

## Boost Appeal, Bottom Line

As the weather warms up, it's time to get outside and tackle home projects that can boost both your curb appeal and your home's value. Here are some quick and easy things to do this spring.

### AMP UP THE COLOR

If you've got fading or cracking exterior paint, now's the time to put on a fresh coat, anyway. Walk around your home keep an eye out for cracking paint, but also any loose nails or rotting boards to be replaced before you pick up a brush. If you're stumped on color, visit your local home improvement store for ideas on colors trending in your area. And don't forget, if you have a homeowners association, to make sure your new colors match their palette. Exterior painting can also be tricky, so this may be a job for a pro, depending on your physical ability and comfort with heights.

### PORCH PROBLEMS

It's meant to be the welcoming entry into your home, but the porch, especially after a hard winter, can be more of an eyesore. One quick way to liven things up is with a fresh coat of paint on the floor or on your front door. There are several brands of paint that come in DIY-friendly latex and premixed in popular colors. Check with your local paint



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### REAL ESTATE 101

#### Get Smart

If you're installing outdoor lighting, why not go smart? With smart lighting, you can program your lights to come on when you arrive home or on a schedule, dance with your music, or change colors to suit the occasion. Besides the added convenience, you also could be making your home more attractive to buyers if you're looking to sell. According to the National Association of Realtors, 42 percent of Realtors in a 2016 survey said clients were interested in smart home devices.

store. You can put a quick coat of spray paint — make sure to look for exterior on the label — on any faded porch furniture for a quick pop of color. Replace faded cushions and

door mats with new ones in trendy patterns. Another quick project: Put up new house numbers in a finish and font that compliments the style of your home. Make sure

they're big enough to be seen from the street.

#### GET DIRTY

Clean out your gardens and pull any weeds and old

growth. Feed existing plants and put down a fresh coat of mulch. Look over any edging or landscaping stones and repair or replace any that cracked or bent during the winter. Spring is also the time to feed your yard and get it a beautiful green. You might also consider switching to a natural landscaping that uses less water and requires less maintenance. Your water bill and the environment will thank you. Talk to your local nursery about native friendly plants and ask them which species are invasive so you can remove them from your beds.

### LIGHT IT UP

Adding some exterior lighting will make your home more welcoming for guests and less inviting for those with more malicious intentions. The options range from call the electrician — recessed lighting in the soffits, for example — to an easy visit to the home improvement store for staked solar lighting. Look at your existing outdoor lighting, like flood lights and porch lights, and replace the bulbs with energy efficient but very bright LED bulbs. There are also several easy-to-install options for smart home and security lighting on the market today that can bring you peace of mind when you're away.



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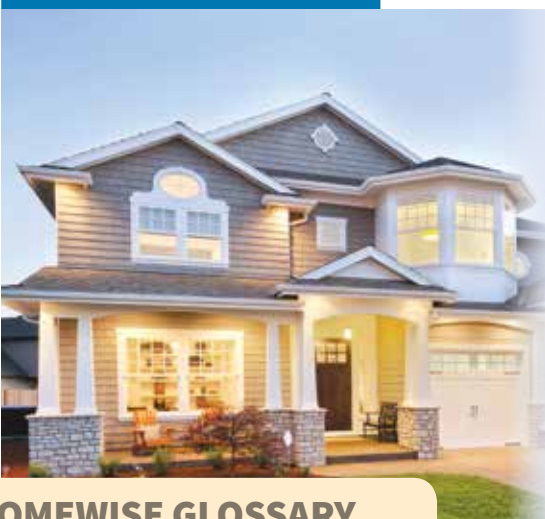
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### HOMEWISSE GLOSSARY

**Growing-equity mortgage:** a fixed-rate mortgage in which the monthly payments increase according to an agreed-upon schedule, with the extra funds applied to reduce the loan balance and loan term.

SOURCE: Federal Trade Commission

## AD SPACE