



Basics to enhance your home's exterior

Is your home ready to see other people?

It's a question you need to ask before the for-sale sign hits your lawn. First impressions count, and as home buyers can be a fickle lot, you want your house to be enticing from the outset.

This is called curb appeal, and it refers to making your home as attractive as possible from the vantage point where most will get their first impression: the curb in front of your house. The goal is to interest a buyer enough to call your real estate agent and arrange a viewing.

If you want drive-by window-shoppers to take things to the next level, here are some tips to improve curb appeal and make that love-at-first-sight connection:

- Cut and rake the lawn. Patch any dead areas with sod or seed.
- Cut and trim shrubs.
- Remove dead tree limbs and other yard debris.
- Brighten up the garden with fresh shrubs and flowers.
- Pluck out weeds.
- Get rid of the clutter. Put away toys and gardening equipment.
- Touch up peeling paint on doors, siding, and trim.
- Repair and paint the fence.
- Fix damaged roof shingles and flashing.
- Clean windows, replace broken panes, and fix torn screens.
- Clean gutters and downspouts.
- Wash the driveway and sidewalk. Patch cracks or holes.
- Make sure all walks and entrances are safe from clutter and other encumbrances.
- In the evening, ensure walks and entrances are well lit.
- Clean up the garage and shed.
- Make sure outside lights and doorbells work.
- Make sure your house number is clearly visible from the road.