Think Visual Impact When Readying Your Yard for Events

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Ask an Expert: Think Visual Impact When Readying Yard for Events

Question: Our yard has been a little neglected, but our neighbors asked us to host an event this summer. What are the most important things we can do to make our yard look nice in a time crunch?

For a special event like this when time is short and appearances are important, focus on the areas where your guests will be mingling that will have the greatest visual impact. Work later on areas not as likely to be seen and used, if time allows. As you walk through your yard, follow the same route you expect guests to use, and make a note of problems or neglected areas that catch your attention. Once you’ve done that, you’re ready to go to work. In addition to the problem areas, start with these tasks:

- Rake leaves and debris, and cut back the dead tops of perennials.
- Pull weeds and edge the lawn around your walkways and flower beds. A nice, crisp edge makes a great impact on the appearance of the area. You will probably need to touch up the edging a day or two before the event.
- One last task that will help your yard look “put together” is to add a 3-inch layer of mulch over the soil in your shrub and flower beds. Small or mini bark nuggets are generally more visually pleasing than shredded bark or large bark nuggets. These tasks will provide the most visual impact. Once you have tackled them, you can move on to other areas if there is still time.
- If you have a fence, dust off cobwebs. Solid fences also benefit from a good rinse with a hose.
- Prune low-hanging or head-height branches in the entry and mingling areas. Don’t just cut back branches. Instead, cut off small branches growing downward from the branch underside. That will preserve the natural form and beauty of your trees while providing clearance for your taller guests.
- Since annual flowers can take several weeks to fill in and bloom, consider adding color with container gardens and hanging baskets that are already in bloom. Large containers and hanging baskets on shepherd’s crooks can also be used to direct foot traffic during the party.

Discover new ideas for your yard and garden at USU Extension’s Hidden Garden Tour on June 15 and 16. For information, visit www.hiddengarden.org or call (801)-851-8469.

Answer by: Meredith Seaver, Utah State University Extension Horticulture Assistant, Utah County, 801-851-8462, gardenhelp@usu.edu