

Curb Appeal... What's The Deal?

We've all heard the term "curb appeal" before but how important is it really?

If you're selling your home or looking to increase your property value, the curb appeal of your property can make all the difference. I'll admit, there was a time when I thought, "curb appeal - mow the grass, plant some plants and you're done. Easy peasy". Effective curb appeal is really so much more

than that. I've trolled the web and read what the experts have to say, so that we can finally answer the question, "Curb appeal - what's the deal?"

The basic idea behind curb appeal is quite literally to add more appeal to your "curb", so to speak. The area we want to focus on here, is everything between your curb and your front door. This is done by carefully planning an aesthetically pleasing, design, that combines both landscape and hardscape features, that will highlight the best of what your home has to offer, at a glance.

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Curb Appeal

Landscapes features can be described as all of the living elements in your design.



Hardscapes are going to be the elements that are “built” or “man made”. For example, stone paths, decks/patios, ponds, and seating are some popular hardscape elements.



You know, something that will trigger the “ooohh ahhhh” effect we’re all looking for in home improvement.

So, right about now, you’re probably rolling your eyes at all of those words and asking yourself, “Yeah but what does that mean? How do I do that?”

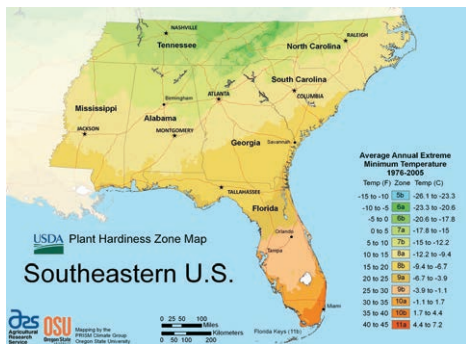
Before you dive in and get your hands dirty, you’ll need to construct a plan. The best way to decide, which elements will be placed where, is to start by considering the following:

THE STYLE OF YOUR HOME

This first one is very important. The last thing you want to do is plan a gorgeous landscape with succulents, grasses, and maybe even a few well-placed rocks for your fabulous, old-world style, colonial. You want your design to reflect and highlight the style of your home in as many ways as possible including, the construction, the color, and even the shape.

KNOW YOUR ZONE

Almost as equally important as choosing plants that are in keeping with the style of your home, is choosing plants that are **in keeping with your region**. You don’t want to create an outdoor oasis with



plants that won’t survive the season. It’s also important to choose plants based on what they will look like through the seasons so remember to plan ahead!

MASSES & SHAPES

Take a good look at your house from the curb. Note the lines and any “open spaces”. This is also a good time to choose a focal point for your design. Take this opportunity to make use of any hidden gems you may have in your yard or to highlight your eye-catching front door/entryway.

For example, maybe you have a gorgeous live oak currently featured back in the “chorus line” of your current design. Build a bench around the base or put in a lovely **flowerbed** that will turn that chorus gal into the principal feature of your new design.



If you have large “blank spaces” in the walls of your home, put in **some small trees** or **tall shrubbery** that will draw the eye upward and create length and character.



If you’re in a position to really sink some money into your design, you may want to think about installing a new retaining wall or walkway with pavers that can really enhance the feel of the overall aesthetic. The possibilities are truly endless. The goal here is to really make your design work for you and your home.

Expert, Leslie Land, author of *New York Times* “1,000 Gardening Questions & Answers”, points out that one should also consider how the plants you choose will look from the road.

“If your house is big and you want to plant lots of little pretty flowers, they don’t read from the street. Instead, use plants and repetition – mid-sized shrubs, to line a path or a row of shrubs. People won’t see individual flowers driving by. They will see the impact of a plant grouping...”

Who knew, right? There really is an art to landscaping the perfect curb appeal design. But, you can do it! I have faith in you. No one knows your home better than you so, you are truly the best source to trust with the design. Now get out there and impress your neighbors and friends with the gorgeous, style-appropriate, design that you just threw together in your spare time... no big deal.

However, if you get a little nervous or need some help picking the perfect plant, we’re always here to help. 🌳

Alex Kantor • The Plant Man