TEXAN LANDSCAPE GROUP

CHECKLIST

What Houston Clay Does to a Yard

Most of the landscape failures we are called out to look at are not material failures. They are water. Houston sits on clay that holds it and gets rain that arrives all at once, so a yard that was never graded for it will tell you so within a season or two. This is what to look for, and what solving it involves.

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Section 01

What the yard is already telling you

Walk the property the day after heavy rain, which is the only time a drainage problem is fully visible. Anything you can tick here is worth photographing before the first walkthrough.

- ☐ Standing water still sitting more than a day after the rain stopped.
- ☐ Paving that has settled, rocks underfoot, or no longer meets the step or slab it started level with.
- ☐ Grass that will not grow in the same patch, however many times it is replaced.
- ☐ Turf or lawn that stays soft and soggy long after the rest of the yard has dried.
- ☐ Beds where plants keep dying at the same end — usually the low end.
- ☐ Water arriving from a neighbouring lot, a downspout, or a driveway, rather than originating in your own yard.
- ☐ Mosquitoes concentrated in one part of the property.
- ☐ A slab, patio, or foundation the water runs toward rather than away from.

- [ ] Silt or mulch washed into a consistent line, which shows you the path water is taking.

Section 02

Why it comes before everything else

Why does drainage keep coming up?

Houston sits on clay that holds water, and our rain arrives in volume. If grade and drainage are not designed first, turf stays soggy, pavers settle, and beds drown — so drainage is part of the design rather than a repair later.

Drainage First

Houston soil holds water and Houston rain arrives all at once. Grade and drainage are solved before a single paver is set.

Base Preparation

Turf, pavers, and courts only stay flat if what is underneath them is right. The base is the part of the job nobody sees and the reason it lasts.

Material Selection for the Climate

Natural stone, travertine, large-format pavers, and shade-tolerant planting specified for heat, humidity, and clay — not for a catalog photo.

Section 03

What resolving it actually involves

The same work appears under several services, because it is the same work: get the water sorted, then build on top of it. These are the scope items from our own service pages.

Houston Paver Contractor Building Patios on a Proper Base — Base Preparation

Excavation to depth and a compacted base built for Houston clay, which moves with moisture and takes paving with it when the base is thin.

Houston Paver Contractor Building Patios on a Proper Base — Drainage & Grading

Falls set across the surface and channel or French drains tied in where the water needs somewhere to go.

Travertine Patio Installation for Houston Backyards — Base Preparation

Existing surface removed, subgrade cut to depth, and a compacted aggregate base built so the stone never has to carry the load itself.

Turf and Paver Grid Installation for Houston Drives and Paths — Drainage

Permeable base and drain lines where the grade needs them, so water leaves through the grid instead of standing on it.

Houston Retaining Walls Engineered for Clay and Drainage — Drainage

Free-draining backfill, filter fabric, and a perforated drain line piped to daylight behind the full length of the wall.

IRP Insulated Patio Covers Installed Across Houston — Drainage

Integrated gutters and downspouts piped away from the terrace and away from the foundation.

Outdoor Shower Installation With Hot Water and Drainage — Drainage

A drained floor piped to a proper discharge point, or a gravel and sump bed where no drain connection is available.

Houston Swimming Pool Contractors, Design Through Build — Elevations & Grade

Water level, deck level, and finished grade set against the house so the deck drains and the transitions are flush where they should be.

Artificial Turf Installation Built on a Drainage Base — Excavation & Base

Existing surface removed and a compacted aggregate base built to grade. The base is what keeps the turf flat and draining years later.

Artificial Turf Installation Built on a Drainage Base — Drainage

Permeable base and, where the grade calls for it, drain lines beneath the turf so water leaves rather than sitting under it.

Houston Putting Green Installation With a True Roll — Drainage

Permeable base and drainage under the green so it plays the day after a storm.

Section 04

Where it is drawn, and who stands behind it

Full-Property Drainage Plan

Grade and water movement resolved across the whole lot rather than just the area being built — where water arrives, where it goes, and what carries it there.

Drainage & Grading

Grade and drainage are designed before anything is paved, and the finished site is checked against that design. Standing water caused by our grading is a workmanship issue, not a maintenance one.

WHERE THIS COMES FROM

Every figure and stage in this checklist is published on landscapedesignhouston.com — the process, the questions, and the design package pricing are the same ones you will be quoted from. This file is rebuilt each time the site is deployed, so it carries no revision date: the copy you are holding is the current one.

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