



THE ULTIMATE
**MYRTLE
BEACH**
PLANTING GUIDE

What to Plant, When to Plant It,
and How to Create a Beautiful,
Low-Maintenance Landscape
That Thrives in Coastal Carolina



LOCAL EXPERTISE



COASTAL SOLUTIONS



BEAUTIFUL RESULTS

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Climate & Zone

Horry County, South Carolina sits in **USDA Hardiness Zone 8b**, which means plants here experience relatively mild winters and long, warm growing seasons, but the coastal environment adds unique challenges. |

In **Spring**, warming temperatures and consistent rainfall create ideal conditions for planting and rapid root development, making it one of the best times to establish new trees, shrubs, and flowers.

Summer brings intense heat, high humidity, and occasional drought stress, so plants must be heat-tolerant and able to handle sandy, fast-draining soils that dry out quickly.

During **fall**, cooler temperatures and still-warm soil make it the *optimal* season for planting, allowing roots to strengthen before winter with less stress from heat.

Winter is generally mild, with only occasional frost, which allows many evergreen plants to maintain structure and color year-round; however, growth slows significantly, making it a time for planning, pruning, and soil improvement rather than active planting.

Understanding how each season impacts plant performance is key to choosing the right plants and timing your landscaping for long-term success in this coastal region.

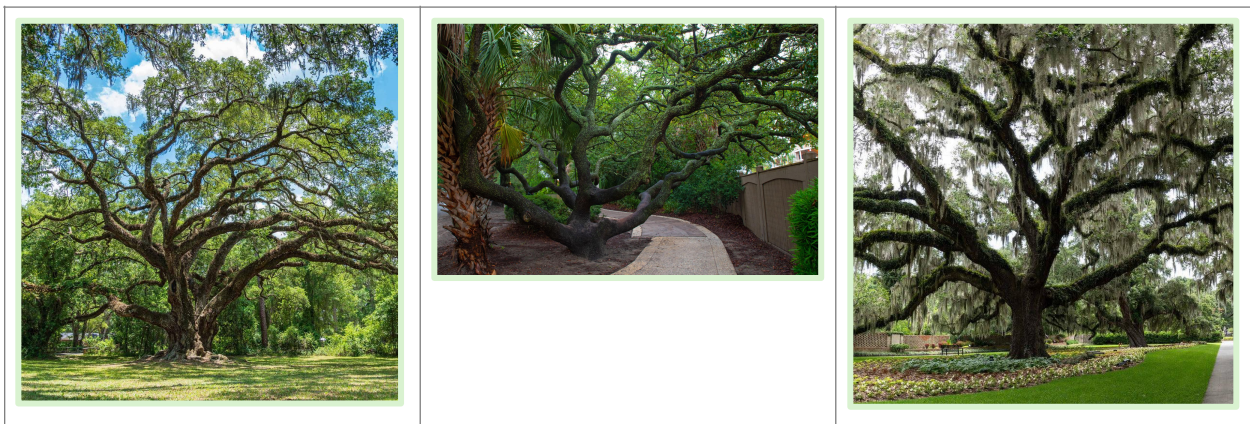
Plant Types for Horry County

Trees:

The best trees to plant in Horry County, South Carolina are those that can handle **heat, humidity, sandy soil, and coastal conditions**, while still providing long-term beauty and durability.

Standout choices include the **Live Oak**, known for its strength, shade, and resistance to wind and salt exposure;

Live oaks are iconic in the South, known for their **massive canopy and durability**, making them ideal for shade and long-term landscaping structure.



Southern live oaks (*Quercus virginiana*) in **Horry County, SC**, typically grow at a moderate rate of **1 to 2.5 feet per year** under optimal coastal conditions. This rate is highest during the tree's youth (up to age 15) and slows significantly as the tree matures and begins to spread its massive canopy.

Growth Characteristics in Coastal SC

In Horry County's warm, humid climate (USDA Zone 8b), live oaks thrive due to their high tolerance for salt spray and sandy soils.

- **Juvenile Growth (Years 1–15):** Young trees "hit their stride" at ages 6–15, often surging **2 to 3 feet annually** in height if well-watered and provided full sun.
- **Maturity (Age 30+):** By 30 years, a typical live oak may stand **30 to 50 feet tall**. After this point, vertical growth slows, and the tree focuses on radial growth (trunk thickening) and lateral branch spread.
- **Radial Growth:** Stem diameter can increase by an average of **1.69 cm (~0.66 inches) per year**, though exceptionally healthy trees may reach nearly maximum trunk diameter within 70 years.

Crape Myrtle, which thrives in hot climates and delivers vibrant summer color with minimal maintenance.



Crape myrtles are one of the most popular Southern trees because they produce **vibrant blooms all summer long** and are extremely heat-tolerant. They're widely used as focal points in front yards due to their color and manageable size.

In Horry County, SC, crepe myrtles generally grow at a **medium to fast rate** of 1 to 5 feet per year once established. The local climate falling within

USDA Zone 8—provides the high heat and full sun these trees require for maximum vigor.

Sabal Palmetto (Cabbage Palm), a native tree perfectly adapted to coastal environments with excellent tolerance to salt, drought, and storms.



The Sabal Palmetto is **perfect for coastal homes**, thriving in salt air, wind, and sandy soil—making it one of the most reliable choices for Myrtle Beach landscapes.

In **Horry County, South Carolina**, the Sabal Palmetto (Cabbage Palm) is considered a **slow to moderate grower**, typically gaining **12 to 24 inches of height per year** under favorable conditions.

Growth Stages & Variations

The growth rate of a South Carolina Palmetto varies significantly depending on its maturity and environment:

- **Seedling Stage:** Extremely slow; it can take **15 to 30 years** for a trunk to become visible in the wild.
- **Establishment Phase:** After being transplanted or reaching trunk maturity, palms may grow rapidly (up to 6 inches of trunk elongation per year) before settling into a slower, steady rate.

- **Mature Growth:** Once fully established, vertical growth often slows to **less than 1 inch per year**.
- **FronD Production:** Expect **2 to 4 new fronds** per growing season in warm months, with growth pausing during winter.

Other strong options include **Southern Magnolia** for its evergreen structure and fragrant blooms, and **Red Maple** (specifically heat-tolerant varieties) for seasonal color.

These trees are ideal because they are either native or well-adapted to the region, meaning they require less water, fewer chemical inputs, and are more resilient against pests and extreme weather—making them a smart, long-term investment for homeowners looking to enhance curb appeal without constant upkeep.

Shrub Types for Horry County

The best shrubs for Horry County, South Carolina are those that can handle **coastal conditions like sandy soil, salt air, heat, and humidity**, while still providing structure, privacy, and visual appeal. Top choices include **Wax Myrtle, Viburnum, and Azaleas**, along with options like **Yaupon Holly and Camellia**, because they are either native or highly adapted to the Southeast. Wax myrtle is especially valuable since it thrives in sandy soils and coastal environments, tolerating salt, wind, and even wet conditions while creating dense, natural privacy screens. Viburnum adds versatility with fragrant flowers and berries that attract wildlife, making it ideal for hedges and landscape borders. Azaleas are a Southern staple, offering vibrant seasonal blooms and performing well in partial shade and acidic soils common in the region. Overall, these shrubs are the best choices because they are resilient, low-maintenance once established, and capable of delivering year-round beauty while standing up to the unique challenges of the Myrtle Beach coastal climate.

Wax Myrtle: In Horry County, SC, the growth rate of Wax Myrtle (*Morella cerifera*) is typically 3 to 5 feet per year under optimal conditions. Because Horry County falls within its primary native coastal range and has a favorable humid subtropical climate, these plants often reach their mature height of 15 to 20 feet within just 3 to 5 years.



Growth Factors in Coastal South Carolina

- **Climate Suitability:** Wax Myrtles thrive in Horry County because they are highly tolerant of salt spray, sandy soils, and heat common to the Grand Strand area.
- **Optimal Conditions:** While the average growth is 1 to 2 feet per year in less ideal settings, consistent moisture and full sun in coastal SC can push growth to the 5-foot maximum in a single season.
- **Maintenance for Speed:** To maintain rapid growth, ensure young plants have regular water during their first year. Once established, they are extremely drought tolerant.

Viburnum: is one of the most versatile and reliable shrubs for Horry County, South Carolina, making it a top choice for homeowners looking to add both beauty and function to their landscape. It thrives in the region's heat and humidity while adapting well to a variety of soil types, including the sandy conditions common near the coast. Viburnum is especially popular for **privacy hedges and border plantings** because it grows dense and full, creating a natural screen. Many varieties also produce **fragrant white flowers in spring and colorful berries**, adding seasonal interest and attracting birds. With its durability, low maintenance needs, and year-round appeal, viburnum is an excellent choice for creating structure and curb appeal in any Myrtle Beach–area yard.



In Horry County, SC, most viburnum species exhibit a **moderate to fast** growth rate, typically adding **1 to 2 feet per year** once established. The region's warm climate and long growing season (USDA Zone 8b/9a) often support the higher end of this range, particularly for evergreen varieties like Sweet Viburnum.

Growth Rates by Common Varieties

Growth speed varies significantly depending on the specific cultivar chosen for your landscape:

- **Sweet Viburnum (*V. odoratissimum*)**: One of the fastest growers, adding 1–2 feet annually. It is a popular choice in coastal South Carolina for quick privacy hedges.
- **Chindo Viburnum (*V. awabuki* 'Chindo')**: A vigorous evergreen that can reach its mature height quickly in the Lowcountry's heat and humidity.
- **Arrowwood Viburnum (*V. dentatum*)**: A native deciduous variety with a moderate growth rate of about 1 foot per year.
- **David Viburnum (*V. davidii*)**: A very slow-growing, compact evergreen, often gaining less than 12 inches per season.

Azaleas: are one of the best shrub choices for Horry County because they thrive in the region's **warm, humid climate and slightly acidic soils**, making them perfectly suited for coastal South Carolina landscapes. Known for their **vibrant spring blooms in shades of pink, red, white, and purple**, azaleas add instant color and curb appeal, especially when planted in groups or along foundations. They perform especially well in **partial shade**, which makes them ideal for areas under trees or along the side of homes where many other flowering plants struggle. Once established, azaleas are relatively low maintenance and provide a classic Southern look that homeowners love, making them a reliable and visually impactful choice for creating beautiful, welcoming outdoor spaces.



Azaleas in Horry County typically grow **12 to 24 inches per year** when young, depending on the variety and environmental conditions. Most varieties reach their mature size within 3 to 5 years.

Growth Rates by Variety

Growth habits vary significantly between traditional Southern hybrids and newer reblooming types.

- **Southern Indica Hybrids:** These are vigorous, upright growers that are well-suited for Horry County's warm, humid climate. They can quickly reach heights of **7 to 10 feet** or more.
- **Encore Azaleas:** These reblooming varieties generally grow **8 to 12 inches per year**.
 - **Intermediate varieties** (e.g., Autumn Sangria) reach 4 to 5 feet tall.
 - **Dwarf varieties** (e.g., Autumn Sunset) grow more slowly, typically topping out at 2.5 to 3 feet.
- **Native Deciduous Azaleas:** Species like the **Piedmont Azalea** (*R. canescens*), which is native to South Carolina, can be large suckering shrubs reaching **10 to 15 feet** tall.

Flower Types for Horry County

Some of the best flowers to grow in Horry County, South Carolina are **Lantana, Coreopsis, and Black-eyed Susan**, because they thrive in the region's **heat, humidity, and sandy soil conditions** while requiring very little maintenance. Lantana is a standout for its bright, multi-colored blooms and exceptional drought tolerance, making it perfect for long, hot summers. Coreopsis, which is actually South Carolina's state wildflower, produces cheerful yellow blooms and handles poor soil conditions with ease, making it ideal for natural-looking landscapes. Black-eyed Susans add bold color and are extremely resilient, blooming through the summer while attracting pollinators like butterflies and bees. Together, these flowers are excellent choices because they provide continuous color, require minimal care once established, and are perfectly suited to the coastal climate of the Myrtle Beach area.

Lantana: Lantana is one of the best flowering plants for Horry County because it thrives in **hot, sunny conditions and sandy soil**, making it perfect for the Myrtle Beach climate. Known for its **bright, multi-colored blooms**, lantana provides continuous color from spring through fall with very little maintenance. It is also highly **drought-tolerant and resistant to pests**, which means less watering and upkeep for homeowners. In addition to its durability, lantana attracts **butterflies and pollinators**, adding life and movement to any landscape, making it an excellent choice for both beauty and functionality.



Lantana is a **rapidly growing** plant in Horry County, South Carolina, where the mild coastal climate and warm temperatures allow it to thrive as a perennial. Most varieties establish full coverage within **30 to 60 days** of planting and can reach mature dimensions—up to 6 feet in height and 8 feet in spread—within a single growing season.

Seasonal Growth Expectations

In the coastal "Lowcountry" regions like Horry County, lantana benefits from high humidity and salt tolerance, allowing for aggressive expansion from spring through fall.

- **Peak Growth (June–August):** Stems elongate between **1.2 and 2.0 inches per day** during the hottest months.
- **Establishment:** Transplanted nursery stock typically achieves 80% of its mature size within **60 to 70 days** once soil temperatures consistently exceed 60°F.
- **Perennial Regrowth:** Because it overwinters reliably in this region (USDA Zones 8b–9a), established plants can push **4 to 6 inches of new growth** in the first two weeks following the last spring frost.

Coreopsis: Coreopsis is one of the best flowers for Horry County because it thrives in **hot, sunny conditions and sandy soils**, making it perfectly suited for the coastal South Carolina climate. Known as the **state wildflower**, it produces bright, cheerful yellow blooms that add long-lasting color from late spring through summer. Coreopsis is extremely **low in maintenance, drought-tolerant, and easy to grow**, making it a great choice for homeowners who want a beautiful yard without constant upkeep. It also attracts **butterflies and pollinators**, bringing life and movement to the landscape while enhancing the overall natural beauty of the yard.



Coreopsis (Tickseed) generally exhibits a **moderate growth rate** in Horry County, SC. While specific timelines depend on the variety and propagation method, many common types in the Coastal Plain can reach maturity within 1 to 2 years.

Growth Timelines by Variety

Different species of *Coreopsis* found in South Carolina have varying speeds of development:

- **Annual Varieties** (e.g., *Plains Coreopsis*): These grow very rapidly, maturing in roughly **10–14 weeks** from seed. They typically bloom about 6–8 weeks after post-germination.
- **Perennial Varieties** (e.g., *Lanceleaf* or *Threadleaf*): These often require **2 to 3 years** to reach their full mature size of 1–3 feet. Perennials starting from seed may not bloom until their second year.
- **Spreading Rate**: Many varieties spread at a **moderate pace** via rhizomes (underground stems) or self-seeding, and clumps may require division every 2–3 years to maintain robustness and prevent overcrowding.

Black-eyed Susan: Black-eyed Susan is an excellent flower choice for Horry County because it thrives in **full sun, heat, and sandy soils**, making it perfectly suited for the coastal South Carolina climate. Known for its **bright yellow petals with a dark center**, it adds bold, eye-catching color to any landscape from early summer through fall. This hardy plant is **drought-tolerant, low maintenance, and easy to grow**, making it ideal for homeowners who want long-lasting beauty without constant care. In addition to its durability, Black-eyed Susan attracts **butterflies and pollinators**, bringing energy and life to the yard while enhancing its natural appeal.



Black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia hirta*) exhibits a **moderate to fast** growth rate in Horry County's subtropical coastal climate. While they can be slow to germinate, taking 7 to 30 days to sprout, established plants can reach their full mature height of 1 to 4 feet within 2 to 3 years.

Growth Milestones

- **Germination:** Seeds typically sprout in 7–30 days once soil temperatures reach 70°F.
- **First Season:** Plants often form a **basal rosette** (a low cluster of leaves) in their first year. If they start indoors early, they may bloom in their first summer.
- **Second Season:** Most plants send up multiple flowering stems and begin a full bloom cycle starting in June.
- **Maturity:** Reaching a full spread of 12–24 inches and maximum height generally take **2–3 years**.

LOW MAINTENANCE WINNERS

Low-maintenance plants like **Muhly Grass, Daylilies, and Knockout Roses** are ideal for coastal areas like Horry County because they are naturally built to handle **heat, humidity, sandy soil, and occasional drought conditions** with minimal care. Muhly grass is especially valued for its **tolerance to salt air and poor soil**, while adding soft, flowing texture and seasonal color. Daylilies are incredibly resilient, thriving in full sun and bouncing back year after year with very little attention. Knockout roses are a favorite for their **continuous blooms, disease resistance, and low upkeep**, providing the beauty of traditional roses without the headaches of maintenance. These plants are excellent choices because they reduce the need for watering, fertilizing, and constant upkeep, making them perfect for homeowners who want a beautiful landscape that holds up against the demanding coastal environment.

Muhly Grass:



Daylilies:



Knockout Roses:





































































































































Planting Calendar

Planting at the correct time is one of the most important factors in creating a healthy, low-maintenance landscape, especially in a coastal climate like Horry County. When plants are installed during their optimal season, such as spring for flowering growth or fall for root development—they establish faster, require less water, and are far more resilient to heat, drought, and environmental stress. Planting at the wrong time, particularly during the peak of summer heat, can lead to poor growth, increased maintenance, and even plant failure. By timing your planting correctly, you give your trees, shrubs, and flowers the best possible chance to thrive, saving both time and money while achieving better long-term results.

Planting Calendar:

Flowers planting schedule for South Carolina Zone 8b-9a

PLANTS	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marigold 												
Petunia 												
Zinnia 												
Pansy 												
Impatiens 												
Begonia 												
Snapdragon 												
Salvia 												
Cosmos 												
Sunflower 												
Calendula 												
Dianthus 												
Celosia 												
Nasturtium 												
Lobelia 												
Verbena 												
Geranium 												
Black-Eyed Susan 												
Coreopsis 												
Gaillardia 												
PLANTS	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

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SPRING (March – May)

BEST TIME TO PLANT & ESTABLISH ROOTS

Plant These:

- Crape Myrtle
- Viburnum
- Azaleas
- Lantana
- Coreopsis
- Black-eyed Susan
- Daylilies
- Knockout Roses

What Happens:

- Soil warms → roots establish fast
- Rainfall supports growth
- Plants prepare for summer bloom

Strategy Tip:

“Spring is for color + flowering plants”

SUMMER (June – August)

HEAT STRESS SEASON – PLANT CARE, NOT HEAVY INSTALLS

Best Performers (Heat-Tolerant):

- Lantana
- Black-eyed Susan
- Coreopsis

- Muhly Grass
- Knockout Roses

Avoid Planting:

- Trees (unless necessary)
- Sensitive shrubs

What Happens:

- High heat + humidity
- Sandy soil dries quickly

👉 Strategy Tip:

“Maintain, mulch, and water — don’t overload your yard”

FALL (September – November)

THE BEST PLANTING SEASON (MOST IMPORTANT)

Plant These (Top Priority):

- Live Oak
- Sabal Palmetto
- Southern Magnolia
- Red Maple
- Wax Myrtle
- Viburnum

Also, Plant:

- Muhly Grass
- Daylilies
- Knockout Roses

What Happens:

- Cooler air, warm soil
- Roots grow without heat stress

👉 Strategy Tip:

“Fall planting = stronger plants next year with less maintenance”

WINTER (December – February)

PREP & STRUCTURE SEASON

Best Activities:

- Plan landscape design
- Prune trees & shrubs
- Install trees (on mild days):
 - Live Oak
 - Magnolia
 - Palmetto

Evergreens That Hold Structure:

- Wax Myrtle
- Viburnum
- Palmetto

What Happens:

- Slow growth
- Occasional frost

👉 Strategy Tip:

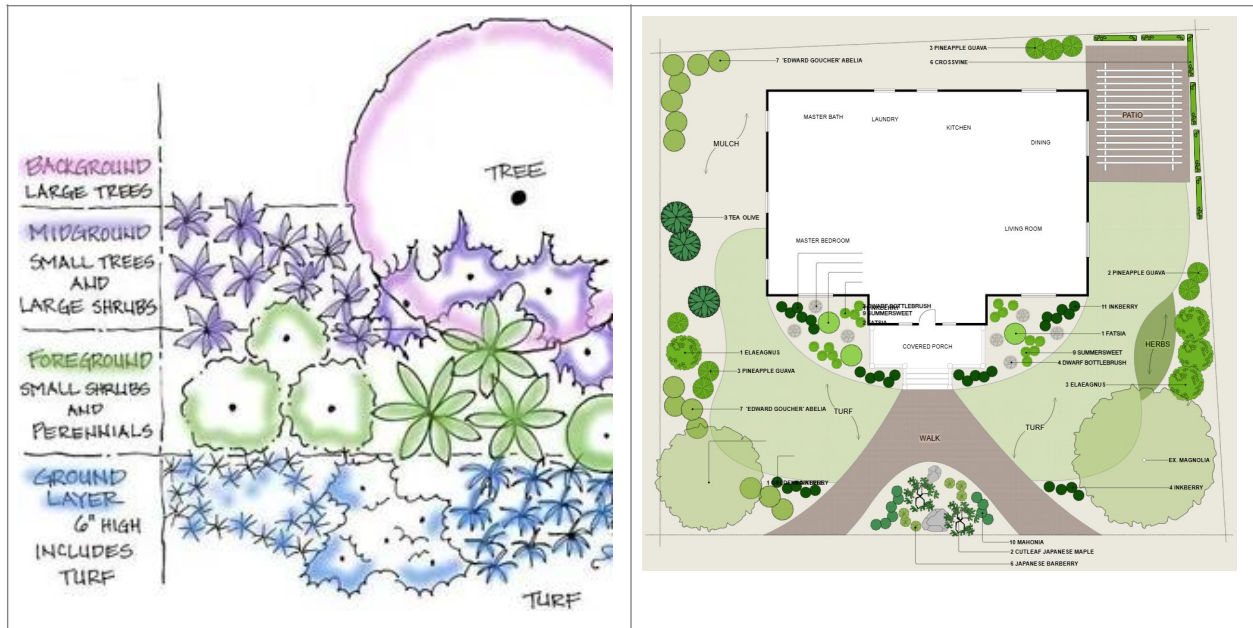
“Winter is for planning the yard you want in spring”

PROFESSIONAL LAYOUT SYSTEM

Having a professional layout for your yard matters because **it ensures a master plan that balances aesthetics with functional science**. It prevents disjointed DIY projects that often lead to "chaotic and dysfunctional" spaces with walkways leading nowhere or patios that are sized incorrectly for their intended use.

Key Benefits of a Professional Layout

- **Financial Return:** A professional design is a high-yield investment, typically increasing property value by **15% to 20%**. Some projects yield a return on investment (ROI) as high as **100% to 200%**.
- **Cost Efficiency:** Designers help avoid expensive "trial-and-error" mistakes, such as choosing plants that won't survive in your microclimate or installing hardscapes that must be torn out to fix drainage later.
- **Environmental Management:** Professionals address "unseen" technical issues like **soil erosion, drainage patterns, and runoff**, protecting your home's foundation and local water quality.
- **Sustainability & Low Maintenance:** Strategic layouts use native plants and smart irrigation to reduce water waste and long-term upkeep time.
- **Functional Zoning:** A professional creates "outdoor living rooms" with defined zones for dining, relaxation, or play, ensuring a natural flow between indoor and outdoor spaces.



Want a Yard Like This Without the Guesswork?



FREE Yard Evaluation

- Custom planting plan
- Low-maintenance design
- Professional install options
- Lawn Mowing
- Mulch and Stone
- Irrigation
- Flower Bed Renovation
- Landscape design and Plant installation
- Storm Prep and Clean up
- Turf and Palm tree Rejuvenation
- General yard clean ups
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