# Advisor Advisor

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### There's nothing better than a great first impression

What's the first thing a potential homebuyer will notice about your house? The great view from the master bedroom? Your beautiful kitchen? If your house's front exterior is lacking appropriate "curb appeal" it's unlikely that buyers will even make it through the front door. Your home's exterior appearance is the first thing people notice.

So whether you're getting ready to sell your home or are just looking for an easy way to improve your property value, taking small steps to improve your curb appeal can be a simple, worthwhile investment.

## Looking from someone else's shoes

There are lots of ways to add curb appeal to your home and sometimes the list can be overwhelming. First, you might want to try and take a good long look at your house. Stand at the end of the driveway or even across the street. Ask yourself: What would my neighbors notice about my house? What kind of initial impression would a guest have?

You might even want to take a few pictures of your home's exterior and send them to a friend or relative. They might be able to see things that you wouldn't.

The most impactful improvements will be the ones made on the most obvious problem areas. It doesn't make a lot of sense to add ornamental flowers if your lawn is dead. A new door knocker won't do much if your home needs new paint. Taking a nice long look at your house will make it clear what project you should tackle first.

### A little elbow grease

Often, the most impactful and cost effective way to improve your home's curb appeal is simply taking time to clean and touch up the house's exterior and front landscape.

### Here's a few clean up ideas to help you get your home looking its best:

1. Powerwash the exterior siding. Make note of areas with peeling or cracking paint.

**2.** Clean out your gutters and remove any debris from the roof. If any of your gutters are rusting or bent, have them replaced.

**3.** Wash all of your windows on both the outside and inside. Remove any cobwebs.

**4.** Rake and remove any dead vegetation. Make sure your walkways are swept.

5. Keep your lawn mowed. Edge the sidewalks.

**6.** Remove weeds or grass from the cracks in your driveway or sidewalk.

7. Trim trees and bushes. Make sure no branches of exterior plants are touching your roof or are too close to power lines.

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**8.** Keep lawn and gardening equipment, bikes or other children's toys stowed away and out of sight.

**9.** Keep garbage and recycling barrels in the garage or otherwise out of sight.

**10.** Repair any broken fencing or any other areas in clear disrepair.

# Small details that can make a big difference

If you're looking to change your home's curb appeal but you don't want to make a big investment, don't fret. There are lots of small, low-cost ways to add additional charm and character to your home's exterior and make it more appealing to potential buyers.

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### The Doorway

Your home's doorway is one of the first features a homebuyer will look for. It's important that this area is kept clean and draws positive attention. If replacing a worn out front door isn't in your budget, consider painting it and updating or polishing the fixtures. You may also want to update your porch lights and add planters around the door way to update and liven the area.

### Lighting

Good lighting is about safety, security and can highlight features at night. Remember, potential homebuyers may drive by your property in the evening. At a minimum, make sure your porch light is both, functioning and is turned on when your home is on the market. Illuminating your walkways or prominent trees are also excellent, low-cost improvements. Today you can find many free standing, solar powered light fixtures that will illuminate your walkway or garden areas. These are a great investment.

### New Plants

Adding new plants and flowers to your front yard and porch area can add an appealing and colorful touch to your home. Readymade planters from your local nursery or home improvement store can also be used to cover up areas where your foundation is exposed. You can also install window boxes with bright colorful flowers to add additional charm to your home's exterior.



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