Remember, a holistic approach to bushfire preparation is critical. While garden design and maintenance can improve the chances of a house surviving a bushfire, do not rely on these in isolation. In high risk areas, on **Severe**, **Extreme** and **Code Red** days leaving early is always the safest option.

The location and arrangement of vegetation within a garden has a greater impact on how a bushfire will spread than the flammability of individual plants.

Use these four principles when designing your garden to reduce the risk of the garden contributing to house loss in a bushfire.

- **CREATE DEFENDABLE SPACE**
- **REMOVE FLAMMABLE OBJECTS FROM AROUND THE HOUSE**
- **BREAK UP FUEL CONTINUITY**
- **CAREFULLY SELECT, LOCATE AND MAINTAIN TREES**

For more detail and to use CFA’s online Plant Selection Key visit [cfa.vic.gov.au/plants](http://cfa.vic.gov.au/plants) or call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667.
Most likely fire direction

1. Avoid planting shrubs under trees. Instead use groundcovers with low flammability and low-growing succulents under trees to provide maximum separation between fuel at the ground level and the tree canopy.

2. Keep veggie gardens well watered and avoid loose, dry mulch. If properly maintained they can provide an area of low flammability.

3. Use paving and gravel around the house to separate plants from windows, doors and other vulnerable parts of the building.

4. Separate garden beds or groups of shrubs using decorative paving, gravel and lawn.

5. Trees must not overhang the roofline. Maintain any remnant indigenous trees in clumps at least 10 metres from the house.