

Tips for Selling: Landscaping: Little touches make the difference



The right landscape design can make all the difference to a prospective buyer, especially when it's beautifully and carefully executed. In fact, REALTORS® and landscape professionals estimate that a well-landscaped yard can add 5% to 15% to the selling value of a house. Houses that look good from the road carry higher price tags—a fact that turns landscape investments into money in the bank when selling a house. Here are a few ideas on how to improve your landscape:

Trees

- One of the best investments you can make is a glorious stand of healthy trees as part of a well-landscaped yard. REALTORS® across Texas and the rest of the country know that healthy trees can increase the property value of a home, as well as provide years of aesthetic benefits to owners. Trees also cut down on energy costs. When Kiplinger published the 25 best ways to invest \$1,000, buying a big tree was at the top of the list. If your selling timetable doesn't allow for planting and nurturing a tree to maturity, remember this advice for your next house.
- Since a tree is a long-term investment, it's important to start with a high-quality plant. In the case of trees, money definitely buys quality. Trees that are 8 to 10 feet tall—either balled and wrapped in burlap or established and growing in containers—are usually the best buy. Homeowners can expect to pay anywhere from \$200 to \$1,000 for a quality tree.

Plants

- Add a few plants around the foundation of the house and in “curb appeal” areas such as near the front door. Or, consider using more permanent bushes, especially those that flower in the summer and have colorful buds in the winter.
- Gardeners on a budget can buy a few plants, then, add more as your budget allows.
- For an especially inexpensive jolt for your yard, flowers are a homeowner's best friend. Bright splashes of color add visual appeal, though they're usually temporary. For this reason, they're great if you suddenly need to put your house on the market and need a quick landscaping fix. At that point, it's best to stick to the basics, leaving more costly and permanent landscaping to the new owners.