
Boost home value with a well-kept, inviting yard



Buying, selling, or simply looking to enjoy the space you're in, there are great returns to be had by taking excellent care of outdoor spaces or by adding upgrades to make the area more welcoming.

Outdoor renovations and upkeep generally cost significantly less than indoor projects and provide more return both financially and emotionally for homeowners according to a 2016 survey conducted by the National Association of Landscape Professionals and the National Association of Realtors. A quick refresh of the landscaping is a top recommendation realtors give homeowners preparing to sell.

"As people are looking at the resale value of their homes, you hear a lot about investing in bathrooms and kitchens, but outdoor spaces shouldn't be neglected as wise investments both financially and for the enjoyment of the homeowner as well," says Missy Henriksen, National Association of Landscape Professionals vice president of public affairs.

Whereas kitchens and bathrooms are pricey projects returning well less than 100 percent of the investment at sale, outdoor projects are often less expensive with incredible returns. Even simply taking good care of a lawn pays. For example, the survey found following a standard lawn care program—which professional landscapers estimate to cost roughly \$330 and include weed control and six applications of fertilizer—would return \$1,000 when it comes to time to sell according to surveyed realtors. That's a 303 percent return. Simple lawncare was the top-ranked project realtors recommended to increase a home's appeal to buyers. That's likely because the lawn helps form a buyer's first impression of a home and is critical to getting them in the door.

Curb Appeal

"When scrolling through hundreds of photos of homes online, the first judgement call is made by a quick look at the home's exterior including the lawn. If the picture doesn't look great, there's generally no way they're going to click on that listing to sort through the other 30 pictures of the house," says Lanissa Fortner, owner of Four Seasons Real Estate in Billings, Montana. And if the house does make it past the first cut, potential buyers often drive by the property before making an appointment.

"If the lawn looks terrible, the landscaping is overgrown, or it hasn't been regularly mowed or fertilized, people subconsciously wonder what else about the house hasn't been kept up," Fortner says. This tends to cause them to look for every little fault throughout the showing and negotiate down the final purchase price. "If a house has a well-cared-for lawn, nice landscaping, and

desirable outdoor living features, people get the feeling the house is worth more money and is better cared for as a whole.”

The cost and return on outdoor spaces upgrades—plus the do-it-yourself possibility for some of the simpler projects—make landscape improvements a clear winner for those looking to market their homes in the near term. The survey reports reseeding the lawn would yield a 417 percent return, new sod 143 percent, and improvements to the general landscape such as new patios, decks, and softscape (lawns, flowerbeds, etc.) upgrades yielded 100 percent cost recovery. And the benefits go beyond financial.

Joyful Returns

Besides cost and return, the survey also asked homeowners to rate the level of joy a project brought them upon completion or how it otherwise impacted their lives. Patio, deck, and softscape upgrades got a “Joy Score” of 9.6 or more out of 10 from homeowners.

“We found that an overwhelming majority of homeowners had a greater desire to spend time at their homes after completing enhancements to their outdoor spaces and most have a greater sense of joy when they’re at home,” Henriksen says.

That’s likely because outdoor spaces are where people go to relax, unwind, entertain, and play with their pets and families. Outdoor spaces are where memories are made, lifestyles are defined, and hobbies conducted.

A yard can even reflect the owner’s personality and interests. For example, a yoga enthusiast may have a quiet nook with soft grass and a bubbling fountain. Their little retreat where they can exercise, relax, and meditate away the stresses of the day. Or, a carefully tended [scent garden](#) for an owner appreciative of the power of aroma therapy to lift the spirits.

“For buyers, great outside spaces allow them to envision and buy the lifestyle they want,” Fortner says. “A great deck with a table set with martini glasses speaks to relaxing after a long day or entertaining. A big open lawn will appeal to those looking forward to throwing a football around with their kids. A great patio brings to mind barbeques and watching the sun set. I’ve sold homes whose interiors might have made for a tough sell just due to the opportunities a great outdoor space provided.”

So, if selling a home—or simply looking to enjoy the space you’re in—start your upgrades from the outside in for the best financial and general personal enjoyment returns.

Helpful links:

[X300 Select Series Lawn Tractors](#)



Your Backyard Tips

Helpful information on how to make your yard beautiful.
<https://yourbackyardtips.deere.com>

[X500 Select Series Lawn Tractors](#)