

THE REAL ESTATE BULLETIN

Issue No. 11

SPRING 2011

Spring Spruce Up for your Home's Exterior

- 1. Landscaping 101.** Now is the time to take inventory of your home's landscaping. Visually inspect the areas needing maintenance. Prune overgrown shrubs, bushes, trees and plants. It's time to weed flower beds, add fresh mulch and plant flowers to add the vibrancy of color. Even those lacking a green thumb can create container gardens and use hanging planters to add interest and dimension to an entryway.
- 2. Lawn check.** Reviving your lawn's lush green grass will instantly boost curb appeal. But, even smaller tasks deliver impact. Get rid of weeds sprouting in the sidewalk. Are elements from your yard obstructing the view to your house? Removing a tree that is blocking the view can make just as much of a difference as adding one to liven up a barren landscape.
- 3. Mailbox makeover.** A dingy, rusted or beat-up mailbox is cheap to replace and makes a big difference in setting the tone for your house's exterior. Make sure the style of the mailbox complements the style of your home. If the mailbox is mounted on a wooden post, consider applying a fresh coat of paint to freshen its appearance.
- 4. Squeaky clean siding.** The elements take a toll on a house's siding, and it may require a power wash to clean stained or dirty siding. Do-it-yourselfers can get on a ladder, sweep away dirt and hose down the walls (or rent a power washer from a home improvement or rental store). Or a professional pressure-washing service will probably restore the siding's original gleam.
- 5. Perfect for paint.** It may be too ambitious and time-consuming to paint the entire exterior of your house, but a new coat of paint on smaller areas can make a dramatic difference. Consider painting the trim or wooden shutters if they've gotten chipped or discolored. Other areas that would benefit from a paint makeover include the framing around windows, the porch and garage door.
- 6. Pay attention to details.** It may seem minor, but little touches like new numbers on a house or a new light above the door improve the overall aesthetic of your home. Homeowners are susceptible to visually tuning out established fixtures, but something as simple as replacing dirty old garbage cans will make a difference.
- 7. Spring cleaning.** Unfortunately, spring cleaning is not limited to a home's interior. If there's a baby tree sprouting from your rain gutters, it mars the overall appearance of the house. It's time to clean out the gutters and wash the windows.
- 8. Welcoming walkway.** Brick or stone can create an elegant walkway leading up to your home. Better Homes and Gardens suggests applying a colored concrete resurfacer to an old walkway, then edging with brick or stone pavers. The bhg.com site also suggests using symmetry at the entrance as a simple and effective way to improve curb appeal.
- 9. Light it up.** Adequate lighting at night is a way to add security, as well as highlight the architectural elements of your home. Landscape lighting or solar fixtures can provide path lighting along a walkway, while porch lights should illuminate the main entrance. You can also install accent lighting to add dimension or enhance a particular point of interest.
- 10. Do the door right.** The door is an important focal point of the home, and it's easy to neglect. If it has become worn, consider refinishing, painting or replacing an old door. New hardware to replace rusted door handles or an outdated lock set also makes an impact.



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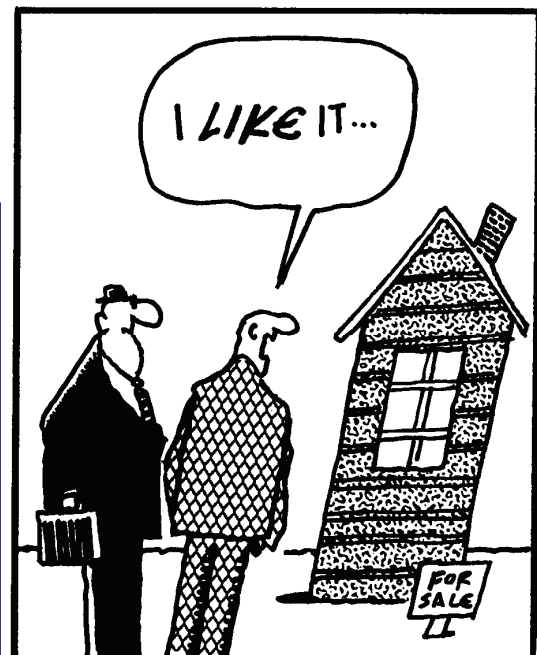
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