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# THE FINNING START-UP GUIDE

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HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR LANDSCAPING EQUIPMENT



EQUIPMENT & ATTACHMENTS EVERY LANDSCAPING COMPANY SHOULD OWN

FINNING 



## INTRODUCTION

While the last couple years have brought challenges like labour shortages and supply chain delays, business continues to grow for landscape entrepreneurs. Over the last five years, the market size of the landscaping industry in Canada has grown an average of 5% per year, increasing faster than the economy overall. And in 2022 alone, landscaping is expected to become nearly a \$14-billion industry.

Whether you've just launched your landscaping company or you're a landscape veteran, you know how busy things can get during peak season. Although you'll have a lot on your plate already, it's important to evaluate fleet requirements during peak season so that efficient and cost-effective machine and attachment purchase decisions can be made during the off season.

'The Finning Start-up Guide' is a series of discovery articles that dive into the industries that matter most to equipment operators and entrepreneurs. This guide will help you decide what landscaping equipment to buy, along with which attachments to select for maximum productivity. It'll also cover some of the reasons why owning equipment makes sense for landscaping companies and tips on how to buy from a Finning location near you.

IN 2020, THE  
**AVERAGE REVENUE**  
FOR LANDSCAPING COMPANIES WAS  
**\$441,800**





## WHY GOOD EQUIPMENT MATTERS

Your landscaping equipment needs to be sturdy, clean and able to work in all kinds of weather conditions. Plus, you want to have a professional appearance. So, your equipment needs to look professional too.

Sometimes, it seems more economical to rent or buy cheaper, smaller equipment. Then, before you know it, your company grows and you don't have the right equipment to get the job done.

If you think "quality" from the get-go, you'll avoid having to replace worn-out tools that just weren't made to last, especially for commercial projects.



## HOW TO PROFITABLY GROW YOUR LANDSCAPE FLEET

Depending on the type of landscaping company you operate and the needs of each project, your equipment requirements will vary. But the factors affecting your plans for fleet growth are the same. Your choices of equipment for fleet growth and your current and expected equipment utilization have an impact on your bottom line, cash flow, and capital requirements. And when it comes to landscape equipment solutions, it's your bottom line that counts.

So how can you scale your fleet most profitably? Start by looking at the condition of your existing equipment. How does your equipment's efficiency impact the productivity of your operators? Remember: Inefficiencies can lead to higher labour costs.

If you're experiencing high unplanned downtime, it's probably time to think about replacing your equipment. Similarly, high maintenance costs can have a significant negative impact on your bottom line. Newer, more efficient equipment will reduce downtime and improve profitability. On the other hand, if your existing equipment is underutilized, it might be wise to sell it and consider renting to meet your requirements.

Here are the factors you'll need to consider when deciding how to grow and maximize the efficiency of your landscaping fleet:

### **BUYING VS. RENTING**

Buying is a good choice for machines that are used all or a majority of the time. Renting or leasing may be the best option if equipment is only needed for one or a few projects. It's also a good way to test out equipment and technology before deciding to invest.

### **NEW VS. USED**

In many cases, well-maintained used machines can be just as efficient as new models and cost considerably less. Finning has a huge selection of compact, medium, and large equipment, attachments, and more. If you have a tight deadline or need to stretch your dollar a little further, buying used equipment might be your best choice. Priced lower than new equipment, you can expand your options without breaking the bank. Plus, with trusted advice from Finning experts, we ensure that you make the right choice. Our used equipment is inspected by Finning certified technicians and select machines are backed by an industry-leading one-year warranty and two-year Customer Value Agreement.



Before you decide to rent or buy new or used equipment, ask yourself the following questions:

**1. What do you need the equipment for?**

If this is a unique, one-off job, renting is the way to go. If you're trying to grow your business around a particular type of job, think about making the investment sooner than later so that you can begin to build up equity in the machine.

**2. How often will you use the equipment?**

A good rule of thumb when considering the purchase of a new machine: buy if you plan on using it more than 65% of the time; if less, keep renting because parked equipment is costing you money, not making you money.

**3. How soon do you need the equipment?**

If you need something now, it's easier to agree to a rental and drive off the lot to your next job. Purchasing equipment requires a credit check, often some financing, as well as more consideration and comparison.

**4. Are you ready to buy the equipment?**

To help understand what you have to put down and how much you'll have to pay it off over time, look at your books as your equipment usage climbs towards the 65% mark and project the future cash flow you'll make from the equipment. By doing this, you'll also be able to project your new profit margins as you build equity.

**5. Are you ready to maintain the equipment?**

If you own the equipment, you'll need to plan for regular maintenance and insurance costs. Some small landscaping companies do their own maintenance and replace parts themselves, as required. If you work with a heavy equipment partner like Finning, you can work out an ongoing maintenance and insurance agreement so that you have a planned, set monthly payment to ensure your uptime.

**Finning can help you make the right rent or buy decision for your landscaping equipment by assessing these five questions with you.**

**Our sales specialists have extensive experience working with the landscaping industry and can help you define and assess the best equipment rental or purchase options for your company.**



## THE TOP EQUIPMENT FOR LANDSCAPING COMPANIES

To find and maintain success in the landscaping industry, every company should own high-quality and reliable equipment for those difficult earthmoving jobs. Access to the right equipment and when you need it allows you to execute your projects with efficiency and deliver services on time.

From compact loaders to mini excavators to a variety of machine attachments, there is a vast selection of Cat® equipment designed to meet the needs of any landscaping company, regardless of its size. And with dozens of specialized work tools to choose from, Cat can help you build a versatile machine capable of performing any task.

The right equipment for your landscaping company can help you streamline projects, increase productivity, and reduce overhead costs. With a range of different equipment types to consider, it's important to keep the following business needs in mind:

- The types of landscaping projects you specialize in (landscaping services to landscaping construction)
- The size of your landscape projects (small residential properties vs managing the expansive grounds)
- The types of landscaping tasks you do (material hauling, digging, vegetation removal, etc.)



## CAT® SKID STEER LOADERS

Small, fast and easy to maneuver, Cat Skid Steer Loaders are compact earthmovers, ideal for completing simple landscaping projects in a hurry. They're easy to transport, allowing workers to move between projects quickly, without the need for a large trailer.

Cat Skid Steer Loaders are also compatible with a wide variety of work tool attachments, enabling them to handle a wide range of landscaping tasks, like land clearing, stump removal, brush cutting, land tilling, and more.

Cat Skid Steer Loaders are four-wheeled loaders built on a rigid frame, which makes any terrain—from pavement to rock—easily traversable. Surprisingly powerful for compact equipment, they have up to 110 horsepower with a total load capacity of up to 3,700 pounds.

### COMMON APPLICATIONS FOR SKID LOADERS:

- Trenching
- Landscaping
- Heavy lifting
- Snow removal
- Debris removal
- Post-hole digging





## CAT® COMPACT TRACK & MULTI-TERRAIN LOADERS

Cat Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders are compact earthmovers equipped with tracks instead of wheels. Tracked loaders provide optimum flotation over difficult terrain and can even operate in icy and rainy conditions.

While Cat Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders are similar in appearance, each one is better suited for certain landscapes. Compact Track Loaders have a stiff undercarriage, giving them superior flotation over rugged terrain than skid steer loaders. Multi-Terrain loaders have a suspended undercarriage with rubberized components, delivering very low ground pressure. This makes them the best option for working on extremely delicate surfaces, like sod, and lawns.

Like all compact earthmoving equipment, both Cat Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders can be equipped with a suite of landscaping work tools, including landscape rakes, stump grinders, and more.

### COMMON APPLICATIONS FOR COMPACT TRACK & MULTI LOADERS:

- Trenching
- Landscaping
- Heavy lifting
- Debris removal
- Post-hole digging



## CAT® WHEEL LOADERS

Wheel Loaders are larger machines than the compact earthmovers mentioned above, which makes them the go-to choice for larger landscaping projects.

Like tractors, wheel loaders ride on large, rugged wheels that provide optimum stability and have an ergonomic cab for maximum visibility. Cat Wheel Loaders offer reduced vibrations and a smooth ride, providing comfort for those long hours on extensive projects. Whether you're grading slopes or digging trenches, Cat Wheel Loaders can help maximize productivity.

The compact version of the Cat Wheel Loader can accommodate landscape companies that serve the residential and small commercial markets.

With a universal coupler, the Wheel Loader's front bucket can be swapped out for other specialized tools, including a variety of landscaping attachments.

### COMMON APPLICATIONS FOR WHEEL LOADERS:

- Moving soil, gravel, and landscape material
- Hauling away debris, branches, and brush
- Grading slopes
- Digging trenches





## CAT® BACKHOE LOADERS

Part loader and part excavator, Cat Backhoe Loaders are one of the most versatile earthmovers to own.

From hard earth to rocky terrain, Cat Backhoe Loaders can tackle challenging terrain with ease and reliability. Cat Backhoe Loaders range in size and capacity, from smaller machines with a 24,000-pound capacity to larger models with 29,000-pound capacity.

If you're looking to maximize your equipment to get jobs done faster and with fewer tools, Cat Backhoe Loaders are the machines for you.

### COMMON APPLICATIONS FOR BACKHOE LOADERS:

- Moving boulders and rocks
- Cutting vegetation overgrowth and removing stumps
- Grading slopes and leveling ground
- Digging trenches for laying irrigation lines
- Excavating dirt to install fence posts, ponds, and water features
- Hauling landscape material, including soil, sod, and fertilizer



## CAT® MINI EXCAVATORS

If your projects require a lot of clearing and hardscaping, you'll benefit from the power and performance of a Cat Mini Excavator.

Cat Mini Excavators are compact and nimble, making them safe and easy to operate, and convenient to transport to and from job sites.

Cat Mini Excavators vary in load capacity from 1 to 10 tons, with dig depths ranging from 5.5 to more than 16.5 feet.

Specialized mini excavator attachments can also help you dig holes for fence and sign posts or tree and shrub installation.

The Cat TiltRotate System (TRS) for mini excavators allows attached work tools (including buckets, forks, grapples, brooms, and compactors) to rotate 360 degrees and tilt 40 degrees side-to-side. Both TRS models—the TRS6 and TRS8—enable your machine to reach more work areas from a single position, while maneuvering tools over, under, and around obstructions when excavating, grading ditches, or sorting materials.

The new TRS models multiply the mini excavator's versatility and are available in various configurations to match the application.

### COMMON APPLICATIONS FOR MINI EXCAVATORS:

- Removing boulders and rocks
- Excavating tree stumps
- Piling vegetation and debris for removal
- Digging holes
- Trenching drainage ditches





## CAT® TELEHANDLERS

Cat Telehandlers are a type of aerial lift that allows you to safely reach objects at significant heights.

Cat Telehandlers are stabilized on the ground by four heavy-duty wheels, while its telescoping boom lifts a basket to the desired height and at the correct angle thanks to its horizontal range.

Cat Telehandlers are perfect for working in confined spaces where other machines can't fit or when it's unsafe to use a ladder. When the boom isn't extended, Cat Telehandlers can move boulders, rocks, material, and landscaping supplies around the site. For site cleanup, a broom attachment can help you push and pile debris for removal.

Cat Telehandlers range in capacity from 6,500 to 11,000 pounds and have a reach of 42 feet or more.

Note: Because of its unique use cases, a Cat Telehandler is an optimal machine to rent from a Finning store for those large landscaping projects.

### COMMON APPLICATIONS FOR TELEHANDLERS:

- Moving bulk materials
- Unloading delivery pallets
- Delivering tools or materials to high points
- Placing loads on a flatbed truck
- Pushing snow or dirt using a bucket



## THE TOP EQUIPMENT ATTACHMENTS FOR LANDSCAPING COMPANIES

The right attachments can transform your equipment into multi-purpose machines that perform a wide range of tough landscaping tasks, from clearing vegetation and hauling landscape material to removing snow and ice.

Read on for a few essential attachments that any landscaping company should own.





## CAT® AUGERS

Cat augers deliver the power needed to drill precise holes into hard earth for fence and sign post installations.

Cat augers and drill bits drive into compact dirt and displace earth for a smooth hole.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders  
Wheel Loaders | Backhoe Loaders | Mini Excavators



## CAT BROOMS

Cat brooms make cleaning debris quick and easy, leaving a smooth and professional finished product after the job is done.

Cat pickup brooms have an attached hopper that collects dirt and dust for easy disposal. Cat angled brooms help you clean up along precise edges.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders | Wheel Loaders



## CAT BRUSHCUTTERS

Cat brushcutters allow for efficient vegetation removal while clearing or managing landscapes.

Cat brushcutters collect thick brush and trees up to 8 inches in diameter, shredding them into a fine byproduct. They also provide a 78-inch cutting width for maximum productivity.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders



## CAT® BUCKETS

Cat buckets are a must-have on the job site. A smooth-edged bucket allows you to grade and level ground, while toothed buckets allow you to scoop and displace soil, gravel, and other material.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Backhoe Loaders | Mini Excavators



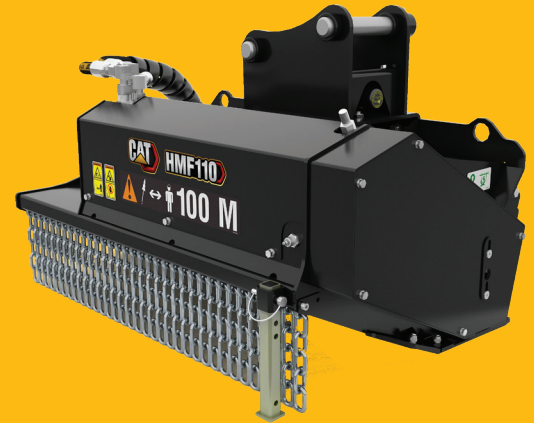
## CAT FLAIL MOWERS

Cat flail mowers have powerful teeth that shred and ingest vegetation, allowing you to clear away vegetation with ease.

Cat flail mowers use a row of safety chains to limit exhaust, making it safe to use in populated areas and along roadsides.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Mini Excavator



## CAT LANDSCAPE RAKES

Cat landscape rakes are a convenient tool for clearing large amounts of organic debris, whether you're preparing a site for seeding, installing sod, or aerating soil.

Cat landscape rakes smooth out the ground, picking up and depositing rock and other debris into an attached hop.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders | Wheel Loaders





## CAT® LANDSCAPE TILLERS

Cat landscape tillers churn up soil and condition it for healthy plant growth.

Cat landscape tillers are built with tungsten-coated tines that penetrate and rip up hard soil.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders | Wheel Loaders



## CAT MULCHERS

Cat mulchers reduce overgrowth to a fine mulch byproduct when clearing away swaths of land, dense brush, and small trees.

Cat mulchers are an efficient and environmentally friendly way to clear land and maintain a usable product for improved soil quality and plant health.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders | Mini Excavators



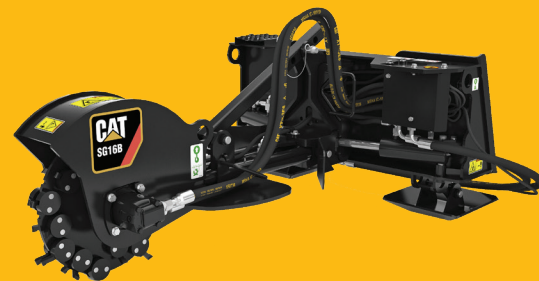
## CAT STUMP GRINDERS

Cat stump grinders use a rotating blade to grind stumps and exposed roots down to ground level.

Cat stump grinders have a cutting depth of 20 inches below ground.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders | Wheel Loaders



## CAT® TRENCHERS

Cat trenchers use a continuous chain of teeth to dig drainage ditches and excavate trenches in a smooth, straight line. The tool's side auger displaces dug-up soil to ensure that newly dug trenches stay clear.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders  
Wheel Loaders



## CAT SNOW BLOWERS

Cat snow blowers clear away snow driveways, sidewalks, and paths, making them an essential tool for winter landscaping services.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders  
Wheel Loaders



## CAT SNOW PLOWS & SNOW PUSHERS

Cat snow plows and snow pushers move large quantities of snow with efficiency. Designed to capture, contain, and displace the maximum amount of snow in a single pass, the Cat snow plows and snow pushers offer superior productivity—both attachments are must-haves for year-round landscaping companies.

### COMPATIBLE WITH:

Skid Steer Loaders | Compact Track and Multi-Terrain Loaders  
Backhoe Loaders | Wheel Loaders

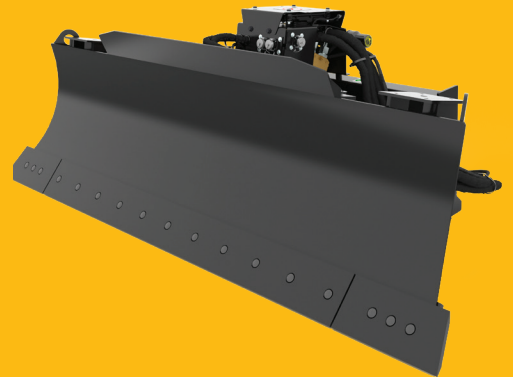


## CAT® SMART ATTACHMENTS FOR JOB SITE EFFICIENCY

Cat has three SMART attachments that enhance the versatility of the D3 Series of Cat Skid Steer Loaders, Compact Track Loaders, and Multi Terrain Loaders.

### THE SMART DOZER BLADE ATTACHMENT

The Smart Dozer Blade attachment for D3 Compact Track Loaders is perfect for cutting, moving, and grading. Additional features, like lift and tilt modes, enable rough and fine grading by identifying which cylinders (lift-arm or bucket) control blade functions.



### THE SMART GRADER BLADE ATTACHMENT

The Smart Grader Blade attachment for D3 Skid Steer Loaders and Compact Track Loaders adapts the display and control functions of your machine, including an enhanced home screen that reveals cross-slope and blade angle.



### THE SMART BACKHOE ATTACHMENT

The Smart Backhoe attachment for Multi Terrain Loaders boosts your machine's versatility so that you can take on tough tasks like utility trenching, digging footings, and forming and maintaining drainage ditches. It also features electro-hydraulic controls and stabilizers that hydraulically shift side-to-side for digging alongside buildings and footers.





## A CASE FOR CAT & FINNING

Valley Landscape started as a two-person team in 2002 with one skid steer wheel loader, borrowed from a family friend. Today, they are a full-scale operation specializing in commercial and residential landscape construction in the summer and snow removal in the winter.

President, Mike Palmer, has dedicated his fleet to Cat equipment, crediting quality, comfort, and performance. In particular, Mike notes the smooth ride of the D Series. Its smooth ride is better than other machines his operators have been on, eliminating operator soreness and fatigue after a full-day at the controls. Other features the Valley team enjoy are how quiet their Cat machines are, both inside and out. This allows for safe and clear communication when spotting or instructing on-site. Valley has been a Finning client for nearly two decades. They keep coming back because Finning has a support systems and no-pressure sales. For Mike, there's a huge incentive in trying before buying, and Finning's flexible approach allows for Valley to be confident in the machine spec they purchase, time-and-time again.

"We sold our first 257 after five years and the resale value was ridiculous. I think we ended up paying between \$2-3k per year to use that machine. We've upgraded our Cat fleet a few times since then and I'm always blown away at how they retain their value."

Mike Palmer, President — Valley Landscape Inc.





## THE BENEFIT OF WORKING WITH A CREDIBLE DEALER

Always consider the value of thinking long-term. This doesn't mean that your search for landscaping equipment needs to be exhaustive, but it does require a certain amount of due diligence to ensure that your money is well-spent.

The value of working with a credible dealer can go a long way. Not only can you leverage their product knowledge to help narrow your decision, but large dealers will often have rental divisions that allow for some trial and error (without the all-in cost).

Finning partners with start-ups and small businesses across Western Canada to supply and support their ambitions of growth and success. Our dealer services can help you select the right size and type of equipment for any job you face.

With multiple locations across Western Canada, there's a make and model always at arm's reach.

Finning is the world's largest Cat® dealer, selling, renting, and providing parts and service for equipment and engines to customers across diverse industries, including mining, construction, petroleum, forestry, and a wide range of power systems applications. We operate in Western Canada, South America, and UK and Ireland.

