

# The Perfect Curb Appeal

## 5 things you must do immediately, before you sell.

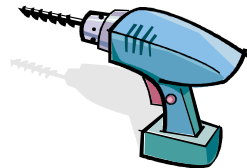


The clock is ticking! You've got only a few seconds to make a good first impression when selling your home and it starts at the curb. If you're putting your house up for sale, curb appeal can increase the value of your home and help it sell more quickly. Follow my five steps on preparing the exterior of your home to make it irresistible and to put your buyers in a positive frame of mind before they walk through the door.

Start by walking across the street from your house. ***This is something I do almost right away when I stage a home.*** Now that you can see your entire front yard, you can see what everyone else sees as they drive by.

1. **Repair** and safeguard the exterior of your home – you will always get a high return on investment upgrades such as a new roof.

- a. Repair crumbling brickwork, broken siding, old window caulking, leaking garden hose connections, damaged electrical outlets, etc.



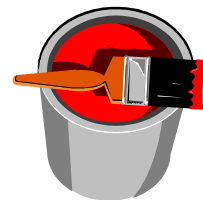
2. **Refresh** your porch.

- a. Make your house number visible on the front door and from both directions at street level. Make it super easy for your buyers to find you.
- b. Install a new front porch light. An outdated or incorrect sized porch light is a missed opportunity. Replace the old light with one that matches the door hardware. This helps tie in an overall theme to the front of the home.
- c. Embellish the door further with a knocker, polished-metal kick-plate, handle, and mailbox. Door hardware can easily be swapped out to provide instant style to the front of a home. Be sure to tie in the door hardware with the mailbox and front lighting.
- d. Buy a new welcome mat (the word *welcome* is a subliminal message).



3. **Redecorate:** Treat your potential buyers to a freshly decorated, welcoming entrance area.

- a. Paint your front door with a strong colour so that it stands out from the rest of the house. When choosing exterior paint keep in mind that the colour of your trim should complement the colour of your roof. ***The garage doors should never be painted the same colour as the front door.*** Why make the garage doors stand out? That might be the usual entrance when you are parking the car and carrying in all the groceries, but for your buyers the appropriate entrance is the front door. The garage doors should be painted to blend in with the house colour, whether it is brick, siding or cedar.
- b. Decorate the entryway with a pair of urns (a great investment is to buy urns that can stay out all winter - think metal or concrete), planter boxes or ivy-covered trellis panels flanking the entrance, or display a hurricane lamp on a table or add an inviting, homey touch like a wreath. A wreath reflects the season. Stay away



from holiday wreaths like Christmas or Easter. Beautiful *seasonal* wreaths on your front door are one easy way to instantly update your porch.

- c. If you have enough space, add a small decorative bistro set, or a couple of relaxing Adirondack chairs.
- d. A really nice touch is to install solar lighting

4. **Recharge** your garden landscaping

- a. Remove overgrown shrubs. Overgrown shrubs often block details of a home. They also can cause damage to siding. Trim back or replace them.
- b. Patch bare spots on your lawn. Dead lawn spots due to grubs, dogs, or other causes are unsightly and unnecessary. A quick trip to the hardware store or gardening center for some fertilizer and grass seed will return your lawn to an even green color.
- c. Add flowering plants to give a punch of colour.
- d. Plant fragrant plants close to the front door; lavender, tarragon, basil, stock, phlox, heliotrope, and of course, roses.



5. **Revive** your home's exterior

- a. Clean your driveway and concrete walkways. A dirty walkway is not appealing and implies that other areas of your home are also dirty. A quick cleaning provides a clear and clean path to your home
- b. Power washing the siding of your home will remove excessive dirt and grime; it will also help remove mildew stains. A fresh clean home siding shows buyers that your home is well maintained.
- c. Clean windows, window ledges, and external dryer vent.
- d. Pick up dog bones, dog messes, children's toys, clutter.



**Spotlight on Décor offers a virtual service** to take the guesswork out of what makes for fabulous curb appeal. For a virtual exterior design consultation, email your pictures with which to work from - don't forget to mention your location - and we will send your pictures back with graphical suggestions and recommendations including paint colours, brick, siding, roof, stair rails, flower pots, lighting, hardware...etc. and a comprehensive checklist. There is a special flat fee of \$150 for this service.

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