

Gardening When Selling a House

Last week we looked at how to tackle a new garden after you've purchased a home, but what if you're selling one instead? As you prepare to move from your home, there are steps you can take to maximize your landscaping to be most helpful for the next owners.

Take photos of your garden at its peak! There's a reason that homes sell faster in the spring and summer months. Green grass and bright flowers matter! It's hard to tell if a tree has dead limbs in December when all the leaves have fallen. Taking a photo of your garden in its prime can help the new home owners visualize the space in all its glory. This can also be helpful if you have perennials such as hosta or surprise lilies that die down to the ground. New owners will know which areas to avoid disturbing until those plants make their appearance.

Keep your plant tags, even if you aren't selling your house. A simple binder divided by bed (front North-east bed for example) can be a valuable tool in your garden. As you plant in your beds, put the labels into the binder. Make sure to check every year to see if plants lived through the winter. As you prepare to sell your house this binder can be extremely helpful for new buyers. Along the same lines as photographing the yard, this tells the new owners what they have to work with. If you planted trees, make a note of what year the tree was planted and where it was purchased as the tree may have a warranty that they can utilize.

Map out your irrigation. If you have sprinklers or other irrigation in your yard and garden, leave a map for the new owners. It can also be helpful to have information for the company that installed or maintains the system along with any maintenance you perform.

If your yard has drainage issues (even if you've resolved them) you may also note this. New buyers may want to put in a koi pond or regrade for a patio. Knowing where water pools and flows can help them select an appropriate place to add new elements without fighting nature.

Last week I emphasized to start with trees when you're in a new home and when you're selling it is no different. Hire a certified arborist to trim limbs away from your home and garage and remove any diseased or dead trees. Include this information in your binder so new owners may know where they might run into tree roots and so that they can use the same tree care company, who would be familiar with your property, if they choose.

Although perennials are a must for establishing yourself in a new garden, they aren't as vital when you're selling. First impressions have a huge impact on buyers. While having newly planted perennials will become beautiful, annuals may help to make a better impact. Keep in mind the market in your neighborhood as you plant. Your home may not sell in one season so look for annuals with a lot of flower power that will last from spring to fall. K-State's Prairie Star Annual list is a great place to start!

A lush green lawn is also more important when selling a home than when you move into one! A healthy green lawn will complement any flowers you do have while also putting the focus on the home itself. Unlike planting annuals a lawn takes planning and proper timing so if you're looking at selling in a few years, begin lawn work today!

It's fairly common knowledge that money put into landscaping gives property owners 2-3 times the value when you sell—if it's done properly of course. Although money is important, gardens mean so

much more to many of us. Giving new buyers the history of your garden leaves a little piece of you behind for years to come.

Prairie Star Annual Flower List: https://www.prairiestarflowers.com/Prairie_Star_List_flwr.html