



A SELLER'S GUIDE

Improving Your Outdoor Spaces

Your yard, porch, and garden frame the whole home — and the right improvements pay off when you sell. Here's how to make smart, high-return choices outside.

Prepared for homeowners across the greater Houston area



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Educational guide — current as of 2026. Outdoor results vary by home, lot, soil, and climate; figures and tips here are general and not an estimate or guarantee for your property. This is not professional landscaping, contracting, or horticultural advice. If your home is currently listed with a REALTOR® or broker, please disregard any solicitation — this is shared for education, not to interfere with an existing agreement. Equal Housing Opportunity.

START HERE

Great outdoor space is a breath of fresh air — and a real selling point.



You don't have to be a landscape architect, or even much of a gardener, to enjoy a beautiful yard. And when you're getting ready to sell, your outdoor spaces do quiet, powerful work: they frame the home, set the mood before a buyer steps inside, and help people picture relaxing weekends and easy entertaining.

The goal isn't to spend big. It's to spend smart — to make a few strategic improvements that have sizable payoffs in how your home looks and feels. Weed it, prune it, plant it, and move things into place, and the whole property reads as cared-for.

This guide covers your porches and outdoor structures, the plants that keep a yard vibrant, an easy starter kitchen garden, and your hardscape — the pavers and concrete that shape the space. Pick what fits your yard and your budget.

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SECTION 1

Porches, pavilions, and sheds

Many homes come with outdoor structures in all sorts of shape — some charming, some neglected. A little attention turns them from a liability into a feature buyers love. Here's where to focus.

Refresh what you've already got



Start with the floor

Whether your porch is wood, stone, or cement, most surfaces can be refurbished — or simply pressure-washed — to look good as new. A clean floor instantly lifts the whole space.



Make it a room outdoors

Add real outdoor furniture to create seating areas, and layer in textiles like an outdoor rug. A porch that feels usable reads as bonus living space to buyers.



Light it up

If you never use the porch because it's dark at night, add lighting along the railing, around the perimeter, or on the tables themselves. Good light makes an evening space feel inviting.



Maintain pergolas and pavilions

Reseal or repaint pergolas every couple of years for weather resistance. Pavilions can be freshened with new covers or rollaway siding to work as a true outdoor room.

THE HUMBLE SHED, UPGRADED

Sheds aren't just for lawn equipment anymore. With lighting and even a window A/C unit, a tidy shed can show as a playroom, studio, or home office — a flexible-space story buyers in our market really respond to.

SECTION 2

Choosing the right plants

The right plants keep your spaces vibrant year-round with surprisingly little fuss. In our long Gulf Coast growing season, a mix of these gives you color and structure without constant work.

1

Perennials for lasting color

Many flowering perennials return year after year. Plant them strategically and you'll get reliable blooms each spring with little replanting.

2

Annuals for a fresh pop

Annuals give you a splash of seasonal color, but remember they last only one year — you'll rotate them out and replant. Great for accents near the entry.

3

Vines and greens for backbone

Vines add a whimsical touch on walls and fences. Hardy greens and shrubs should form the core of your landscaping — they need little care and stand up to the elements.

4

Keep mulch consistent

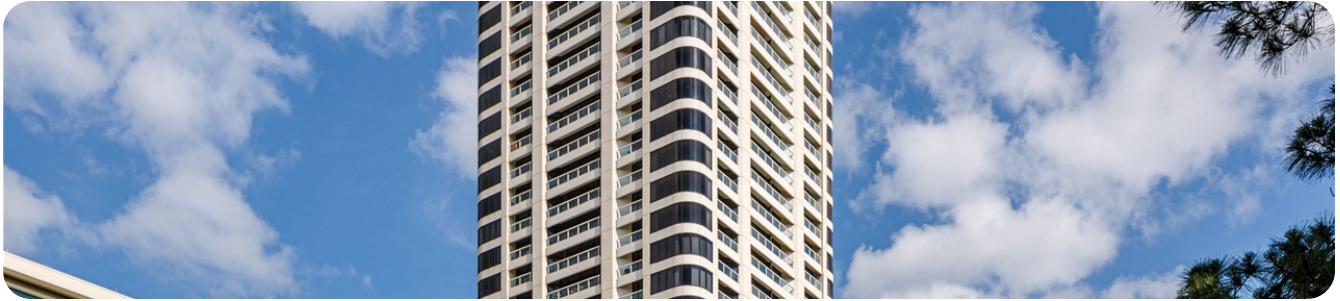
Pick one mulch color and use it in every flowerbed, then refresh it quarterly. This one trick keeps the whole yard looking crisp, sharp, and intentional.

HOUSTON-AREA NOTE

Our heat, humidity, and clay soil reward plants suited to the Gulf Coast. When in doubt, choose Texas-friendly, drought-tolerant natives — they look great with less water and survive our summers far better than fussy imports.

SECTION 3

Starting a kitchen garden



Easy herbs

Basil, oregano, mint, and rosemary are famously simple to grow and useful in all kinds of dishes. A few pots by the kitchen door go a long way.

Beginner vegetables

Grown from seed, zucchini, green beans, pumpkins, carrots, turnips, and radishes are hearty and forgiving. Just mind the planting cycles for our climate.

Quick-yield berries

Strawberries, blackberries, and blueberries are sweet, fairly climate-resistant, and germinate faster than tree or vine fruit. Plan to protect them from wildlife.

Keep it tidy

A neat, productive garden bed reads as a lifestyle perk to buyers. Keep beds weeded and edged so the garden looks like a feature, not a chore.

A BUYER'S-EYE VIEW

You don't need a farm. Even a few well-kept raised beds or a cluster of herb pots tells buyers this is a home where outdoor living actually happens — and that feeling helps your listing stand out.

SECTION 4

Pavers and concrete

Most yards are a mix of grass and hardscape — the pavers and concrete that shape patios, walkways, and gathering spots. Done right, hardscape gives your outdoor space structure and a steady base for everything from seating areas to a driveway hoops game.

Your hardscape options



Pavers

In any size or pattern, pavers build patios, walkways, and garden accents. They can be pricey and may need expert installation and upkeep — but sealed correctly, they last a long time and resist cracking better than a slab.



Mosaic concrete

Instead of a plain slab, some homeowners use a mosaic of small concrete sections, sometimes filled between with gravel. It reads modern and clean.



Stamped concrete

Want an upgraded look without the cost of pavers? Stamped concrete can be textured and designed to mimic stone — a nice middle ground on budget and style.



Maintain what you have

Before replacing anything, pressure-wash and seal existing concrete and pavers. Clean, sealed hardscape often looks brand new for a fraction of the cost of redoing it.

SPEND WHERE IT SHOWS

Hardscape can run up a bill fast. Before you commit to new work, ask whether cleaning and sealing gets you most of the way there. Often it does — and that's money better kept for your move.

Spending smart outside

Outdoor spaces are a wonderful way to entertain, show off your home's personality, and add real appeal at sale time. Here's how to make those dollars work.

1

Clean before you build.

Weed, prune, and pressure-wash first. A tidy, cared-for yard often beats an expensive new one — and costs almost nothing.

2

Plant for our climate.

Choose hardy, Gulf Coast-friendly plants and keep mulch consistent. You'll get year-round color with far less upkeep.

3

Make spaces feel usable.

A furnished, well-lit porch or a tidy garden bed shows as bonus living space — exactly what buyers picture themselves enjoying.

4

Refresh hardscape before replacing it.

Sealing and cleaning existing concrete and pavers usually delivers most of the look for a small fraction of the cost.

5

Match the spend to the home.

Don't over-improve the yard beyond what your price range supports. A few sharp, clean touches almost always beat a big redo.

LET'S TALK

Work with Allen



Before you invest in the yard, it helps to know which outdoor improvements buyers in our market actually pay for — and which ones won't earn back the cost. That's a conversation I'm always glad to have, on the market or in the market, with no pressure and no obligation.

Getting your yard ready to sell? Let's make it count.

I'll walk your property with you, point out the outdoor changes buyers in our area respond to most, and help you decide where to spend and where to save. I'll also give you a free, current picture of what your home could sell for today. When would be a good time to connect?

Reach out for a free home-value and prep consultation

Call or text: (832) 709-2540 · allen@allenmarkel.com · allenmarkel.com

If a weekend of cleanup is all your yard needs, I'll tell you honestly. My goal is to help you net the most from your sale — not to send you to the garden center. TREC #0658294.