

H **YOUR** HOME



CURB APPEAL STARTS AT THE CURB

Getting your house in top shape is important when welcoming potential buyers inside. But you don't want to forget about enticing buyers from the outside as well. Your yard is definitely part of the first impression and having it in tip-top condition can help set the tone of any visit. Unfortunately, summer's scorching sun can often work against you. Here's how you can keep your garden and yard looking healthy and beautiful even in the hottest months:

KEEP WATERING.

- 1** a sprinkler in your yard and make sure your flowers and grass get water daily. You'll save water — and plants — by only watering in the evenings or early mornings when the sun isn't beating down.

2 CHOOSE SUMMER FLOWERS.

When planting your garden, always keep in mind the amount of sun and heat flowers might receive. With a little bit of TLC, your snapdragons and petunias will maintain their blooms throughout the summer.

- 3 FERTILIZE.** When fertilizing summer blooming flowers, use a fertilizer high in phosphorus or use a "bloom booster" formula. This will help stimulate flowering throughout the summer, ensuring your garden will always look its best.

If all else fails, hire a local landscaping company or gardening center to plant a season of colorful flowers. While this is an additional cost, it's worth it if it helps your house sell faster and at a higher price.

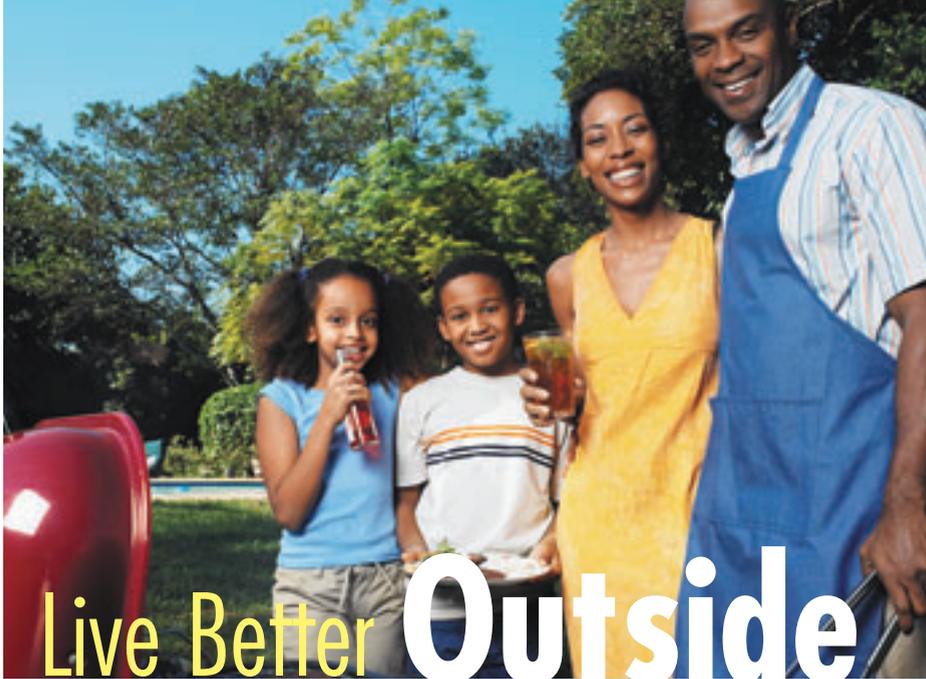
GOING FROM A DAMP TO DRY BASEMENT

Don't let a potential buyer think you have an underground swimming pool waiting to present itself. Even the slightest hint of dampness in a basement can send up a red flag to potential buyers.

The condition of the foundation and basement structure is vital to the health of a house. Inspect the basement yourself before putting your house on the market. Look for cracks in the walls, water seepage or stains, and crumbling concrete.

If you notice a problem, inspect the ground outside around the perimeter of the house for drainage issues that could be causing the seepage. Water may be directed toward the foundation instead of away from it. Make sure that the gutters aren't clogged and downspouts are directed away from the house.

If you live in a humid climate, an inexpensive dehumidifier can help keep the humidity at an acceptable level and prevent the basement from feeling damp or musty.



Live Better Outside

For many buyers, a house with outdoor amenities is a big bonus. In fact, a recent Better Home and Gardens survey reported that “outdoor areas are becoming extensions of the American home’s indoor living spaces.” This means patios, barbecues, decks and other outside conveniences are key aspects in any home’s desirability.

Investing in the creation of a comfortable outdoor living space may not be as difficult as it sounds. You do not have to be a designer to form a creative and fun outdoor living area. Here are a few ideas for making your space great:

- 1.** Add a garden trellis, painted screen or tall shutters to maximize solitude when neighbors are close.
- 2.** Consider decorating with simple furnishings such as a garden table or chairs. A cushioned storage bench can seat a couple of people and be used to store gardening tools, outdoor equipment or toys inside.
- 3.** Accentuate your back yard with a portable outdoor fireplace or grill.
- 4.** Planters, lounge chairs and lighting are inexpensive ways to beautify any outdoor area.

Say Yes to CRS

Buying or selling a home can seem like an overwhelming task. But the right REALTOR® can make the process easier and more profitable.

A Certified Residential Specialist (CRS), with years of experience and success, will help you make smart decisions in a fast-paced, complex and competitive market.

To receive the CRS Designation, REALTORS® must demonstrate outstanding professional achievements and pursue advanced training in areas such as finance, marketing and technology. They must also maintain membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR) and abide by its Code of Ethics.



Do you know someone who is thinking about buying or selling a home? Please mention my name.

This newsletter is for informational purposes only and should not be substituted for legal or financial advice.

If you are currently working with another real estate agent or broker, it is not a solicitation for business.