



## The Importance Of Curb Appeal In The Home Selling Process

*“A house is not a book. Buyers will judge it by its cover.”*

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While every home is different, the impact curb appeal has on a home sale cannot be understated. Regardless of what homeowners are working with, there are steps they can take to improve their home’s curb appeal to add further value to their home. ESTATENVY caught up with Christina Breuer McNamee, a senior real estate broker with @properties in Chicago, to learn more about how sellers can set themselves up for success with curb appeal in mind.

ESTATENVY: What do you tell sellers about how they should approach curb appeal?

McNamee: Curb appeal is not just how your home looks while driving by. It starts online. The photo of the outside of your home is just as important, if not more important, than the inside. Real estate databases require all listings to have at least one exterior photo of the home as the very first photo on the listing. This means your home’s exterior photo needs to be visually appealing enough to entice a buyer to want to click to view more versus scrolling past it.

ESTATENVY: What are some of the most common misconceptions about curb appeal you've

come across in your career? McNamee: A common misconception I encounter is that curb appeal only applies to landscaping. Yes, go green and go manicured, but don't go overboard. Landscaping should be smaller to make the home appear larger. Trim low hanging tree branches, tighten up bushes, lay fresh mulch and use symmetry when planting. That being said, keep in mind that curb appeal also pertains to siding, gutters, downspouts, the roof, the front door, lighting, the porch, stairs, railing, mailbox and house numbers. ESTATENVY: Where should homeowners invest to bring more curb appeal to their home? McNamee: When investing in your home's exterior, I recommend focusing on the roof, the siding, the windows and the landscaping, then accessorizing with simple details, such as sleek, modern lighting, a new entry lockset and distinct house numbers. ESTATENVY: On the contrary, where does a little go a long way? McNamee: It's amazing how much a simple wash can do. Assess the exterior of your home and consider power washing the siding in lieu of expensive replacement options. Hire professionals to clean the inside and outside of every window, and while they are up there, have them clean out the gutters and downspouts too. Similar to the inside of a home, a fresh coat of paint can go a long way. Throw a coat on the front door, shutters, porch, soffit and fascia and railings for a crisp, clean finish. ESTATENVY: Any parting words about how you've seen curb appeal make or break a sale? McNamee: A house is not a book. Buyers will judge it by its cover. Unfortunately, poor curb appeal will deter certain buyers from even looking at a home. Those who are willing to take a look may heavily discount the home's value based on its meager appearance. You only have one chance to make a first impression, so make it a good one!