

FFL Home Landscape Recognition Checklist

By recognizing specific landscapes as Florida-Friendly, the Florida Yards & Neighborhoods (FYN) branch of the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ (FFL) Program honors clients' efforts to conserve water and protect water quality and other natural resources. A Landscape Advisor should use this checklist to evaluate existing landscapes, referring to *The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Landscape Advisor's Manual*, if necessary. Page numbers in the right-hand column of this checklist refer to the FYN Handbook, 5th edition, *The Florida Yards & Neighborhoods Handbook (2015)*. New construction, governmental and institutional properties are evaluated with separate checklists that can be found at <http://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/homeowners/recognitions.htm>.

To maintain the integrity of the FFL program and to ensure that FFL Landscape Recognitions have a positive environmental impact, landscape evaluations must be as thorough and accurate as possible. However, the landscape evaluation process should always be a positive, educational, and enjoyable experience for all clients. Focus should be on the educational aspects of the landscape evaluation process, rather than on the recognition itself.

Client Information:

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____
County: _____ Email: _____ Date: _____

Do you employ a lawn service? Company name _____

If performed, please fill in how often each of the services is performed:

Mowing	Weed Control	Fertilizer
Pruning	Landscape Beds	Pest Control

In order for a landscape to be considered for recognition it must contain living landscape plants. Landscapes made up predominately of rock, mulch, shell, artificial turf, or other similar materials are not eligible for recognition.

There are two recognition levels available—Silver and Gold. The required practices for Silver and Gold recognition are set forth herein. The FFL Recognition is valid for 24 months from the date of recognition/re-recognition (unless revoked for non-compliance). Please contact fyn@ifas.ufl.edu for information on how to renew your recognition.

In order for a landscape to be awarded recognition or re-recognition under the FFL Program, the landscape must be in compliance with the checklist in effect at the time the landscape is evaluated for recognition/re-recognition. The operative checklist may be found on the FFL website (<https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/index.html>).

The FFL Program reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to award or deny recognition to any landscape. The FFL Program further reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to revoke FFL Recognition if a landscape falls out of compliance with the checklist under which recognition/re-recognition was awarded.

Required Practices for Silver (Check or indicate N/A)

The following practices, when applicable to the landscape being evaluated, are required for Silver level recognition (note: in order to achieve Silver level recognition, the landscape must also satisfy the FFL Principles set forth on pages 4-7):

- Client confirms that landscape complies with all codes, laws, ordinances, and HOA rules (if applicable).
- Landscape does not contain any plants found on the current UF/IFAS Assessment “Prohibited” list. (<http://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu/assessments/?types=24208>). (p. 9)
- Most plants are placed in landscape locations that match their requirements for water, light, soil condition, wind tolerance, salt tolerance, mature size, etc.
- Landscape contains at least 10 plant species.
- At least 25% of the landscape must contain planted (in ground) beds.
- Spilled fertilizer is collected and disposed of properly. (p. 24)
- If fertilizer is used, it is not applied when heavy rain is forecast in the next 24 hours. (p. 24)
- If fertilizer is used, it is applied to turfgrass and landscape beds at less than or equal to the UF/IFAS-recommended rate. (pp. 26-28)
- A FFL recommended mulch is applied at a depth of 2-3" and pulled away from the base of all plants. (p.30)
- Volcano mulching is not practiced on site. (p. 30)
- If the property is located on a waterfront: a low-maintenance zone of at least 10 ft. has been established around the water body. No grass clippings, pesticides, fertilizer, or irrigation water is applied in this zone. (p. 46)
- If pesticides are used: only affected plants and turf areas are treated with pesticide applications (spot treatments). (p. 34)
- Downspouts drain into landscaped areas or pervious surfaces. (p. 43)
- Cypress mulch is not used. (p. 30)

If an irrigation system is present:

- Irrigation system is calibrated to apply 1/2" to 3/4" of water per application. (p. 18)
- A functioning automatic rainfall shutoff device is maintained on functioning in-ground irrigation systems. (p. 20)

If turfgrass is present:

- Turf is mowed at the UF/IFAS-recommended height for the grass species. (p. 13)
- Grass clippings are left on the lawn after mowing. (pp. 14 & 39)
- Fertilizer is only applied when grass is actively growing. (p. 24)
- “Weed and Feed” products containing herbicide and fertilizer together are not used. (p. 24)

Aesthetics:

- Plants are not overgrown.
- Plants do not show signs of decline (untreated diseased, infested or dead plants).
- Appropriate pruning practices are utilized. Plants (excluding annuals) do not require pruning more than two times per year.
- There are defined and maintained (routinely weeded and mulched) landscape beds.
- Landscape and household debris are properly disposed of or recycled and not visible from front yards.

Required Practices for Gold (Check or indicate N/A)

The following practices, along with the Silver level practices identified above (when applicable to the landscape being evaluated), are required for Gold level recognition (note: in order to achieve Gold level recognition, the landscape must also satisfy the FFL Principles set forth on pages 4-7). (If the landscape has no in-ground irrigation system, credit can be given for satisfying the irrigation practices.)

- Landscape does not contain any plants found on the current UF/IFAS Assessment “Prohibited, Invasive, Invasive (No Uses), or High Invasion Risk” list. (<https://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu/assessments/?types=25451,1080,1074,24208>). (p. 9)
- Landscape contains at least 15 plant species.
- All plants are placed in landscape locations that match their requirements for water, light, soil condition, wind tolerance, salt tolerance, mature size, etc.
- 100% of roof runoff (with or without downspouts) drains onto lawn or landscaped areas, pervious surfaces, drainage swale, or is harvested in rain barrels or rain garden. (pp. 43-44)
- Not more than 50% of the irrigation system (by area) is high-volume.
- Spray and rotor heads are installed on separate zones.
- Low-flow irrigation is installed and maintained in plant and flower beds.

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Practices

FFL Principle #1: Right Plant, Right Place

	Trees and shrubs are positioned to improve the building’s heating and cooling capacity if space allows. (p.5)
	Maintained turfgrass is used for functional purposes (e.g., play area, erosion control, and nutrient uptake).
	Erosion prone areas are managed to minimize erosion.
	Shrubs and groundcovers are used where grass is difficult to maintain. (p. 6, 8)
	Main leaders of all shrubs are at least 2.5' from the foundation of house.
	Trees are located appropriate distance (canopies do not touch roof and roots do not disturb house foundation or hardscape) from the foundation of house based on mature size.
	Total for Principle #1 (3 for Silver, 4 for Gold)

Notes:

FFL Principle #2: Water Efficiently

(If site does not have an in-ground irrigation system, credit can be given for satisfying all practices.)

	Not more than 50 percent of the irrigation system (by area) is high-volume.
	Turfgrass and landscape plants are irrigated only as needed according to UF/IFAS recommendations and in compliance with any existing watering restrictions.
	A smart controller (evapotranspiration, soil moisture sensor, or similar) is installed and operational. (p.20)
	Separate irrigation zones for turf and landscape plants are maintained.
	Low-flow irrigation is installed and maintained in plant and flower beds. (pp. 19-20)
	The irrigation system is maintained seasonally to adjust spray patterns and repair clogs and leaks.
	Number of Requirements Met for Principle #2 (2 for Silver, 3 for Gold)

FFL Principle #3: Fertilize Appropriately (If fertilizer is not used, credit can be given for satisfying all practices.)	
	A soil nutrient test has been performed within the last year.
	No supplemental fertilization (except for palms) is used in the landscape once plants are established.
	A broadcast spreader with an operational deflector shield is used to apply fertilizer, or fertilizer is applied by hand. (p. 24)
	A soil pH test has been performed within the last year.
	Number of Requirements Met for Principle #3 (1 for Silver, 2 for Gold)
FFL Principle #4: Mulch	
	Self-mulching areas exist under trees where leaves can remain as they fall
	Cypress mulch is not used.
	Mulch is pulled away (12"-18") from the base of trees. (p. 29)
	Mulch is pulled away (1"-2") from shrubs.
	Not more than 25% of the landscape is open areas of mulch.
	Number of Requirements Met for Principle #4 (2 for Silver, 3 for Gold)
FFL Principle #5: Attract Wildlife	
	There is plant material that provides habitat, shelter and/or food sources for wildlife. (pp. 31-32)
	Host and nectar plants are present for butterflies, hummingbirds and/or other pollinators. (pp. 31-32)
	A water source for wildlife exists in the landscape. (pp. 31-32)
	Wildlife shelters exist and maintained in landscape (e.g., bird or bat houses, snags, brush piles, etc.)
	Planting a variety of trees, shrubs and groundcovers that increases vertical layering (layers of vegetation).
	Number of Requirements Met for Principle # 5 (3 for Silver, 4 for Gold)
Notes:	

FFL Principle #6: Manage Yard Pests Responsibly	
	The least toxic method of pest control is used first.
	Homeowner is able to properly identify some pest and disease issues in their landscape or has brought samples to their local Extension office.
	If chemical treatment is necessary, homeowner uses spot treatments.
	Landscape is checked every 1-2 weeks for signs of pest damage.
	Integrated Pest Management is used for insects and disease whenever possible. (p. 34)
	Number of Requirements Met for Principle #6 (3 for Silver, 4 for Gold)
FFL Principle #7: Recycle	
	Compost pile or worm bin is installed (if permitted by HOA) or community compost bin is available for use. (pp. 40-41)
	Landscape waste (tree trimmings, fallen leaves, pine needles) is used on site (if permitted by HOA) and/or properly composted or placed at curb for horticulture recycling.
	Number of Requirements Met for Principle #7 (1 for Silver, 2 for Gold)
FFL Principle #8: Reduce Stormwater Runoff	
	At least 25% of hardscape surfaces are made of porous materials.
	Pollutants such as pet waste and car oils are cleaned up so that they do not end up in storm drains. (p. 43)
	50% or more of roof runoff (with or without downspouts) drains onto landscaped areas or pervious surfaces. (p. 43)
	A cistern, rain barrel or other water harvesting practice is used (if permitted by HOA) with proper mosquito prevention techniques in place. (p.44)
	Rain gardens, swales, and berms are used to catch and filter stormwater runoff. (pp. 43-44)
	Number of Requirements Met for Principle #8 (2 for Silver, 3 for Gold)
Notes:	

FFL Principle #9: Protect the Waterfront (If site is not on the waterfront, credit can be given for satisfying all practices.)	
	Shoreline (riparian zone and littoral zones) is kept free of invasive exotic plant material. (p. 45)
	Seawalls, rip rap, or gabions are used where appropriate to control erosion. (p. 45)
	Plant material is located to provide at least a 10' low-maintenance zone to buffer, filter and prevent erosion. (p. 46)
	Number of Requirements Met for Principle #9 (1 for Silver, 2 for Gold)
Notes:	

Previous Review date (if applicable): _____

Review Team Members Present: _____

Is the applicant a Master Gardener? Yes No

Was a landscape sign issued? Yes No

Date certificate with cover letter issued: _____

With permission, could the FFL program use the yard for training purposes? Yes No

What phone numbers can you be reached at? _____

Photos were taken? Yes No

Reviewed by Extension staff member: _____ date: _____

	Number of Principles met	Silver	Gold
#1 Right Plant Right Place (3 for Silver, 4 for Gold)			
#2 Water Efficiently (2 for Silver, 3 for Gold)			
#3 Fertilize Appropriately (1 for Silver, 2 for Gold)			
#4 Mulch (2 for Silver, 3 for Gold)			
#5 Attract Wildlife (3 for Silver, 4 for Gold)			
#6 Manage Yard Pests Responsibly (3 for Silver, 4 for Gold)			
#7 Recycle (1 for Silver, 2 for Gold)			
#8 Reduce Stormwater Runoff (2 for Silver, 3 for Gold)			
#9 Protect the Waterfront (1 for Silver, 2 for Gold)			

Recognition Level Awarded: _____ Silver _____ Gold _____ None