



Space enclosure

In design, enclosure by vegetation, landform, structures or water in wall planes enables the definition and separation of spaces and their related human activities.

The type and degree of enclosure affects human experience and use, microclimate and character.

Degrees and permeability of enclosure

The landscape architect must decide how enclosed or 'open' a space should be – ranging from entirely open with space defined only on the ground plane, to fully enclosed in wall planes.

Full enclosure suggests and provides security and privacy, but can be experienced as threatening and unsafe in a public urban environment. Enclosure on two or three sides provides refuge but allows prospect.

The height of an enclosure affects scale. There is a tendency among inexperienced designers to make enclosing planes too high and dense, thereby creating claustrophobic and intimidating places. Conversely, too little structure or enclosure can result in a monotonous and bleak landscape. Visual and physical permeability of enclosing planes is an extremely important concept in landscape architecture and is one that the designer can use with subtle variation.