

Abstract 1. Proposed future research directions include the use of longitudinal research designs focusing on green space characteristics, considering actual exposure and systematically addressing heterogeneity in factors influencing the relation between green spaces and mental health (e.g. type of interaction, user experience). Analysis of the direction of the mental health outcomes (positive, neutral, negative) from exposure to various types and characteristics of green space found positive (i.e. beneficial) effects across all green space types. To achieve this, experts in planning, design and nature conservation need to know which types and characteristics of green spaces are most beneficial for residents' mental health. Few of the included studies were specifically designed to enable direct comparisons between green space types and characteristics (e.g. between parks and forests). The included studies have predominantly experimental research designs looking at the effects of short-term exposure to green space on short-term mental health outcomes (e.g. affect and physiological stress). 2.3.4.5