

Landscape

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GREEN WALLS

THE ORIGINAL GREEN WALL

It's not uncommon for villas in Dubai to be enclosed by a boundary wall. In addition to these wall surfaces there are then the walls of the actual villa. This can add up to a substantial amount of unflattering masonry. In some cases because of limited space it may be impossible to plant screening shrubs to 'hide' these unattractive elements. Even when space is available it may not be possible to grow plants tall enough to hide all the masonry. This means there is limited scope to create a more natural 'green' look.

THE WAY IT CAN AND SHOULD BE.

However help is at hand! Now with little inconvenience and minimal cost you can transform your villa and its surroundings by acquiring the services of a good professional to fit 'stainless steel' tying wires (climbing wires) to all your external

walls and create your own vertical garden without huge amounts of spaces required. There are 'many' climbing plants on the market with various characteristics and colours to ensure the new look is 'never boring'. There are also various stainless steel elements required to give the initial fitted product an architectural feel.



WHAT TO DO,

Firstly you must appoint a competent person who is familiar with all the various elements required. Secondly it is important to express exactly what you want and where you wish the tying wires fitted and to what height etc. etc. Fixings are typically 'never' placed any closer than fifteen centimetres to a door or window jam. This is because the plants will make 'some encroachment' on their own without support.





This is why it is preferable to allow space to prevent the blocking of light and restricting the movement of openings. It is advisable to use good quality and stronger fixings (hooks) in the walls at either end of each run as when tension is applied to the wire it will place a degree of stress on these fittings. Extra tension will also be applied from the weight of plants as they grow and develop

STEP BY STEP

Each stainless steel run should be placed at no more than 50 centimetres apart horizontally with the top wire within 30 cm of the top of a boundary wall. This will allow plants to clamber over the wall with ease. The maximum vertical separation should be no more than 1.5 meters although this can vary slightly to ensure the distance between each vertical wire is equidistant to the other spaces on the wall. In addition to vertical and horizontal wires there must also be two diagonal wires fitted opposite to each other to ensure plants have as much climbing assistance as possible. At both ends of each individual wire it is 'a must' to add 'tensioners' to tighten the wire so it looks more attractive. These tensioners may have to be adjusted periodically to ensure the wire remains taut. It is also advisable to fit miniature 'pulley wheels' to prevent friction at every

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junction where the wire changes direction. This item will greatly reduce your requirement for tensioners while substantially enhancing the richness and overall architectural appearance of the tying wire.

WHAT YOU NEED,

Fitting tying wires is like assembling a jigsaw. You require 'all' the pieces and then must figure out where they go. It is a very fulfilling task as you get substantial benefits from minimal effort. If done correctly it can enhance a property greatly even before the plants mature. There are various sizes and types of tying wire available from 1.5 mm upwards. You can choose bare wire, upvc or nylon coated. These two covered versions can come in any colour to blend with surroundings and are also kinder to plants. The various fittings are readily available and will last for a substantial period of time.

UPSIZE FOR STRENGTH,

If you wish to place 'heavier' plants that require 'more support' like grapevines for instance ensure that you upsize your tying wire and fittings to accommodate any extra weight. These heavy duty wires and fittings can also be used to stretch overhead to join two sets of climbers together which are on opposing walls and create 'a perfume tunnel'. Alternately it is also possible to create trellis using this system as long as you have a frame in either wood or stainless steel to support the wires.

GAIN HEIGHT,

Walls can also be extended upwards with the assistance of 'rigid' fencing on top of boundary

walls to assist climbing plants in their ascent. These can be powder coated to any colour either to blend with surroundings or to make a bold statement. This addition can increase privacy in a colourful way without the risk of root damage to structures from tree planting which is the only other option to achieve this goal.

SAFETY AND PERMISSION,

Today we have many high-rise balconies in Dubai. These balconies can be extremely hazardous to children for obvious reasons. Planning authorities will not allow the overall aesthetic exterior appearance of buildings to be

altered regardless of safety concerns. However by using tying wires on top of existing walls it is possible to ensure 'complete safety' while still complying with strict planning authority guidelines. In addition to these wires it would then be an option to grow climbers in this area to reduce noise and increase privacy.

GET IT RIGHT

People have been growing climbing plants to use as screening for generations all over the world. The system mentioned above was the original 'green wall' concept. Recent developments have introduced new systems where there is substantially more structure and expense required and is not practical or viable for private residences. The great lengths that these people are going to in order to create the 'ultimate green wall' proves the enduring attractiveness of the wall climbing plant concept. So why not attempt to create your very own piece of wall climbing utopia!



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