

home design guide

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catch 'em at the curb with great curb appeal

Most Realtors say that the two most important things in real estate are location and lifestyle. The third most important thing has to be curb appeal. Curb appeal is the quality of a home's attractiveness. A home is usually considered appealing when it has striking character and charm that adds value to the neighborhood. A home buyer's first impression of a home is crucially important - it can determine whether a buyer will stop the car and get out or drive on to the next listing.

Home buyers tend to agree, and curb appeal ranks high on many of the latest consumer preference surveys. Buyers say that they:

- No longer want to buy a home just for resale value.
- Plan to stay in their home longer.
- Are once again seeking "pride of ownership."
- Prefer not to have a cookie-cutter home.
- Are looking for something fresh and new, especially Generation Y buyers.
- Prefer "creative contemporary" or transitional architectural styles - these are homes with styles that blend traditional building forms of the past with new contemporary ideas.

Conquer good curb appeal with good architectural design. Use these essential design principles to give your home unique personality and to help you get the most value out of your home's character, no matter what your budget looks like:

#1: Composition & Proportion

Design the home's composition with the right balance and scale of all primary and secondary building "blocks." Design proportions using the golden ratio; even the simplest home can look good if it's designed with the right proportions.

#2: Architectural Style

The first impression of a home is forged the instant a buyer pulls up to the curb. Make an impact with a style that gives the home a personality that fits within the neighborhood. Borrow adored timeless architectural styles that never seem to go out of style, like Spanish or Colonial.

#3: Quality of Details

Keep details authentic. Place tasteful ornamentation where it can be appreciated. Be sure to avoid Styrofoam columns that mimic precast, faux dormers, scored stucco bands and incorrectly sized columns.

#4: Have the Right Exterior Finishes & Materials

Limit the combinations of exterior materials to three types; any more can make an elevation look complicated. Stop and start brick or stone veneers on inside corners.

#5: Minimize Garage Presence

Place more emphasis on the house, especially the front door. Garage should be less than 50% of the total front façade. Improve its appearance with decorative garage doors, stylish lighting fixtures or screen the garage using landscape materials.

#6: Complement & Enhance the Architecture

Choose the appropriate paint color palette, landscaping and lighting to suit the home's architectural style.

Do you have questions about home design or remodeling?



Contact Tony at twereichik@canin.com or visit his company's website at www.canin.com. Years

of research in custom home design, remodeling and home building has led Tony Weremeichik, Principal of Canin Associates' Architectural Design Studio, to be a strong advocate for home buyers and home owners to get the best design and construction value for their money. He leads clients and builders through a well-orchestrated design process that provides his clients with the utmost attention and creative design solutions.