

## Easy landscaping tips when selling your property

Sure, you shouldn't judge a book by its cover, but a scrappy yard can be an instant turn-off to potential home buyers, even if the house is a dream on the inside. We've pulled together some savvy landscaping tips to make sure your home is picture perfect for when you're ready to sell.

The first thing to keep in mind when revamping your garden is that it has to appear well presented and easy to maintain. People want to enjoy the outdoor space, not feel like it's a burden.

### Freshen up

If your garden is in reasonable shape but just needs a little spruce up, start with the basics. Mow the lawn and trim the edges, or even lay new lawn if necessary. Get rid of any dead plants, and throw out those stacks of plastic pots that mysteriously seem to pile up around the yard. Have a good weeding session, plant some fresh colour and lay some neutral-coloured mulch for a neat look.

Consider some outdoor lighting to lend a warm glow to your garden – it adds atmosphere and illumination for potential buyers who might only be able to do a drive-by after dark. It also gives people a glimpse into what it might be like to enjoy an evening soirée in their maybe-home.

### Know your limits

If you've got a green vision but a terminal black thumb, invest in a professional landscape gardener who can bring some interesting ideas and impressive finishes to the table. You can also speak with someone at your local garden centre for advice on plants that will suit your garden.

### Style it right

Make sure your garden design syncs up with your target market. It's probably not wise to put a swing set in a tiny courtyard of a one-bedroom apartment. Conversely, you might want to transform the garden of a three-bedroom house into something that can function as a fun, outdoor space for the whole family.

Even without a large area to play with, you can still bring life to the outside of your property. Pots of bright flowering plants can give an entrance a visual lift – plus you can take them with you when you move.

### Keep it functional

Yes, a garden or outdoor space is a place to relax, and yes, it should be visually appealing. But remember, it's also a place to hang washing, store the garbage bins, maybe park the car, and

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even house a kennel. Don't worry – there are ways of addressing these issues without the result being dull and utilitarian. If you're short on space, install a retractable clothes line. If you can't tuck your bins out of sight, a low screen with a climbing plant like a passionflower can provide a multifunctional piece of greenery.

### **Problem-solving plants**

Address your property's shortfalls such as nearby neighbours or busy roads by planting out your garden. While the plants may not initially create a full visual barrier, or any significant sound improvement, the perceived improvement from a buyer's point of view will be worth it.

Home buyers are buying a home – not just a house – so make your exterior as appealing as your interior. Not only will you capture a potential buyer quicker (and out of hours – you don't need a key to see the front garden), but you just may land a better end result.