



### HAPPY FEET

When a large part of a small back yard is paved, it makes sense to give extra thought to what lies beneath—especially during hot summer months. Consider cool surfaces, like white travertine or a textured acrylic coating, which absorb less heat.

# *Sense &* **SENSIBILITY**

A family of four looks to a landscape designer to bring purpose to their overgrown, limited lot.



**WHEN QUARTERS ARE TIGHT AND** there are two teenagers in a household, every inch both indoors and out counts. So was the case for Loes and Ramon Min. As the kids became more active, their parents realized the small back yard was going to require a total redesign. At the time, the family was barely using even half of the yard, due to the overgrown trees and hedges. They needed someone who could see past the brush and make sense of the narrow lot.

Enter garden designer Danielle Hulsebos. When she first visited the small, neglected outdoor space in the southern Netherlands, she found an unruly plot. "The garden is long and narrow, and it was outdated. It had a huge conifer and a large hedge along

the entire length at one side," she says. "Those things took up a lot of space. And then there was an old shed [that didn't even have] enough space to store the family's bikes inside. There was no lighting, so in the evening, it became this dark, atmosphere-less abyss."

The garden designer also noted that the homeowners had become used to crowding into one small area. "The lawn terrace by the house was the only area they were using," says Hulsebos. The Mins were desperate to make more room for relaxing, entertaining friends, and playing games and sports. They also wanted a new garden "room" that could house an adult-friendly workspace and a kid-friendly place to gather. "They still wanted some of the garden to have a

lawned area, too. There's nothing nicer than walking barefoot in the grass on a summer's day, after all," Hulsebos says. "The kids play hockey, so they also wanted a small hockey field area where the table tennis could also stand. When I presented them with my drawings, the clients said, 'Yes, but all of that will never fit in our garden!'"

The Mins couldn't have been more wrong. The back yard now boasts a variety of seating areas and surfaces that make this relatively small space bustle with activity. "I wanted to break open the garden so that they could experience the full possibilities here. That's why I chose clear, powerful lines. They immediately catch the eye, and it also looks very spacious," the landscape designer explains. Hulsebos



## MAKE A PLAY

Rather than walling off the "game room," the designated spot for table tennis is made clear thanks to a paved border and a patch of evergreen, artificial grass.

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## ON THE BENCH

Landscape designer Danielle Hulsebos solved the mystery of how to place furniture around mature trees by commissioning custom pieces that make the conifers a built-in design element.

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### PRIME POSITION

An outdoor table and chairs tucked into the corner nearest the house make for a remote and comfortable setting for the homeowners to enjoy outdoor dining and gain easy access to the kitchen for extra helpings.

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“I think it would have been a real shame if we’d had to close off this long, narrow garden with hedges or created totally separate rooms.”



### GO WITH THE FLOW

A wall mounted fountain adds a moment of serenity to the action packed surroundings.

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### LIGHT IT UP

Matte black, lantern style fixtures with incandescent Edison bulbs help the garden shine day and night.

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also wanted the layout to be crystal clear. Near the house, there’s a dining terrace that’s adjacent to a lawn area with a lounging terrace and a water feature. Then there’s an area for chilling out or practicing sports. The new garden house is at the very back, with a new storage room behind it. “The garden house is now a perfect place to work from home, but also a place where the young people can hang out,” she says.

Despite the fact that the garden is divided into different spaces, it’s

meant to be enjoyed in its entirety. “I didn’t want to divide the long garden into [separate] rooms, but on the other hand I did just that, but in an open way, so that everyone is able to enjoy their own place in this garden,” she notes. A pergola spans across the garden, creating a kind of barrier without obstructing the view. Some of the furniture is built in, like a custom daybed on the “adult” side of the garden.

The pergola, along with a more transparent wall and the two white

walls, make the garden feel and look wider, but they also make the space in front of the garden house more intimate. The pergola runs along the right side on the boundary of the yard, so it emphasizes the depth of the beds. In time, it will be covered by evergreen climbers.

Now that the backyard is more functional—and fun—Hulsebos is thrilled with the results. “I don’t think you should be able to see everything in a garden at once, but you should be able to experience it as a whole.”