

Shade



Shade fact sheet

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. One in two Queenslanders will be diagnosed with skin cancer at some time during their life, and about 300 Queenslanders will die from skin cancer each year. Skin cancer can be prevented by minimising your time in the sun between 10am and 3pm, seeking shade, wearing a broad-brimmed hat, SunSmart clothing, sunglasses and broad-spectrum SPF 30+ water resistant sunscreen.

Shade can reduce up to 75 per cent of ultraviolet radiation (UVR), but remember UVR can reflect off surfaces such as grass, water, snow and concrete so use a range of SunSmart strategies.

The two main types of shade are natural and built. Whatever the shade type, remember it should:

- Be appropriate for seasonal and climatic conditions;
- Provide a suitable barrier to direct and indirect UVR; and
- Suit the surrounding environment.

Natural shade

Natural shade can be achieved by planting trees, vines and shrubs with sufficient foliage and a broad canopy to provide protection from UVR. Advantages of natural shade include:

- It is a cheaper alternative and useful addition to built shade.
- It is more aesthetically pleasing.
- It absorbs harmful carbon dioxide emissions.
- Tree planting can provide an educational opportunity for children.
- It can provide a habitat for local wildlife.

There are a few important points to consider when creating natural shade.

Daily shade patterns – By understanding the shadows cast by the sun, you can ensure shade falls at the right angle at the right time. By doing so, you can maximise the effect of natural shade.

Location – Ensure shade is created in areas of frequent use. Plant trees to complement built shade structures and to increase the coverage in an area. Keep large trees away from powerlines and underground services such as water, gas and sewerage. Phone 'Dial Before You Dig' on 1100 for more information.

Type of plant – Choose trees with a broad canopy and dense foliage to provide maximum protection. Take care not to plant trees with extensive root systems that may damage surrounding pavement or create a tripping hazard.

When planting in school or childcare grounds avoid species that:

- Have seed pods or stone fruit;
- Attract bees;
- Have thorns or spikes;
- Drop branches; and
- Are known to cause skin and respiratory irritations.

Watering and maintenance – Many parts of Queensland are experiencing drought conditions, so to ensure the longevity of natural shade, choose native plants that are suitable for your area which also retain water. Contact Greening Australia for information about planting tips. You can also receive free trees, seedlings and advice about natives by contacting your local council.

Built shade

Built shade can be connected onto existing buildings and structures or stand alone separately. It can be:

- Permanent – long-lasting structures able to withstand most weather conditions.
- Demountable – easy to set up and take down. This type of shade needs to be strong enough to withstand frequent transportation, assembly and dismantling (examples include tents and marquees).
- Adjustable – includes retractable devices such as canvas awnings or louvers which can be modified as the sun moves throughout the day.
- Tension membrane structures – otherwise known as shade sails which use support structures and fabric to cover an area. They can be a cost-effective alternative to permanent shade over large areas such as swimming pools and playgrounds.
- Portable – this provides options for shade where it may not be readily available and includes umbrellas, shelters and small tents.

The benefits of built shade include:

- The shade cast is more predictable.
- It can provide protection from the rain.
- Some types can be erected easily and transported for use in many locations.

Combining natural and built shade

Natural and built shade can be combined to offer a high level of UVR protection and improve the aesthetics of a built structure. For example, plants can be grown onto a pergola or lattice screen and shrubs can reduce indirect UVR at the sides of a structure.

For more information

The Cancer Council Queensland

The Cancer Council Helpline 13 11 20
www.cancerqld.org.au

Greening Australia Queensland

Ph: (07) 3902 4444
general@qld.greeningaustralia.org.au
www.greeningaustralia.org.au

Planet Ark

Ph: (02) 8484 7200
www.planetark.com.au

Local Government Association Queensland

Ph: (07) 3000 2222
www.lgaq.asn.au

Webshade

Ph: (02) 9818 2177
www.webshade.com.au

Queensland Health

Ph: (07) 3234 0111
www.health.qld.gov.au/sunsafety

Dial Before You Dig

Ph: 1100
www.dialbeforeyoudig.com.au

