and the Kingston Peninsula) requires different equipment and techniques. Material delivery from suppliers can also add delays, especially for specialty stone or custom-ordered plants.

To keep your project on track, discuss timeline expectations upfront and get specific start and completion dates written into your contract. Ask how many crew members will be assigned to your project daily, and what the rain-day policy is. Build in a 20-30% time buffer beyond the contractor's estimate for weather and unforeseen conditions. If you need the project completed by a specific date — a summer event, for example — communicate this deadline during the quoting phase so the contractor can plan accordingly. For project budgeting, NB backyard landscaping typically runs \$5,000-15,000 for basic renovations, \$15,000-40,000 for mid-range transformations, and \$40,000+ for comprehensive luxury installations.

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Q6

Is it worth hiring a landscape designer in New Brunswick?

Hiring a landscape designer is worth the investment for any New Brunswick project exceeding \$10,000 in construction value, or for any project where you're uncertain about plant selection, spatial layout, or how to

handle NB's specific climate and soil challenges. Design fees typically run 8-15% of the total project budget but regularly save homeowners 20-30% in avoided mistakes, plant losses, and redo costs.

A landscape designer brings expertise that's particularly valuable in NB's challenging growing environment. Selecting plants that thrive in NB's Zone 3b-5b range, acidic soils (pH 4.5-6.0), heavy Maritime humidity, and 250-300 cm of annual snowfall requires specific knowledge that most homeowners don't have. A designer who knows NB will steer you away from trendy plants that won't survive your first winter and toward proven performers that deliver year-round beauty. They'll understand that the sunny, well-drained spot in your Fredericton backyard needs completely different plants than the shady, boggy corner, and that the salt-sprayed front yard near a Moncton road requires salt-tolerant species.

The design process typically works in phases. An initial consultation (\$100-300 in NB) involves a site visit to assess your property's conditions — sun patterns, soil type, drainage, existing features, and your goals. The designer then creates a concept plan showing the overall layout, followed by detailed planting plans specifying exact species, quantities, and placement. Full design packages for residential properties in NB typically cost \$1,500-5,000 depending on property size and complexity. Some NB landscape companies offer design-build services where the design fee is credited toward construction costs if you hire them to install the project.

Where designers provide the most value is in problem-solving and long-term vision. NB properties frequently have challenging conditions — heavy clay soil along the Saint John River valley, sandy coastal soil near Shediac, steep grades, poor drainage, exposure to Bay of Fundy winds, or shaded lots under mature spruce and fir. A designer has solved these problems before and can specify drainage solutions, grading plans, and plant selections that work, rather than the trial-and-error approach that costs many NB homeowners hundreds of dollars in dead plants.

For smaller projects under \$5,000, a full design may not be necessary. Instead, consider a consultation-only session where a designer visits your property for 1-2 hours, discusses your plans, offers recommendations, and sketches a basic layout. Many NB designers offer this service for \$150-300, and it can be enough to give you confidence in your plant choices and layout without the cost of a full design package.

When choosing a designer, look for NB-specific experience. Ask to see projects they've completed in your area of the province, and check whether those projects are still thriving 2-3 years later. A beautiful design that doesn't account for NB's winter severity, soil acidity, or pest pressures will look great in the first summer and deteriorate rapidly after that. The right designer pays for themselves many times over through a landscape that performs beautifully for decades.

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How should I prioritize landscaping improvements for my NB home?

Prioritize landscaping improvements for your New Brunswick home by starting with functional issues that protect your property, then addressing curb appeal, and finally adding lifestyle and enjoyment features.

This sequence ensures that each investment builds on the previous one, and you're never adding decorative elements on top of unresolved problems like poor drainage or eroding grades.

Priority one: address any water, drainage, or grading problems. In NB, where heavy spring snowmelt, frequent rainfall, and clay-heavy soils create persistent moisture issues, fixing drainage should always come first. Water flowing toward your foundation, pooling on your lawn, or eroding garden beds will undermine any landscaping you install on top of it. Regrading to direct water away from the house, installing French drains, or correcting downspout drainage typically costs \$1,000-5,000 but protects your home's foundation — the most expensive thing on your property. NB's freeze-thaw cycles make foundation water issues especially destructive.

Priority two: establish healthy soil and a good lawn. A thick, healthy lawn is the foundation of any NB landscape. Test your soil and correct the pH (most NB soils need lime), core aerate compacted areas, overseed thin spots in late August, and establish a consistent mowing and fertilization program. A solid lawn costs relatively little — \$200-500 for a full season of treatments — but dramatically improves the overall appearance of your property and provides the green canvas that makes everything else look better.

Priority three: improve curb appeal with front yard plantings. Foundation plantings, a well-defined front walkway, and an attractive entry area provide the highest return on investment of any landscaping improvement. Real estate professionals consistently rank curb appeal landscaping as returning 100-200% of its cost in home value. In NB, focus on hardy, low-maintenance foundation shrubs like Japanese yew, mugo pine, and boxwood (with winter protection), complemented by perennial borders and seasonal colour. A professional front yard landscaping refresh in NB typically costs \$3,000-8,000.

Priority four: create functional outdoor living spaces. Once the front is presentable and the property's functional issues are resolved, invest in backyard features that enhance your lifestyle. A patio or deck provides the biggest quality-of-life improvement for most NB families, extending your usable living space through the 120-150 day growing season. Follow this with privacy plantings (cedar hedges or mixed shrub borders), garden beds, and then specialty features like fire pits, water features, or outdoor kitchens.

Priority five: add finishing touches and specialty gardens. This includes things like landscape lighting, irrigation systems, ornamental gardens, and decorative elements. These make a good landscape great but should never take priority over the fundamentals.

Spread your investment over 2-3 years if budget is a concern. Tackle one priority level each year, starting with a solid plan that shows how each phase connects to the next. Many NB landscapers will create a multi-year master plan and execute it in phases, which also spreads the cost and lets you adjust plans based on what you learn in each phase.

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Q8

What should I expect during a professional landscape consultation in NB?

A professional landscape consultation in New Brunswick typically involves a 1-2 hour on-site visit where the designer or landscaper assesses your property's conditions, discusses your goals and budget, and provides initial recommendations — expect to pay \$100-300 for this service, though some NB companies offer free consultations as a sales tool. Understanding what happens during this visit helps you prepare and get maximum value from the time.

Before the consultation, gather your thoughts on three things: what you like and dislike about your current landscape, what you want to use your outdoor space for (entertaining, gardening, play area, privacy), and a realistic budget range. Collect inspiration photos from magazines, Pinterest, or drives through NB neighbourhoods you admire. Having this information ready prevents the consultation from being vague and ensures the professional can give you specific, actionable advice rather than generic suggestions.

The site assessment phase takes up the first 30-45 minutes. The professional will walk your entire property, noting sun and shade patterns, existing vegetation health, soil conditions (they may take a quick soil sample), drainage patterns, grade changes, and the condition of existing hardscaping. In NB specifically, they'll assess winter exposure — which areas get hammered by prevailing northwest winds, where roof snow avalanches, where

salt spray from the road reaches — because these factors heavily influence plant selection and placement. They'll also note your hardiness zone, which varies significantly across NB from Zone 3b in the north to Zone 5b along the coast.

The discussion phase is where your input matters most. A good NB landscaper will ask detailed questions about your lifestyle, maintenance willingness, and aesthetic preferences. Be honest about how much time you'll spend on maintenance — NB's short but intense growing season means gardens require consistent attention from May through October, and a designer who knows you don't want to spend every weekend gardening will select lower-maintenance plants and designs accordingly. Discuss your budget openly — a professional can accomplish a lot more within a known budget than when trying to guess what you'll spend.

Expect initial recommendations on the spot, but not a finished design. The professional should be able to tell you immediately whether your ideas are feasible, suggest alternatives you haven't considered, and identify potential problems. They'll likely recommend a phased approach if your wish list exceeds your budget. In NB, they should specifically address soil amendment needs (almost always necessary with NB's acidic soil), seasonal interest planning for the 120-150 day growing season, and winter survivability of proposed plantings.

After the consultation, you should receive a written summary or proposal within 1-2 weeks, outlining recommended work, estimated costs, and suggested timeline. Some NB companies provide a rough cost estimate during the consultation itself. If you decide to proceed with a full design, the consultation fee is often credited toward the design cost. Compare proposals from 2-3 companies before committing, and don't feel pressured to decide on the spot — a reputable NB landscaping professional will give you time to consider your options.

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Q9

How do I maintain my landscaping investment year-round in New Brunswick?

Maintaining your landscaping investment year-round in New Brunswick requires a structured seasonal approach because NB's dramatic climate swings — from -30°C winters to +30°C summers — put constant pressure on plants, hardscaping, and soil. The homeowners who protect their investment are the ones who follow a consistent schedule rather than reacting to problems after they appear.

Spring (April-May) is recovery and preparation season. Once the ground firms up in mid-April, begin with a thorough cleanup: rake debris and matted leaves, remove winter wraps and mulch gradually, and assess winter damage to plants, fences, and hardscaping. Apply pelletized lime if your soil test shows pH below 6.0 — NB's acidic soils drift lower every year without correction. Have your irrigation system professionally started up (\$75-125), and apply pre-emergent herbicide when forsythia blooms (early May) to prevent crabgrass. Edge garden beds, refresh mulch to 2-3 inches, and divide any overcrowded perennials.

Summer (June-August) focuses on active growth management. Mow weekly at 3-3.5 inches, leaving clippings on the lawn. Water deeply but infrequently — 1-1.5 inches per week, delivered in 2-3 sessions. Deadhead perennials and annuals to encourage continued blooming. Watch for pest and disease problems, which peak in NB's humid July and August conditions. Weed garden beds regularly — a few minutes twice a week prevents weeds from establishing. Inspect hardscaping for any settling, shifting, or weed growth in joints. Mid-August is the ideal time for overseeding thin lawn areas.

Fall (September-October) is the critical winterization window. Apply high-potassium fall fertilizer in September. Plant spring bulbs and divide perennials in September and early October. Do your final mow at 2.5 inches in October. Complete leaf cleanup before snow arrives. Winterize your irrigation system by late October (\$75-150 for professional service). Apply winter mulch to perennial beds after the ground freezes lightly. Wrap vulnerable evergreens in burlap and protect roses with the mound-and-mulch method. This fall work is arguably the most important maintenance of the year — it determines how your landscape emerges from NB's 5-month winter.

Winter (November-March) is about protection and monitoring. Brush heavy snow off evergreen branches gently after major storms. Avoid piling salt-laden snow on garden beds. Monitor for animal damage — rabbits and deer browse on shrubs when natural food is scarce in deep NB winters. During mid-winter thaws, water evergreens if possible to combat desiccation. Plan next year's improvements while the garden is dormant.

Budget approximately \$1,500-3,500 annually for comprehensive year-round maintenance of a typical NB residential landscape if you hire professionals for all tasks. DIY maintenance reduces this to \$300-600 in materials and tool costs. The investment is worthwhile — neglected landscaping loses value quickly in NB's harsh climate, while well-maintained landscapes can increase property value by 10-15%. Professional seasonal maintenance contracts that cover all four seasons typically offer the best value and ensure nothing falls through the cracks.

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Are year-round landscaping maintenance contracts worth it in NB?

Year-round landscaping maintenance contracts are worth it for most New Brunswick homeowners, offering better pricing, guaranteed service availability, and consistent care that prevents the costly neglect cycles that NB's extreme seasonal demands create. The value proposition is strongest for homeowners who travel frequently, have large properties, or simply prefer to spend their limited free time on something other than lawn and garden work during NB's short but intense growing season.

A typical year-round NB maintenance contract covers all four seasons and includes: spring cleanup and bed preparation (April-May), weekly mowing and garden maintenance (May-October), fall cleanup and winterization (October-November), and winter snow removal (November-April). Comprehensive contracts run \$3,000-6,000 annually for a standard residential property, which breaks down to roughly \$250-500 per month. When you compare this to hiring individual services separately — spring cleanup (\$200-500), seasonal mowing (\$800-2,000), fall cleanup (\$250-600), winterization (\$200-500), and snow removal (\$600-1,500) — the bundled contract typically saves 15-25%.

The financial savings are real but aren't the biggest benefit. The true value of a year-round contract is consistency and timing. NB's landscape maintenance has tight windows — pre-emergent herbicide must go down when forsythia blooms in early May, fall fertilizer needs to be applied in September, irrigation winterization must happen before the first freeze in late October. Miss these windows and you're dealing with consequences (crabgrass infestations, winterkill, burst pipes) that cost far more to fix than the maintenance would have cost to do. A professional under contract doesn't miss these windows because your property is built into their seasonal schedule.

Contract quality varies significantly across NB's landscaping market, so evaluate carefully. Ask exactly what's included in each seasonal phase — some contracts are genuinely comprehensive while others cover only basic mowing and snow removal, leaving expensive tasks like fertilization, aeration, winterization, and pruning as add-on charges. Get a detailed written scope of work for each season, including specific frequencies (weekly mowing? biweekly?), materials included (fertilizer types, mulch quantities), and seasonal transition tasks.

Look for contracts with built-in flexibility. NB's weather is unpredictable — some years spring arrives two weeks early, other years winter lingers into late April. A good contract company adjusts their schedule to actual conditions rather than rigid calendar dates. Ask how they handle unusual seasons and whether additional snow events or extra mowing visits during wet summers incur surcharges.

The contract may not be worth it if your property is small and you enjoy yard work. A homeowner with a small city lot in Moncton or Fredericton who finds gardening relaxing can maintain their own property for \$300-600

annually in materials, with the main investment being time — roughly 3-5 hours per week during the growing season and occasional half-day projects for seasonal transitions. But for properties over a quarter acre, for homeowners with physical limitations, or for anyone who values their weekends too much to spend them mowing and raking, the professional contract delivers excellent value and protects an investment that typically represents 10-15% of your home's total property value.

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Q11

How does landscaping increase curb appeal and home value in NB?

Professional landscaping consistently increases home value in New Brunswick by 5-15% according to real estate industry estimates, and in NB's competitive housing markets — particularly in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John — strong curb appeal can be the difference between a quick sale at asking price and a property that lingers on the market. First impressions form within 7 seconds of a potential buyer seeing your property, and landscaping is the first thing they see.

The highest-return landscaping investments for NB homes focus on **foundational elements that frame the home and create a welcoming entrance**. A well-maintained lawn, defined garden beds along the foundation with a mix of evergreen and flowering shrubs, a clear and attractive walkway to the front door, and a mature tree or two providing shade and scale consistently deliver the strongest return. In NB's housing market, where the median home price varies significantly by region (\$250,000-400,000+ in Moncton/Fredericton, lower in rural areas), spending \$5,000-15,000 on professional front-yard landscaping can add \$15,000-40,000 or more in perceived home value.

Specific high-return landscaping projects for NB properties include upgrading a cracked asphalt or plain concrete walkway to natural stone or quality pavers (\$2,000-5,000 — often recovers 100-150% at resale), planting a mix of evergreen foundation shrubs that provide year-round structure (critical in NB where homes are viewed by buyers in all four seasons), adding landscape lighting along walkways and accent lighting on architectural features (\$1,000-3,000), and installing a defined edge between lawn and garden beds using stone or aluminum edging for a maintained, professional look.

Year-round appeal is especially important in New Brunswick because homes are shown and sold throughout all seasons, including the long winter months. Landscaping that looks good only in July fails to impress buyers viewing in January. Invest in **evergreen structure** — boxwood (in Zone 5 coastal areas), cedar hedges, mugo pine, dwarf spruce, and rhododendrons (which thrive in NB's acidic soils) provide green colour and form during the 5-6 months when deciduous plants are bare. Ornamental grasses, birch trees with distinctive bark, and red-twig dogwood provide winter visual interest that photographs well for real estate listings.

Functional outdoor living spaces are increasingly valued by NB homebuyers. A quality patio or deck area with privacy screening, an outdoor gathering space, and proper lighting can significantly increase both appraised value and buyer appeal. In NB's climate, covered or partially sheltered outdoor spaces that extend the usable season are particularly desirable.

Conversely, poor landscaping actively detracts from home value. Overgrown or dead hedges, cracked and heaving paver walkways (extremely common after NB winters), bare or patchy lawns, and cluttered yards signal deferred maintenance to buyers and can reduce offers by 5-10%. Before listing a NB home for sale, invest in basic cleanup, fresh mulch in all beds, a healthy green lawn (or at minimum a clean, dormant lawn in winter), and repair of any hardscaping damage from frost heaving. These relatively small investments typically return many times their cost at closing.

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What are the best landscaping ideas for small urban yards in Moncton or Fredericton?

Small urban yards in Moncton and Fredericton can be transformed into stunning, functional outdoor spaces by thinking vertically, creating distinct zones, and choosing plants that deliver maximum impact in minimal square footage. The older neighbourhoods in downtown Fredericton and Moncton's central core feature narrow lots with compact backyards — typically 20-30 feet wide by 30-40 feet deep — that require creative design to feel spacious and purposeful rather than cramped.

Vertical gardening is your most powerful tool in a small NB urban yard. Install trellises, arbors, and vertical planters along fences and walls to add greenery without consuming floor space. Hardy climbing plants for NB include Dropmore Scarlet trumpet honeysuckle (Zone 3, attracts hummingbirds), Virginia creeper (native, spectacular fall colour), and hardy clematis varieties like Jackmanii (Zone 4) that produce dramatic purple blooms from July through September. A simple cedar trellis against a south-facing fence (\$100-300 to build) can support climbing vegetables like beans, peas, and cucumbers while also serving as a privacy screen.

Create distinct functional zones even in a small space. A 10x12 foot paver patio immediately adjacent to the house provides dining and entertaining space, a narrow 3-foot-wide perennial border along the fence adds colour and privacy screening, and the remaining lawn area (even just 10x15 feet) provides green space and visual openness. Use different surface materials — pavers, gravel, lawn, mulch — to define zones visually without physical barriers that would make the space feel smaller. In Moncton and Fredericton's Zone 4b-5a climate, a well-designed small patio with afternoon sun can be comfortable for outdoor living from late May through mid-October.

Plant selection for small NB urban yards should prioritize multi-season interest and compact growth habits. Dwarf varieties of popular NB shrubs — dwarf burning bush, compact mugo pine, dwarf hydrangea, and miniature lilac — deliver the same beauty as their full-sized relatives in a fraction of the space. Japanese maples (zone-hardy varieties like 'Bloodgood' work in Zone 5b Moncton microclimate spots) provide stunning form and fall colour as a focal point. For perennials, choose long-blooming varieties like coreopsis (June through September), daylilies in sequence-blooming varieties, and compact ornamental grasses like blue fescue that provide texture and movement without overwhelming a small space.

Privacy is often the top concern in small urban yards where neighbours are close. A narrow mixed hedge of upright cedars, tall ornamental grasses (Karl Foerster feather reed grass grows 5-6 feet tall but only 2 feet wide), and columnar shrubs creates an effective screen without consuming half your yard. Cedar fences (up to 6 feet in both cities) provide immediate privacy — soften them with climbers and planters.

Container gardening extends your growing space significantly. Use large containers (16-24 inch diameter minimum to survive NB's freeze-thaw) for small trees, herbs, and seasonal flowers, grouping them at different heights for visual interest. Quality frost-resistant containers cost \$50-150 each. A professional landscape design for a small urban yard (\$500-1,500) can help you maximize every square foot of your property.

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How do I plan a multi-year landscaping project for a New Brunswick home?

Planning a multi-year landscaping project in New Brunswick allows you to spread costs, tackle work in the optimal season for each element, and adjust based on how earlier phases perform through NB's demanding four-season climate. A phased approach typically produces better results than trying to complete everything in one hectic season.

Year one should focus on hardscaping and structural elements — these are the bones of your landscape and are the most expensive, most disruptive, and most important to get right first. This includes driveway and walkway installation or repair, patio construction, retaining walls, grading and drainage corrections, fence installation, and irrigation system installation. In NB, hardscaping is best completed from mid-May through October when the ground is workable and concrete/mortar can cure properly. Budget 40-50% of your total landscaping investment for this phase. Getting the grade, drainage, and hardscaping correct first prevents the heartbreak of tearing up established plantings in later years to fix water problems or install infrastructure you forgot.

Year two focuses on major plantings — trees, large shrubs, hedges, and foundation plantings. Planting in year two gives hardscaping a full NB winter to settle and reveals drainage issues before you invest in plant material. The ideal planting windows are May through June and September through early October. Plant the largest elements first — a shade tree planted this year will be 3-4 feet taller by project completion, anchoring the entire design. Budget 25-30% for this phase and choose species proven for your NB hardiness zone (4a-4b inland, 5a-5b coastal).

Year three adds the finishing layers — perennial beds, ground covers, ornamental grasses, garden bed edging, mulch, landscape lighting, and decorative elements. These finishing touches transform a functional landscape into a polished one. This is also when you assess which year-one and year-two elements are performing well and which need adjustment. Perhaps a tree is not thriving in its location and should be moved, or a garden bed needs better drainage — addressing these issues in year three is far less disruptive than discovering them later.

Throughout all phases, maintain a master plan. Sketch your property to scale (or hire a landscape designer for \$500-2,000 for a professional plan) showing the final vision. This prevents the piecemeal look that results from season-by-season decisions without an overarching vision. Share this plan with contractors so they can rough in irrigation lines, electrical conduit, and proper grading for planned features even if those features are years away.

A practical NB budget framework for a comprehensive multi-year landscaping project on a typical suburban property is \$15,000-40,000 total, spread over 3-4 years at \$5,000-10,000 annually. This is far more manageable than a single \$30,000 invoice and allows you to adjust spending based on how each phase performs. Keep 10-15% of each year's budget as a contingency for unexpected issues — NB's rocky soils and variable subsurface conditions frequently reveal surprises during excavation.

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What is the return on investment of professional landscaping in NB?

Professional landscaping in New Brunswick delivers an estimated return on investment of 100-200% for well-planned front-yard improvements and 50-100% for backyard living spaces, making it one of the highest-ROI home improvements available to NB homeowners. These figures come from real estate industry research and appraiser estimates, and they hold true across NB's major markets in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John, where curb appeal significantly influences buyer behaviour and sale prices.

Front yard landscaping offers the highest returns because it directly affects curb appeal — the first impression that determines whether a buyer wants to see the inside of your home. A comprehensive front-yard landscape renovation in NB (professional design, quality plantings, paver walkway, landscape lighting, foundation beds) typically costs \$5,000-15,000 and can increase home value by \$10,000-30,000 based on comparable sales data. Simpler improvements like fresh mulch and seasonal colour in all beds (\$500-1,000), a maintained healthy lawn (\$200-500 annually for professional service), and updated exterior lighting (\$500-2,000) deliver returns well above their cost with minimal investment.

Specific projects and their estimated NB returns break down as follows. A paver walkway or patio (\$3,000-8,000 installed) typically recovers 100-150% of its cost at resale — NB buyers strongly value functional outdoor living space given the province's relatively short warm season. Professional tree planting (\$300-800 per tree installed) delivers among the highest percentage returns of any landscaping investment — a well-placed mature tree can add \$1,000-5,000 to a property's appraised value. Irrigation systems (\$3,000-6,000) recover approximately 50-75% at resale but also protect your ongoing landscaping investment by maintaining healthy plantings and lawns

that might otherwise die during NB's July-August dry spells.

The ROI extends beyond resale value. Strategically placed deciduous shade trees on the south and west sides reduce summer cooling costs by 15-25%, while evergreen windbreaks on the north side reduce winter heating costs by 10-15%. In NB's 6-7 month heating season, energy savings from well-placed trees can total \$200-500 annually, compounding significantly over time.

Quality of life returns are equally significant, though harder to quantify in dollar terms. NB homeowners with professional landscaping spend more time outdoors, report higher satisfaction with their property, and experience the documented mental health benefits of time in well-designed green spaces. A private backyard patio area with screening, comfortable plantings, and good design effectively adds a seasonal outdoor room to your home — valuable in a province where the warm-weather months are treasured.

To maximize your landscaping ROI in New Brunswick, invest in quality over quantity, choose durable materials that withstand NB's freeze-thaw cycles (natural stone, quality pavers with a proper 12-16 inch base), and select proven species for your hardiness zone. Maintain your investment through regular care — dead plants, heaving pavers, and overgrown beds signal neglect and can decrease home value. Budget \$500-1,500 annually for professional maintenance to protect and grow your landscaping investment.

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