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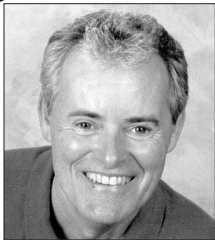
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**Increase your home's
curb appeal—
and resale value**

Spring is the season of thawing, growing and moving, so what better time to get outdoors and make improvements to the house. According to the Canadian Real Estate Association, buying patterns peak in late spring and early summer. If you are trying to put your house on the market and you want to create a good first impression, simple alterations like a fresh coat of paint, blacktopping the driveway, lighting and simple landscaping can make any home more attractive and enticing, whether or not you're even looking to sell.

To help improve the appeal of your house to prospective buyers and real estate agents, The Home Depot Canada offers several easy, low-cost suggestions:

For the outside of your house:

- Blacktop the driveway— One of the first things people see from the road is the driveway. If the driveway looks smooth and black, the whole house looks new.
- Make a statement with paint— Outdoor painting can turn into a big job, but small to medium-sized projects are all you need to add a fresh touch to any home. To find the right stain and paint colour, visit The Home Depot's Exterior Wood Care Centre and the Colour Solutions Centre.
- Punch up the path— The pathway to your front steps does more than provide a safe walk way, it also sets the tone for your home. Use brick, stone concrete or tile to create an inviting walkway welcoming guests to the front door.
- Light-up the entrance— Floodlights and porch lights give a soft inviting glow and can effectively highlight your home after hours. Consider stand alone fixtures, post or hanging lights to accessorize your home's front walkway. The Home Depot carries a variety of low-voltage lighting kits perfect for quick installation.

For your front garden:

- Prune and plant— Cleaning up your landscaping is another relatively easy step to improve curb appeal. Prune all trees and shrubs to give them clean lines,

then plant colourful perennials to make your yard look lively. Tall shrubs can be used to frame and accent interesting features of your house and yard, along with concealing unsightly areas.

- Plant into a pot of colour— Versatile and sophisticated, planters add a welcoming touch when flanked alongside your front door. Alternatively, position a large colourful planter in the middle of a lackluster flower bed or group together pots of various sizes to make for a dynamic focal point.

- Repair those bare spots— Nothing is more inviting than a nice green front lawn. Small flaws can easily be repaired with some seed and diligent watering. For a quick bare spot repair consider Turf Builder Grass Seed.

For more information on how to add awe-inspiring appeal to the outside of your home for an early summer sale, visit your local The Home Depot.

—News Canada

**Installation –
Hire a contractor
or do-it-yourself?**

You may be an ambitious and skilled do-it-yourselfer who would like to install a patio or walkway.

To start, make a sketch of the project with dimensions so the area of pavers can be calculated. Take the plan to your paver supplier and decide on the colours, shapes, and patterns.

Most concrete paver suppliers can supply printed step-by-step instructions for patios, walkways, and driveways, as well as help you locate tools and materials required to complete the project. In addition, the ICPI offers brochures on installation and videos on how to construct a patio, walkway, or driveway project.

Further information can be found online at www.icpi.org.

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