

Go the Extra Yard

Some 94% of top real estate agents said curb appeal adds dollars at closing, according to a HomeLight survey. And in the meantime, you'll get to extend your living space into the great outdoors. Here's how to get the most out of your yard.

PLANNING

Homeowners can get as much as a 215% return on landscaping investments, according to Bankrate.com. But these improvements aren't made overnight, and the seasons play a key role in what you plan and went. You'll want to time certain plantings based on when they'll thrive, keeping in mind that some months in summer and winter are simply too harsh for young plants to take root. Pay attention to whether they'll receive full sun or not, as well. Start by cleaning up the yard, removing clutter, weeds, branches and other excess items, then begin designing your new space. A landscape professional can help complete your vision.



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REAL ESTATE 101

A Great Time to Put Your Home on the Market

Spring is the traditional time to list a house, but the pandemic and resulting home-value surge have made the market anything but predictable. Read more on Bob Vila's website at bit.ly/3teukul.

PLANTS

Landscaping should draw your eyes to the door, whether in front or back. Plant or place pots with blooming

flowers along walkways toward the porches. Select trees, bamboo or climbing plants to hide unsightly places in the yard, or to create pri-

vacy if homes in your neighborhood are too close together. Trees add value aesthetically, while also providing shade and insulation that

helps with utility bills.

OUTDOOR FEATURES

Backyards, decks and patios are made complete with options like fire pits, fountains, outdoor kitchens and well-placed lighting systems. Not all of it will necessarily help with resale because some buyers won't use an outdoor kitchen, for instance. But in the meantime, they'll turn a backyard into your own little paradise. If your budget allows it, up the ante by choosing cobblestone instead of poured concrete for the patio, or stacked stone instead of railroad ties for a retaining wall.

MAINTENANCE

The work isn't over once your new landscaping is in place. Regular maintenance will ensure that it continues to look as good as it did on that very first day. Make sure downspouts are clear and functioning properly, and that any drain pipes are not exposed or leaking. Standing water can create a home for pests, and eventually damage hardscaping. Monitor everything for incursions from roots, including walkways, patios and fencing. Be aware of any loosening railings or steps, and secure them quickly. If you planted nut- and fruit-bearing trees, be aware that they require a lot of attention.



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HOMEWISSE GLOSSARY

Credit report fee: The amount that the person applying for a loan must pay to their lender in order to have the lender obtain their credit history directly from a credit reporting bureau. SOURCE: MLS.com

AD SPACE