



How To Step Up Your Home'S Curb Appeal

The first impression your home makes on a potential buyer has the potential to make or break a sale.

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There's a lot that goes into prepping a home before it's officially ready to be put on the market. From removing personal items to updating old fixtures and furniture, there's a long list of factors that buyers take into consideration when touring potential new homes. And that list extends beyond a home's front door.

A home's exterior needs to match its interior. Given that it's the first thing buyers see, your curb appeal has the power to make or break a sale. Nancy Jones, a franchisee for [Showhomes](#)—the nation's largest home staging franchise—has seen the strong impact a home's curb appeal can make.

“I've accompanied several buyers and realtors to showings, and I've learned that first

impressions are everything. If a potential buyer's first impression is that a house isn't being well maintained, it will set a negative tone. If the outside of a home doesn't look nice, buyers will wonder how bad the inside will look before they even walk through the front door," said Jones. "Your home's curb appeal ultimately has the power to move the sale process forward."

The first thing home owners should do to step up their curb appeal is to declutter. There shouldn't be any trash cans, toys, bikes or gardening tools visible at first glance. You don't want to detract attention away from the house—it's the main focal point. That means eliminating any distractions and neutralizing the exterior.

That process starts all the way at the curb. Mailboxes should be standing up straight without any rust or cracked paint. Weeds along the driveway need to be picked, and plants need to be well fed and thriving. Jones even recommends pressure washing your driveway and the sidewalk surrounding your home.

"By decluttering your space and making sure everything is clean, you're letting the house sell itself. You want potential buyers to be able to envision themselves moving in. That means getting rid of any of your own personal distractions," said Jones. "Having your home look pristine from the outside is the best way to jump start that process and create a positive vibe."

Enhancing your home's curb appeal sets a showing up for success before it even begins. And even though there are always going to be factors that are out of your control when it comes to making it to a closing, a little extra effort goes a long way.

"There are a lot of things that can't be controlled when it comes to selling your house. Maybe you have lousy neighbors, or your location isn't ideal. But boosting your home's curb appeal is something that you can change," Jones said. "It may seem like a lot of work, but it's worth it in the end. Maintaining the outside of your home—especially before a sale—will speed up the time it takes to get from a listing to an initial offer."