



Easy Landscaping Tips That Can Help Sell Your Home

Potential home buyers form their first impression of a home from its curb appeal. Yet often a home's outdoor landscaping is overlooked, or underdone, in the preparation for the sales process. An attractive and well-maintained landscape can add as much as 10 percent to the value of your home.

Ideally the time to get started cleaning up your yard is about a month before you plan on showing your house. That should give you enough time to get everything looking great and not leave the impression that you simply waited until the last minute to put things in order. Follow these tips for sprucing up your yard to help your home sell quickly.

Spruce up outdoor containers: Container plants, especially large tropicals, add considerable interest to patios and doorways where would-be buyers enter and exit the house.

Touch up the mulch: Nothing spruces up a place like a new application of mulch, so apply a fresh layer in all your garden beds. The color enhances the contrast of the surrounding plants and makes everything pop.

Plant some instant color: Seasonal color makes the landscape pop as well and flats of annuals are also relatively inexpensive. Go for a splash of several colors.

Shape unsightly or overgrown trees and shrubs: Regardless of the season, it's a good idea to tackle any overlooked pruning chores because nothing says neglect like a bunch of dead branches. The idea is to show your house and garden has been well maintained.

Tend to perennial beds: Tidy up annuals and perennials that don't look as good as they should. If a plant is in such bad shape that it needs to be removed, either replace it or stick a decorative pot in its place.

Take care of any irrigation issues: If there are any problems with an irrigation system, fix them. Provide information about your irrigation schedule, especially if you have an automatic system. Include instructions as to how the system operates and recommend the same water schedule that's worked for you.

Repair faucet leaks: A leaking faucet suggests that there may be other problems elsewhere in the plumbing, and that can be an instant turn-off to buyers.

Clean up water features: Get rid of any visible algae, remove leaves and clean filters so that the water is crystal clear. After all, a water feature that doesn't look good or function properly can be an instant turnoff.