

Turn your yard into an outdoor-living oasis

For those homeowners lucky enough to have entertaining spaces outside, summer and fall provides plenty of opportunities to enjoy fresh air under the sun or stars.

Over the last few years, families have become especially familiar with what works about their yards and where there is room for improvement. A backyard renovation can cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$50,000. The American Society of Landscape Architects suggests homeowners budget the cost of a major landscaping project at between 5 and 10 percent of their home's value. Large or small, here are ways to make an outdoor oasis at home.

Create living privacy

Living in close proximity to neighbors may make privacy harder to come by. Wood or vinyl fences, however effective, may not provide the all-natural look many people desire. Vertical gardening, which trains easy-care vines like English ivy, Clematis or various climbing roses to grow on trellis or fencing adds greenery and privacy. Hedges and fast-growing shrubs also can be used for natural barriers.

Install a pool

Pools are the ultimate spots to cool off on hot days. An elabo-

ately shaped inground pool can blend in with the landscape and offer the ultimate hang-out zone. However, above-ground pools also serve the purpose and are more budget-friendly.

Stock tank pools are popular among those who want minimal pool expenditure or have small spaces to work with. Stock tanks are metal vessels traditionally used as watering holes for livestock. They also can be "adult kiddie pools" when combined with some plumbing. Galvanized steel frames make them sturdy. With floats and other accessories, they can become the perfect oasis.

Provide outdoor atmosphere

Create a bespoke bistro vibe by using freestanding planters and posts along with hanging lights to make an intimate outdoor hangout spot at night. For those with permanent structures, like a deck or a gazebo, lights can be strung across the area or on railings or edging.

Extend the living space

Decks and patios can help make outdoor entertaining areas more comfortable by eliminating the need to sit on the grass or gravel. Plus, they add another "room" to the home. When paired

with weatherproof patio furniture, such as sofas, loungers and tables, a private seating area can be crafted and utilized for any number of entertaining desires.

Hang a hammock

Few things evoke feelings of relaxation better than a hammock. Fitted between two trees (or two posts if trees are sparse), a hammock is an ideal place to grab a nap or read a book.

Additional oasis-inspired ideas include outdoor kitchens, letting up lanterns, cascading water features, and bird feeders to attract the sounds of nature.

RENTALS

BRECK GARDEN APARTMENTS
 5270 Dewitt Road
 Cross Lanes, WV 25313
 304-776-2735
 1 & 2 Bedroom Available

3 Miles from Nitro Market Place
 All Utilities Paid Except Electric.
 KRT Busline
 Housing Certificates Welcome
 Monday-Friday 9am-3pm
 TDD 1-800-982-8711
 This Institution is an
 Equal Housing Opportunity
 Provider and Employer

STRICKLEN PROPERTIES

 304-768-5848

BRAND NEW
 Charleston - 3 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath townhouse featuring an open floor plan with beautiful finishes. The white kitchen has a pantry, granite countertops with bar, & stainless appliances. Laundry room inside unit (W/D not included), Central air, & Patio. Minutes from downtown Charleston & shopping at Corridor G.
 \$1,600 plus tenant pays utilities.
ONE-YEAR LEASES. DEPOSITS. PROMPT MAINTENANCE. NO PETS.
 StricklenPropertiesLLC.com

Looking to *advertise* your apartment?

TO ADVERTISE ON THIS PAGE
 304.348.4852

Charleston Gazette-Mail
 wvgazettemail.com

twitter.com/CGMRealEstate
 facebook.com/GazetteMailRealEstate