

Your home's curb appeal is the first chance to impress potential buyers. Whether buyers are wowed by a beautiful and well-maintained yard or are repelled by dirty exterior walls and an overgrown lawn can significantly impact your home's sales price if you're thinking of selling.

When buyers pull up to a house, they want to be able to picture themselves living in and coming home to it. Dead grass and chipped paint can make that all the more difficult to visualize. Making sure your home is prepared - both inside and out - before you put it on the market could help it sell faster and for top dollar.

Here are a few tips to make sure your curb appeal is making the best impression on potential buyers:

- Clean your house. It's not only the inside of your home that needs to be kept clean of dirt and grime, the outside of your home should be just as spotless. Clean your outer walls with soapy water and wash your windows inside and out. Washing your house can substantially raise the sale price.
- A new coat of paint. After you've cleaned your home's exterior, the next step is to apply a fresh coat of paint. A new coat of paint is like a face-lift for your home, but don't try to make a statement with your home's color. If your home is a wildly different color from the other homes in your neighborhood, it could negatively affect a buyer's perception of the home's value.
- A well-manicured yard. Your front yard creates your home's first impression to prospective buyers, so make sure that your lawn is green and trimmed and your shrubs and flower beds are well-tended. It is important to keep your yard neat, raking any fallen leaves and pulling any weeds. If there is a barren tree in your front yard, cut it down and replace it with grass.
- Repair the roof. If your roof is damaged, dirty, or missing shingles, it can have a negative impact on the value of your home. If your neighbors' roofs are well maintained or have been recently replaced, it will make yours look especially ragged. Sometimes a good cleaning is all you need to have your roof look like new. However, that isn't a project you will want to take on yourself without the proper equipment; hire a professional with the right tools and training, who will be able to clean your roof without damaging it.

By making a few simple changes to your home's exterior, you can increase your home's value and hopefully help it sell more quickly.