



LANDSCAPING ADDS TO A HOME'S VALUE

An incentive to gardening this spring: An attractive and well cared for lawn and garden can add up to 10 per cent to a home's value when it comes time to sell, according to Realtors. Curb appeal, they note, is vital in forming a positive first impression in today's competitive housing market.

Ideally the time to get started cleaning up your yard is about a month before you plan on showing your house. That should give you enough time to get everything looking just right and not leave the impression that you simply waited until the last minute to put things in order. Follow these tips from Home and Garden TV for sprucing up your yard to help your home sell quickly.

Spruce up outdoor containers. Container plants, especially large tropicals, add considerable interest to patios and doorways where would-be buyers enter and exit the house. Such displays also demonstrate the endless possibilities for designing with container plants.

Touch up the mulch. Nothing spruces up a place like

a new application of mulch, so apply a fresh layer in all your garden beds. The color enhances the contrast of the surrounding plants and makes everything pop. What's more, mulch is relatively cheap and easy to apply.

Plant some instant color. Seasonal color makes the landscape pop as well, and flats of annuals are also relatively inexpensive. Go for a splash of several colors or a more monochromatic scheme, whatever fits in with the look of your home.

Shape unsightly or overgrown trees and shrubs. Regardless of the season, it's a good idea to tackle any overlooked pruning chores because nothing says neglect like a bunch of dead branches. The idea is to show how well not only your house but your garden has been maintained. It's okay to prune deciduous trees and shrubs any time of the year.

Tend to perennial beds. Tidy up herbaceous plants, such as annuals and perennials, that don't look as good as they should. If a plant is in such bad shape that it needs to be removed, either replace it or stick a decora-

tive pot in its place.

Now is also a good time to dig up any plants that you want to take with you to your new home. If you intend to remove any landscape plants and haven't already done so, you have an obligation to inform the buyer exactly which plants you plan on digging up.

Use these tips to increase your home's curb appeal and find out how an attractive and well-maintained landscape can add to the final selling price.

Ideas for green thumbs: The Rotary Club 10th annual tour of inspiring gardens is held June 23-24 in Chilliwack and includes free entry to Minter Gardens. For details, phone 604-794-7967 or visit www.chilliwackrotarygardentour.ca