



Photo courtesy Forslund Woodworking Company

Subtle additions and changes can help a deck blend in with the natural surroundings of a back yard.

Maximize outdoor living spaces

Have you ever been out on a sunny afternoon looking at houses and noticed the minimal effort put into outdoor living spaces? Have you ever skimmed the garden and landscape magazines and observed garden structures and decks which appear to have been built by someone who got a little carried away with their project by making it too big, or by butchering a decent space plan with a bunch of crazy angles which are not coordinated with the landscape?

In constructing outdoor structures such as decks, arbors and

gates, size is often prioritized ahead of space planning and quality.

At Forslund Woodworking Company, employees strive to bring the focus back to the space plan. Most clients start with visions of a project much larger in size than what is eventually built.

"Eventually we ask the clients, 'Do you really need something that big?'" writes James Forslund, president of Forslund Woodworking Company, Inc. "In our planning process, it is becoming more and more common for clients to realize they don't need

a deck, for example, that could double as a sport court. Instead, we help them determine it would be better to downsize the square footage of the job and increase the quality of the materials and workmanship included in the job."

Subtle additions and changes to a huge, choppy floor can dramatically increase the ability of a project to blend in and become part of the natural landscape. Curved railings, steps, planters and arbors can create graceful transitions between spaces. Likewise, woodwork can also be wrapped around

landscape features such as boulders and trees. However, gentle curves are not so gentle on the wallet, due to intensive labor required to bend wood and make material fit the profile of landscape features such as boulders and trees.

"For the brief moments in our busy lives that we actually get to spend outside enjoying the Northwest scenery with our families, promote it with an outdoor living room, which is bent to fit the profile of your piece of creation," writes Forslund.