

Adding Curb Appeal: 6 ways to Spruce Up the Yard

KNOX COUNTY (Aug 3): When a house for sale looks good outside, buyers are more likely to want to come inside, says Barb Schwarz, founder of the International Association of Home Staging Professionals.

Here are some of Schwarz's suggestions for tidying up the yard.

Make it neat and clutter-free. Get rid of children's toys and limit the number of hanging flower baskets and yard art. "It's far better to have fewer bigger pots than the clutter of smaller hanging pots," Schwarz says. "They just weigh down the house."

Mow, weed and edge. "If the yard doesn't look well-manicured, then [potential buyers] feel the home hasn't been well maintained," Schwarz says. If the dog urinated on the yard and killed a portion of it, Schwarz recommends painting it.

Trim the greenery. Trim trees from the bottom so they create a canopy but don't block the view. Trim foundation plantings from the top, so they don't impede views of the windows. Add color. If there's no color in the yard, plant something like brightly blooming impatiens along the walkway.

In winter, place two small potted evergreen trees on either side of the door to brighten up the entrance. Also, make sure the walkways are clear of ice and snow.

Buy a new welcome doormat to dress up the front door.

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