

# Pergolas

## Basics of Pergola Design and Construction

- Pergolas can be used to create either outdoor rooms or covered pathways. Use as an open air room, a dining area or a secluded hideaway.
- Pergolas should be constructed of durable and long lasting materials. Many wood pergolas will not last 2 years. Fiberglass is a much better material for the beams. Columns should be stone, fiberglass, GFRS or GFRC.
- Pergola columns should generally be at least 8' tall (10' minimum is even better if they are to be planted with vines). As they grow, the plants will decrease the clear height and the clear width.
- If the pergola is to be planted with vines and climbers the plants will take up some room. Generally pergola columns should be set about 8' apart.

A pergola can be a shaded covered pathway or outdoor room covered with greenery or an attachment to a building serving as a covering for a terrace. The romantic pergola has always been a sought after feature in gardens, both for its lovely appearance and as a shady shelter from the sun. Pergolas add comfort and character. A pergola with vines rambling and clustering overhead provides a shady shelter where the family can sit and talk when the day's activities are done.

The pergola consists of a series of cast stone, GFRC, fiberglass or GFRS columns, supporting a beamed framework and an open lattice.

This simple and beautiful structure is often planted with vines, roses, wisteria or other climbing plants. The pergola shades out the summer sun but lets cooling breezes through.



*Covered walkway pergola*



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## *Pergola History*

The term pergola comes from the Latin word *pergula*, meaning a projecting eave. In early renaissance gardens green arched tunnels were built from willow shoots bound together as "withes" and used as shaded passageways with climbing

*Pergola as a covered area and outdoor room*

plants growing over them. Pergolas developed as a more permanent architectural feature. In Renaissance Italy, where the pergola developed, they were originally grape arbors rather than wooden posts.

In the gardens of the great historic Italian villas near Rome and Florence, the pergola is an extremely important and ornate structure. These pergolas are constructed with massive supporting stone columns and wreathed in gorgeous climbing plants. In England, the Victorian landscape designer and garden writer Gertrude Jekyll and the architect Edwin Lutyens created several pergola structures and pergola covered walks at some of England's finest estates. British pergolas of note include the Pergola at Hestercombe garden in Somerset and the Pergola and Hill garden at Hampstead. In America, Frederick Law Olmsted, designed the pergola at Central Park. The pergola became an important feature at the great homes of America.



*Pergola and single column pergola structure.*



*Pergola as a covered verandah or porch. Ionic columns and G-29 balustrade*



*Rooftop pergola or belvedere with FRP columns and fiberglass texture wood beams.*

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# Plants for Pergolas

- Roses
- Clematis
- Ivy: Boston or English
- Grapes
- Wisteria
- Trumpet Vine
- Bougainvillea



Roses on the prayer garden pergola. Cast stone columns



City garden pergola

# Pergola Benches

Benches are often placed at intervals between columns when the pergola is of sufficient size to act as an open air room. There is no more pleasant place to sit than beneath these cool corridors, relieved by brilliant colors of climbing plants.

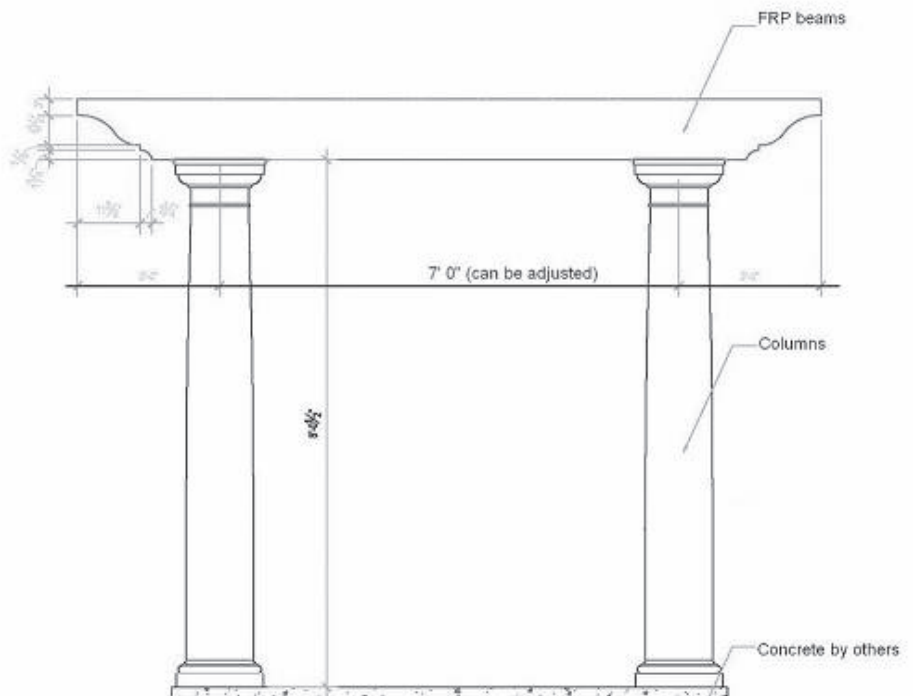


Stromberg pergola on high rise condominium. Cast coral stone columns. Coral Gables, Florida



Balcony pergola

## Pergola



Stromberg pergola • GFRS columns and fiberglass beams

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