VOLUME 01 / LANDSCAPE BUSINESS

Price the work. Protect the margin.

Site quantities, person-hours, complete job costs, margin versus markup, and a reusable estimating worksheet.

ENTERED JOB COST

$1,552.00

PLANNING PRICE

$2,069.34

25% target margin / fictional worked example

WORKED EXAMPLES / CHECKLISTS / REUSABLE WORKSHEETS

Original practical business guidance. Examples are fictional. Adapt the records to your actual scope, costs and professional review.

02 / SCOPE

Begin with a defined piece of work.

A useful estimate starts with the work you can explain and verify.

Name the work area

Record the project reference, dimensions, boundaries and what stays. Separate measured values from guesses. A customer description such as "refresh the front" does not establish removal, preparation, plant quantities or material depth.

Write the cost-bearing tasks

List removal and disposal, preparation, supplied materials, delivery, installation, protection, cleanup and handoff. Identify specialist questions and work outside your offer before assigning a fixed price.

Keep installation and recurring service separate

A one-off project can require procurement and several production phases. A recurring stop adds repeated travel, access and service-frequency assumptions. Use the lawn-care estimator for mowing visits rather than forcing those costs into a planting project.

Record	Fictional Willow Court example
Defined bed	12 ft x 18 ft = 216 ft²
Base selection	18 reviewed plants
Outside scope	Tree, grading and irrigation alterations

03 / LABOR

Count person-hours once.

Crew time and labor cost are related, but they are not the same unit.

Build the work allowance by phase

Estimate the elapsed time for the crew to remove, prepare, install and clean up. Include handling and site constraints rather than treating every planted square foot as identical. Use your own completed-job records to refine these assumptions.

Convert elapsed time to person-hours

Two people working eight hours each create 16 person-hours. At a loaded labor cost of $32 per person-hour, entered labor cost is $512. Do not multiply by crew size again after calculating person-hours.

Use the cost you actually incur

Loaded labor may include payroll-related burdens and other labor costs relevant to your business. A customer billing rate is not the same as your labor cost. Allocate overhead separately and avoid charging the same cost to two categories.

Labor input	Worked value
Crew / elapsed hours	2 people / 8 hours each
Person-hours	16
Loaded hourly cost / labor total	$32 / $512

04 / COST

Give every cost a home.

A transparent worksheet is easier to review than one unexplained total.

Separate direct costs and overhead

Materials and labor attach to this job. Delivery, equipment and disposal may also be direct costs. Allocated overhead represents the share you assign to business operating costs. Use a consistent method and check that allocations are not duplicated.

Label the reserve

If you include a reserve, identify the cost base and percentage. A reserve does not make an unresolved condition a fixed inclusion. Unknown scope still needs an assumption, investigation or change process.

Review omissions before adjusting margin

An apparently attractive margin can disappear if delivery, cleanup or return work was omitted. Confirm supplier amounts and lead times. Check who owns product selection and what must be resolved before issuing a customer price.

Cost category	Fictional amount
Labor / materials	$512 / $680
Equipment / delivery	$120 / $90
Allocated overhead / reserve	$150 / $0
Total entered job cost	$1,552

05 / PRICE

Margin and markup tell different stories.

Choose the calculation intentionally, then label the result honestly.

Price for a target margin

Price = entered cost / (1 - target margin). At $1,552 cost and a 25% target, the unrounded price is $2,069.333...; the FREE calculator rounds upward to $2,069.34. Price less entered costs is $517.34.

Do not substitute the same markup percentage

A 25% markup gives $1,552 x 1.25 = $1,940. That leaves $388, or a 20% margin on the selling price. Neither number is automatically the correct local market price.

Compare scenarios with the same scope

Hold costs fixed when comparing margin targets. If you change the material selection or work area, revisit cost before treating the result as a pricing alternative. The output is a planning price before tax and before any expense you omitted.

Target margin	Price on the same $1,552 cost
20%	$1,940.00
25%	$2,069.34
30%	$2,217.15

06 / QUANTITY

Convert volume. Then confirm the order.

A quantity calculation is one step in procurement, not a complete material specification.

Keep dimensions consistent

Cubic feet = square feet x depth in inches / 12. Cubic yards = cubic feet / 27. In the fictional example, 216 ft² at an assumed 2 inches gives 36 ft³. That chosen depth demonstrates arithmetic; it is not a recommendation for a real installation.

Add the reviewed allowance once

A 10% allowance changes 36 ft³ to 39.6 ft³, or about 1.47 yd³. With a labeled 2 ft³ bag, divide 39.6 by 2 and round up: 20 bags. Bag count uses the unrounded volume, not the displayed yard figure.

Compare supplier formats

The upgraded calculator can compare a bulk price per cubic yard plus a delivery charge with a price per bag. Confirm supplier minimums, increments, actual yield, access and tax. Volume does not determine weight or compaction.

Quantity checkpoint	Worked value
Base volume / adjusted volume	36 ft³ / 39.6 ft³
Adjusted yards	1.466666... yd³
Whole 2 ft³ bags	20

07 / WORKSHEET

Build your own estimating record.

Use reviewed inputs. Keep the scope and worksheet together.

Project / current scope / revision

Measured quantities and unresolved assumptions

Crew x elapsed time x loaded cost

Materials / delivery / equipment / disposal

Allocated overhead / reserve / total cost

Target margin / reviewed customer price / tax status

Reviewer / next action

08 / REVIEW

Check the estimate before it leaves.

Make it possible for someone else to understand the price.

Review checklist

Confirm the work areas and quantities. Verify person-hours, loaded labor and direct costs. Allocate overhead once. Identify reserves, allowances and exclusions. Check margin versus markup. Confirm tax treatment. Label options separately. Give the customer one next action.

Use the tools

Open the job-pricing calculator for a cost breakdown, margin scenarios, printable worksheet and CSV. Use material volume for your measured area and chosen depth. Then move to the proposal builder with your reviewed scope.

Learn after completion

Compare estimated and actual hours, costs and changed work. Revise the task allowance that was wrong rather than blindly raising every future quote. Preserve the original worksheet so the difference remains visible.

Use the FREE tools and the completed Willow Court project: bookedworkpro.com/resources/landscaping

Fictional amounts are USD; tax is omitted for the worked arithmetic only. This is a business planning resource, not an installation specification, legal contract or guaranteed profit model.

Make one improvement on the next job

Choose the estimating assumption you will compare with actual results after completion.