

#1 Curb Appeal

We all know the saying “you only get one chance to make a first impression.” The same is true when selling a house. The front yard is usually the first view a potential buyer has when shopping for a new home. In a slower housing market this impression can be what intrigues or attracts a buyer to look at a home.

Creating curb appeal can make or break the sale of a home. Many buyers have difficulty visualizing the potential of a home’s landscape. Providing a well maintained yard can create comfort for the potential buyer as they view the interior and exterior elements of a home.

So what can be done to improve the curb appeal? First it might be helpful to view your house from the street. Look at your yard as a potential buyer would as they approach for the first time. Notice any unruly or tall shrubs that may be blocking interesting architectural features or views. These can easily be pruned back creating a more manicured look and open the landscape.

Keep lawn areas mowed and fertilized. A well kept lawn and its surroundings will let a buyer know that the house is well cared for. Pull or spray weeds that may be growing in planter beds and look for grasses growing up through walkway cracks.

A buyer’s opinion of a home will begin to develop as they walk towards the front door. Keep this area clear of debris and consider adding seasonal color along the walkway. A decorative pot of bright colored flowers is always a welcome at the doorway.

Don’t forget about the backyard. This area may not be visible from the road but can be just as important as front yard curb appeal. Perspective buyers may drive by a house prior to a viewing and peak over fences or find vantage points to explore the outdoor surroundings of the house for sale. Keep toys and garden tools stored away so they don’t distract from the overall feel of the yard. Make sure patio and walkways are kept swept and clean. A few quick ways to brighten up the backyard include coloring existing concrete, adding seasonal color to flower beds and adding lights to brighten the yard and patio area.

Lighting can be a quick fix to enhance evening curb side appeal. Outdoor lights can be placed along driveways and walks to welcome guests. They can also be strategically placed to illuminate shrubbery and other landscape elements. The shadows cast by lighting can create a beautiful look for a home. Lights can also be added to the exterior of the house to enhance the visibility of an entry way and add architectural interest.

The yard is a good place to spend a little extra time and money when trying to sell your home. A well planned and visually appealing landscape will not only assist in the sale of a home but add value too. The landscape is one of the few areas around the home that you can be sure to see your invested money returned but be careful not to over do it. When adding improvements you probably won't get value out of adding features that enhance your home well beyond that of your surrounding neighborhood. Take the time to explore the surrounding homes and plan a beautiful landscape that will be comfortable, inviting and competitive with the homes in your community.

By trying some of the suggestions above you'll be on your way to creating a home with great curb side appeal. If you feel intimidated by the task you can try strolling through your local nursery and discussing your ideas with their staff. It is also possible to obtain professional assistance for a low cost.

Remember a potential buyer will form opinions of your home from the instant they see it whether it is in a photo or from the street. Hopefully, these suggestions can help you to improve your curb appeal, and create a lasting impression with a warm welcoming home.