**ABG Permaculture Principles**by Damian S Mason
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# Intro to Permaculture - What is Permaculture?

## Ask 1000 different people and you’ll get 1000 different answers.

## Permaculture is a diverse big oak tree that combines over 30 scientific disciplines as well as the knowledge and practices from many different indigenous cultures. “The word *Permaculture* originally referred to "permanent agriculture" but was expanded to stand also for "permanent culture," as it was seen that social aspects were integral to a truly sustainable system as inspired by Masanobu Fukuoka's natural farming philosophy.” – Wikipedia (One Straw Revolution)

## Bill Mollison says: “Permaculture is a philosophy of working with, rather than against nature; of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless labor; and of looking at plants and animals in all their functions, rather than treating everything as a single product system.” (Drill into that)

## Beavers are an excellent example of an animal that practices Permaculture. They are a Keystone Species in aquatic environs and they help turn deserts into water garden oasies. As snow packs lessen due to climate change beaver dams provide a much needed alternative for landscape water retention. They use local renewable resources to build a home that provides habitat for many other species and prevents tree monocultures.

## Core Ethics: Take care of the earth. (Leave it better than you found it) Care for all people. (Universal Compassion) Return the surplus, so that all may get a Fair Share. (Gleaners & Food Banks) The focus is on creating a synergy where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

# Why learn about or practice Permaculture?

## Peak Oil, Food & Water scarcity, Economic Inequality, Landfills, Climate Change, Severe Droughts & Floods, Disaster relief and prevention, Corporate Greed & Consumerism, Toxic Waste, Etc.

**The 12 Permaculture Principles as defined by David Holmgren in his book: *Permaculture: Principles and Pathways Beyond Sustainability***

### Observe and interact: By taking time to engage with nature we can design solutions that suit our particular situation.

### Catch and store energy: By developing systems that collect resources at peak abundance, we can use them in times of need.

### Obtain a yield: Ensure that you are getting truly useful rewards as part of the work that you are doing

### Apply self-regulation and accept feedback: We need to discourage inappropriate activity to ensure that systems can continue to function well

### Use and value renewable resources and services: Make the best use of nature's abundance to reduce our consumptive behavior and dependence on non-renewable resources

### Produce no waste: By valuing and making use of all the resources that are available to us, nothing goes to waste, just like nature works.

### Design from patterns to details: By stepping back, we can observe patterns in nature and society. These can form the backbone of our designs, with the details filled in as we go.

### Integrate rather than segregate: By putting the right things in the right place, relationships develop between those things and they work together to support each other.

### Use small and slow solutions: Small and slow systems are easier to maintain than big ones, low-tech solutions are often more durable and easily maintained.

### Use and value diversity: Diversity reduces vulnerability to a variety of threats and takes advantage of the unique nature of the environment in which it resides.

### Use edges and value the marginal: The interface between things is where the most interesting events take place. These are often the most valuable, diverse and productive elements in the system.

### Creatively use and respond to change: We can have a positive impact on inevitable change by carefully observing, and then intervening at the right time. “Vision is not seeing things as they are but as they will be.”

# What does Permaculture look like?

## In my backyard – Customized to fit your needs, Multi-purpose, Stacking functions, Espalier & Vertical Gardens, Bee Hives, Worm Bins, Compost bins, Chicken Coops or Tractors, Rabbit Hutch (Taylor Ave, Chicken Coop Tour), Plant Guilds, Raised Beds (wicking worm beds), brush pile hugelkultur, Aquaculture, Duck or Frog ponds

## As a solution to seasonal flooding or for fencing in poor regions – Living bridges or Living Fences (For deer-Sour Cherry hedge with Sweet Cherry grafted along inside edge)

## As a business model – Employ disadvantaged, pollution => profits, grow food or up cycle unwanted wastes, efficient use of water & resources, Back to the Roots Oyster Mushroom Kits, Bay Worms, Etc.

## In a park or rural location – Food Forests-Foragers Lane, Native Plant medicine cabinets, Surplus to Food Banks, Jean Swe. Open Space Park

## Applied to Architecture – Natural Vernacular Buildings, Cob & Straw Bale, Green Roofs, Round beams, Passive Solar, Greywater Systems, Masonry Heaters, Salvage & Re-use, Pee-ponics & Composting Toilets

## As a nation or planet-wide – Eco-Villages & Eco-Cities (Serenby in Atlanta Georgia, Masdar City & Institute in Abu Dhabi UAE, Greening the Desert in the Mid-East Region, Free Land 3,000 Acres in NSW AU)

**Additional Info & Resources**

1. “Permaculture: Principles and Pathways beyond Sustainability” by David Holmgren
2. “One Straw Revolution” by Masanobu Fukuoka
3. “Gaia’s Garden” by Toby Hemenway
4. “Farm City” by Novella Carpenter in Oakland
5. “Practical Permaculture for Home Landscapes, Your Community, and the Whole Earth” by Jessi Bloom
6. “Garden Up! Smart Vertical Gardening” by Susan Morrison
7. “Lasagna Gardening” by Patrica Lanza
8. “Straw Bale Gardens Complete” by Joel Karsten
9. “Living Homes” & “Botany in a Day” by Thomas J. Elpel
10. “Serious Straw Bale: A Home Construction Guide for All Climates” by Paul Lacinski
11. “The Natural Plaster Book” by Cedar Rose Guelberth
12. “Design Like You Give A Damn: Architectural Responses To Humanitarian Crises” by Architecture for Humanity
13. www.pinterest.com/marksmcclain/permaculture/