

THE MULLARKEY MINUTE

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EASY WAYS TO BOOST YOUR HOME'S CURB APPEAL (PART 1)

When people talk about a home's "curb appeal," they're referring to how it looks at first glance. A home's curb appeal not only creates a welcoming vibe for visitors but can also increase your home's overall value. Boosting your home's appearance doesn't require a remodel or professional landscaping and you don't have to spend a fortune.

If your home doesn't look quite as nice as you'd like, here are some relatively simple DIY projects that can improve its curb appeal:

Paint your front door. Give your home a fresh new look by repainting the front door. If the current door is a pleasing color but the paint looks faded or scratched, you may want to repaint it with the same paint you used in the past. Or, for a more eye-catching look, try a bold shade that compliments your home's overall color palette.

Perk up your porch. Time and weather can take a toll on outdoor décor, so take a closer look at what's currently on your porch and look for ways to improve its appearance. Start by removing everything from the porch and giving the surface a good cleaning. Sweep away any dirt and debris, and use a garden hose with a sprayer attachment to wash it. As you wait for the porch to dry, clean any outdoor furniture, and wash or replace the doormat. To make your porch even prettier, consider adding seasonal décor or installing planters with flowering plants.

Reduce visual clutter. It's common for clutter to build up around homes over time. If you look at your yard as a first-time visitor would, what catches your eye? If you notice dead plants, broken children's toys, fallen tree branches, or other trash, collect and dispose of those items.



If your yard includes empty planters, sports equipment, landscaping tools, or old building materials, find an out-of-sight place to store them. You may have grown accustomed to seeing these things in your yard, but they are likely to look messy to other people.

Add outdoor lighting. At night, does your home still look inviting—or does its beauty get lost in the shadows? Installing more outdoor lighting can make your home safer while also improving its overall appearance. Options include wall light fixtures, solar lights along your driveway or walkways, motion-sensor lights over the garage, or spotlights to highlight certain landscaping features such as a prominent tree.

Install window boxes. Installing window boxes and planting flowers in them will add color and natural beauty to your home's exterior. You can buy window boxes pre-made, or build them yourself as a DIY project. If you're planning to hang the boxes in an area that gets lots of sunlight, buy plants that will thrive in full sun. (Not sure? Ask an expert at the garden center.) Choose flowers that will bloom in a color that compliments—or creates an artistic contrast with—the primary color of your home.

Small, relatively low-budget improvements like these can increase your home's curb appeal quickly and easily. Whether or not your neighbors and visitors comment on the changes, you'll notice the difference—and you'll feel good about your home's latest upgrades.

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