

# Six Landscaping Trends That Wow Buyers

By Barbara Ballinger | February 2010 Realtor magazine

## 6 Landscaping Tricks That Wow Buyers

In today's market, sellers have to work harder to persuade buyers that their property is worth the bite.

Landscape designer Michael Glassman has cooked up a recipe for guaranteed curb appeal.

**1. Add splashes of color.** With every changing season, a landscape should provide a new display of colors, textures, and fragrances. "It's best to use one or two and repeat them," Glassman says. Example: white iceberg roses that bloom in spring, summer, and fall as a backdrop; in front, a contrasting punch of purple salvia or lavender that will flower at the same time; and as an accent, a crape myrtle tree that provides changing leaf colors in fall and interesting branches come winter.

**2. Size trees and shrubs to scale.** These should be planted in the right scale for the house so that they don't block windows, doors, and other architectural features on the home's facade. A large two-story house can handle a redwood, Chinese pistache, sycamore, or scarlet oak, but a one-story cottage is better paired with a flowering cherry, crabapple, or eastern redbud. Too many trees cast too much shadow and cause potential buyers to worry about maintenance and costs.

**3. Maintain a perfect lawn.** A velvety green lawn demonstrates tender loving care, so be sure sellers' homes don't have brown spots. Some rocks, pebbles, boulders, drought-tolerant plants, and ornamental grasses will generate more kudos, especially in drought areas.

**4. Light up the outside.** Good illumination allows buyers to see a home at night and adds drama. Sellers should use low-voltage lamps to highlight branches of specimen trees, a front door, walk, and corners of the house. But less is better. The yard shouldn't resemble an airport runway.

**5. Let them hear the water.** The sound of water appeals to buyers, and you shouldn't just reserve this for your backyard. A small fountain accented with rocks provides a pleasant gurgling sound, blocks street noise, and is affordable.

**6. Use decorative architectural elements.** A new mailbox, planted window boxes, and a low fence wrapped in potato vines add cachet, particularly during winter months when fewer plants blossom. Colors should complement the landscape and home. Just don't overdo it: Too much can seem like kitschy lawn ornaments. ■

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**Source:** Michael Glassman, landscape designer, Michael Glassman and Associates, Sacramento, Calif., [www.michaelglassman.com](http://www.michaelglassman.com)