



BEFORE

# Cinderella makeover

How a barren backyard in Oregon became a dreamy space

By Mary-Kate Mackey • Photographs by Janet Loughrey

Not too long ago, this backyard in Beaverton, Oregon, looked so bleak that the homeowners admit they used to leave the curtains down all the time “because it was so gross out there.” Then one day, Oprah Winfrey announced that she was searching for a “nightmare yard” to transform as a topic on her show. So the homeowners submitted a video of the barren 86- by 35-foot backyard, showing a dead fir surrounded by straggly grass (above). Then they crossed their fingers.

Their wish came true. The yard was chosen for an instant garden makeover. To accomplish a swift transformation, the *Oprah Winfrey Show*'s producers enlisted the help of Los Angeles landscape designer Nicholas Walker of Jardin du Jour and Portland-based Craig Prunty of All Oregon Landscaping.

“I'd done a makeover before in three days,” Walker explains, “but Oprah's people said, ‘You have to do it in



Colorful foliage plants now sweep across the once-bleak corner shown at left. Red-leaved Japanese barberries play off green-and-white hostas and deep red 'Bloodgood' Japanese maple (far right). Behind, a golden deodar cedar and rich green incense cedars create a privacy screen.

