

5 QUICK CURB APPEAL PROJECTS

Do you need to get your home ready to hit the market? Or are you just in the mood for a quick refresh to the exterior of your home? Whatever your situation, boosting the curb appeal of your home is a quick and easy solution.

Here are five quick projects you can do yourself to help dress up your home using lightweight, decorative millwork accessories or architectural elements. The composition and durability of the products make them a long-lasting, low-maintenance way to dress up your home for years to come.

1 ENTRY DOOR Make a front entry door 'pop' by surrounding it on both sides with a set of decorative pilasters and topping it off with a pediment. A pediment is a classical, triangular element that is attached to the wall, directly above the upper part of the door. Select from simple peaked pediments or more ornate acorn or rams-head pediments.



2 BRACKETS Install lightweight decorative brackets to a porch or under an eave for a fast way to personalize a home. These brackets are normally made of wood, which will not warp or lose shape, adding a beautiful, classical element to your home that will last for years.



3 WINDOWS Add a simple wood header directly over the exterior of a window frame to add more visual appeal to the window. Select from straight or arched headers for the style that best matches your home. Or, instead of a header, you can add a footer or window box below the window. The window box will allow you to plant flowers to add a burst of beauty and color, which will boost curb appeal even more.

4 COLUMN WRAPS If your home has worn or boring porch posts, cover them with PVC column wraps. These decorative pieces fit right over a post for an instant makeover. Choose a column wrap design that matches the rest of your home and porch's style.

5 SHUTTERS If your shutters are suffering from peeling paint or worn finishes, consider replacing them with UV-resistant polyurethane shutters. Made to resist moisture and insects, such shutters can be quickly installed and will maintain their curb appeal for years to come. Or, if you prefer the look of wood, consider painting your shutters a color like red or navy blue to make your exterior really stand out from your neighbors.



Improve Your Home's Air Quality

You may think about air pollution while you're running alongside a busy road or strolling to your favorite coffee shop, but do you ever think about the pollutants inside your home? Between sleep and home hangouts, the majority of your time is spent between your own four walls. According to Aire Serv, you should regularly change the HVAC filter in your home to help improve indoor air quality. For ease, stock up on a few filters at a time and plan to check the filter monthly. Other considerations to keep in mind include:

- 1** **Dust and vacuum often.** It's easy to put off dusting and vacuuming, but removing dust means you get rid of one of your home's most prevalent pollutants. Instead of a feather duster, use a wet rag or electrostatic cloth to trap dust instead of spreading it around. When you vacuum, turn the thermostat setting to ON so the fan blows continuously, drawing up dusty air and filtering it before sending it back into the air you breathe.
- 2** **Avoid chemicals.** Everything from cleaning products and air fresheners to personal care items give off harmful vapors that become trapped in your home. Avoid chemically laden products and choose non-toxic, non-aerosol, unscented products instead to promote good indoor air quality.
- 3** **Utilize existing spot ventilation around your home.** For example, run the bathroom exhaust fan when you shower and clean; flip on the kitchen range vent when you cook and clean; and turn on the laundry room exhaust vent when clothes are drying. These habits help you eliminate pollutants at the source.
- 4** **The air filter in your furnace should be cleaned or replaced at least once every three months.** Irritants and allergens such as pollen, pet dander, dust mites and more build up in dirty filters, increasing exposure and worsening the effects on those with sensitivities.
- 5** **If your furnace uses natural gas, propane or oil to keep your house warm, the air quality in your home could become contaminated by dangerous carbon monoxide gas.** If not properly and adequately ventilated, its build-up in your home can be deadly.
- 6** **Run an air cleaner.** A small portable air cleaner is perfect for your bedroom at night while you sleep. This device collects airborne dust and debris, leaving the air cleaner than ever. If you opt for a whole-house model, it replaces the air filter. This type of installation is known to decrease asthma and allergy symptoms.

