

Creating Curb Appeal By Amy Bledsoe

The biggest purchase most people will make in their lives is to buy a home. With the poor economic conditions currently existing, the market for real estate has become a buyer's market. If you're in the position of selling your home in the current market, you know what a tough sell you may have ahead of you. You may have consulted realtors that have helped you to "stage" your home to make the house appear its most appealing to a wide range of potential buyers. If you have no urgency to currently sell your home, but are thinking of a future sale, then you need to think outside the box. Literally. Consider your house the box, and think outside of it to your yard.

Make believe that you are the potential buyer the next time you drive up to your yard. See it through their eyes. Is the yard appealing? Does it make you want to get out of your car and come into explore the inside of the house? The greatest house interior in the world can't be seen from the street. Instead, it's the first impression that your yard makes that can not only lure a buyer inside, but could also potentially be the deciding factor in getting your asking price for the house.

Unfortunately, builders have a practice of clearing off lots prior to building homes, including valuable mature trees. Trees that not only provide shade, but also work to control erosion, keep storm water clean, and add aesthetic beauty. If you're lucky enough to have healthy, mature trees on your property, don't forget to take their value into account when deciding the asking price of your home. If your property doesn't have mature trees, consider investing in larger trees to give your home that "settled" appearance. A builder's landscaping is not sufficient to provide the beauty and grace buyers are looking for when choosing a new home. Remember, you're competing against other homeowners just as eager to sell as you are. A pleasing mixture of trees, shrubs, and flowers are not only an immediate investment, but are also a long term investment. Shade provided by trees will help with cooling costs in hot weather, and make play areas more inviting. Strategically placed trees and shrubs can help screen out undesirable views and noise. While all of this may make plenty of common sense, you still may not know how to start tackling the problem of landscaping, particularly if you're not plant savvy. A landscape designer can help solve these issues. A design will allow you to either hire someone else to plant the landscaping or, if you have budget constraints, allow you to do the planting yourself.

If you plan on tackling any landscaping project yourself, don't forget to call the Palmetto Utility Protective Services (PUPS) at 1-888-721-7877 as required by law at least 72 hours prior to beginning your digging. A well staged yard will get potential buyers out of their car, in to your home, and eventually in to a real estate office to sign on the bottom line.