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HOW TO... SHOW YOUR HOUSE FRONT IN ITS BEST LIGHT

Earth Designs was formed by Leigh-on-Sea-based **Katrina Kieffer-Wells** in 2003, and here in her monthly column she shares her top tips for getting a fabulous front garden



First impressions count for a lot. How the front of your house looks can influence how people think the inside looks. My house is painted black. People slow down as they drive past and although it might not be everybody's cup of tea, it certainly gets noticed. Front gardens need to be a lot of things as well as attractive. Things to consider include, where are you going to store your bins, do you need to park a vehicle in front of your house? And be honest, if you have no time to go in your back garden you won't be on your front either. Pick plants that are nigh on bullet-proof. You also need to think about...

Lighting

As well as security lighting, consider the accent lighting to make your front garden come alive when the sun goes down. Trees can eliminate pathways to give a warm glowing atmosphere to your frontage.

Pots

The bigger the better. Nothing looks worse the dying hanging baskets or window boxes. If you have a big planter, it will need less



water. A great opportunity to use colour or a different material to create a talking point.

Storage

No matter how lovely the outside space looks, if you have to accommodate unsightly wheelie bins it'll detract from the whole effect. Invest in a good quality bin store, and then soften it as much as possible with planting.

The pathway

Make sure it is neat and tidy and weed-free. If you have a large front garden, consider making a winding path through the space.



Plants

A massive tree helps to offset the imposing building beyond and soften the whole area. Add structure with some year-round evergreen plants such as boxes, conifers or ferns. Consider planting a climber at the house, taking care to select the right one so not to compromise brickwork or masonry. Scented plants work well next to a pathway.

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