

Landscaping Enhances Your Curb Appeal—And Home Value.

Landscaping Can Add 7-15%* to Your Home's Value.

Colorful landscaping, a fresh coat of paint and attention to detail not only bring you enjoyment every day, but they also increase the value of your home. Landscaping can return 100-200% of your investment when it comes time to sell, while *Money Magazine* reports that a swimming pool returns only 20-50% of your money. Mature landscaping can lower energy costs, dampen noise and help reduce air pollution. Here are a number of ways to enhance your home's value through some simple, fun and relatively inexpensive landscaping ideas.

A new mailbox and handsome street numbers will yield a great return on investment (ROI).

Replace your porch light with a new fixture that complements your home's style.

Give your front door a fresh coat of contrasting paint or stain. Paint the trim if you have a tight budget.

Keep shrubs trimmed, add color with plants and keep the soil free of weeds with mulch or ground cover.

Make sure walkways are in good condition and free of cracks. Paint or stain concrete walks, steps and porches.



Get the entire family involved. Everyone can play a role and will have pride when your landscaping project is complete.

Landscaping 101

Select Indigenous Plants

Choosing native rather than exotic plants for your landscaping will reduce maintenance and increase curb appeal. Indigenous grasses, trees and shrubs grow well together and to predictable sizes. They do not need watering (except during establishment), nor do they require chemical fertilizers because they are already adapted to local conditions and insects. Native plants not only accent your home, they also attract colorful birds and butterflies.

Bring Life to Small Spaces

Small garden areas should not feature too many different kinds of plants and materials. This will make your landscaping look cluttered. Paint outdoor walls and fences light shades to open up the space. Take advantage of vertical space with shelves, trellises and hanging pots. Container gardening can work miracles in small spaces, with the added benefit of being easy to move according to the plants' needs. If you live in a condo or apartment, revitalize your entryway, patio or balcony with attractive hanging baskets, planters and unique personal accessories.

Cold Weather Gardening

Keep your landscape from looking cold and bare in the fall and winter months by choosing hardy plants that look great year round. Instead of foliage and flowers, it is important to think in terms of bark, berries and shape. Japanese maple trees have unusually colored bark, while others such as the Japanese pagoda tree have interesting fruits or seeds that form during the fall and winter. Wisteria can form strange, twisting branches, and evergreen plants provide visual appeal against a winter landscape.

Create an Outdoor Space

Create an outside living area by adding a deck or patio for entertaining and relaxing year round. This addition is also a great investment in your home. A 2008 Cost vs. Value Report produced by *Realtor Magazine* stated that installing a deck provides up to 81.8% return on investment. There are a variety of different surfaces to fit any particular style or budget, including concrete pavers, natural clay, wood, stones and bricks. Pebbles, gravel, bricks and tiles can also be incorporated easily and inexpensively.





SMALL SPACE Landscaping Ideas THAT ADD BIG IMPACT

You can enjoy all the rewards that come with gardening even if you are challenged with limited space. Basic design principles still apply—choose a focal point, understand how the plants you choose will thrive in the area that you have selected and create an environment that is beautiful yet fits within the personal time you have to invest in up-keep. Any plant or garden concept can be worked into a small garden space; you just have to consider scale. Adding landscaping to any area, regardless of size, brings a valuable addition to your home. Incorporating your personal touch will make it even more fun and satisfying.



HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED:

- Assess your space and decide what you hope to achieve in your yard.
- Be informed on various plants that thrive in tight spaces.
- Create focal points and make sure they are scaled to your space.
- Leave areas available for other unifying plants.
- Use potted plants, either alone or nestled within your design, to provide visual appeal (a great solution for condominium patios and balconies).
- Remember, every space is important so research your plants, considering future growth and which plants grow most successfully together.
- Create interest with textures such as decorative rocks, ground covers, borders and stepping stones.
- Consider incorporating unique elements, such as a bird feeder or wind chimes, into your space to create an even more appealing environment.

MAINTAIN A HEALTHY LAWN TO MAXIMIZE CURB APPEAL.

- Aerate the soil to allow water and nutrients to penetrate to the roots.
- De-thatch often to remove dead grass blades, which build up a barrier that prevents water and oxygen from reaching the root zone.
- Use compost to improve the nutrient levels in the soil.
- Water less frequently but for longer periods of time. This allows more water to reach the roots.
- Fertilize in spring or fall.
- If grass dies in shady spots, plant flowers that thrive out of the sun in those spots instead.

