

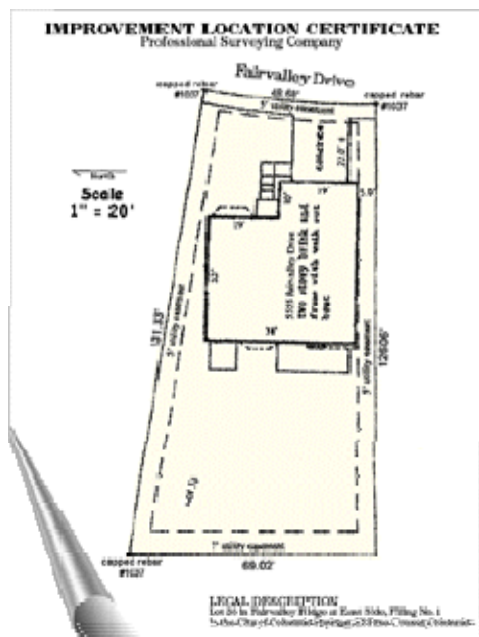
Step 1: Creating a Base Plan for Your Landscape Design

[Basic drawing materials](#) you will need.

Although you have probably spent some time thinking about how your site looks, you will need to translate the information into a two-dimensional form in a base plan before you can begin designing. Landscape plans are drawings that show an area from above. Such plans help visualize the areas of your property and how they relate to one another.

Improvement Location Certificate or Site Survey

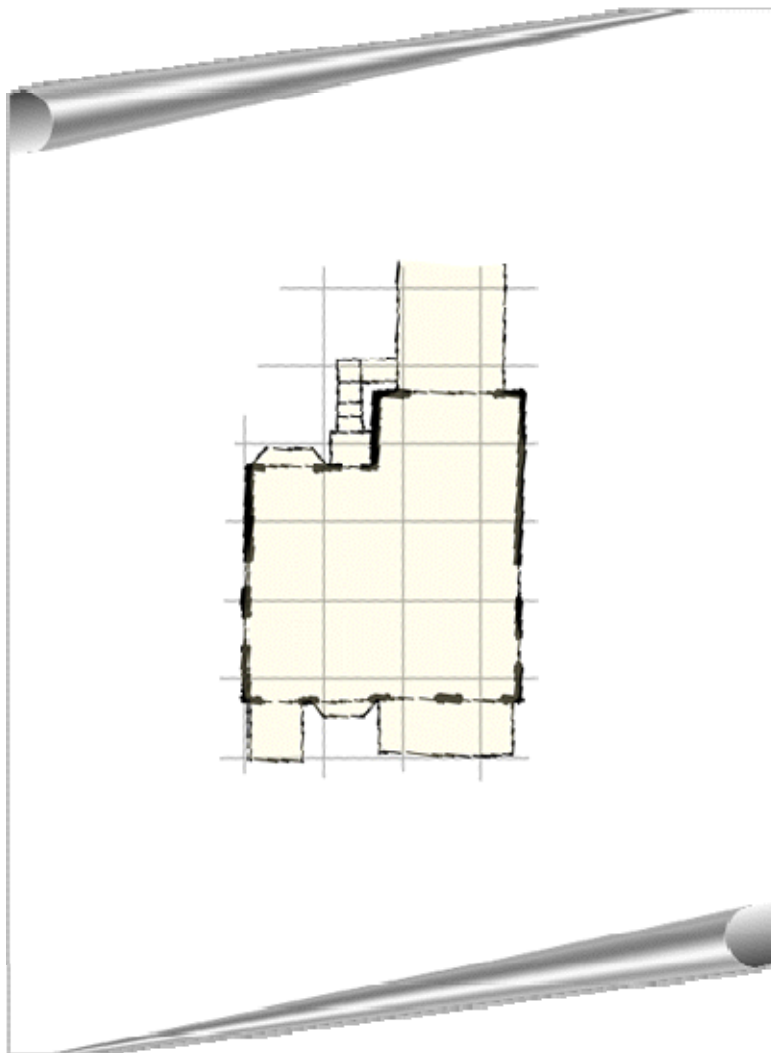
Start with your improvement location certificate or site survey. If you own your home, this certificate was probably a part of the paperwork you received at closing.



This is a good tool to use in drawing your base plan; however, don't count on every measurement being correct. Check the distances from your house to the street and property edges. Make sure your house is as shown, and verify that the north arrow is pointing north! If the information is accurate, you can skip some of the measuring in the rest of this step. You can either transfer the information to your graph paper, or you can use the zoom on a photocopy machine to make the certificate into a base the scale of your landscape plan.

and a helpful relative or friend. Measure the exterior walls of your house, and from your house to the property lines. You also need to measure other hardscape, such as sidewalks, decks and driveways. If there are existing trees and shrubs that you wish to keep, measure to place them accurately on your plan.

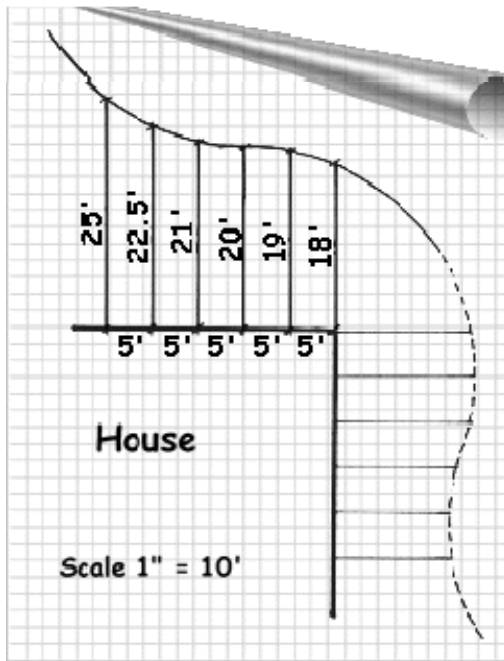
There are many ways to measure your property. One of the easiest is to start with your house. With this method, you simply measure around your house. As most of the angles will be 90 degrees, this can go quite quickly. Place doors, windows, steps, walkways and utility boxes as you work.



Next, place the house on your property. The property lines are measured from each of the house corners.



To draw curves in walks, driveways or the property line, locate a series of points along the curve and then draw a line connecting them.



Once the house and property are measured, place all other details of your property, such as telephone poles and electric lines, in relation to the house. Call the Utility Notification Center of Colorado at 1-800 922-1987 to have underground utilities located.

Once you've recorded all the measurements, transfer them to graph paper. It's a good idea to make several photocopies of your base at this point. You may decide to work on the base itself or use tracing paper. Either way, make one extra and set it aside for future use. This will be the base for all of your design work.

