

## Boost Your Home's Resale Value With Landscaping

by NewsUSA

If you want to increase the value of your home, invest in landscaping. A Clemson University study found that landscaping around your home can result in more than a 100 percent return on investment. Since the return on investment is contingent upon the quality of the landscaping job, it's important that you find the right landscaping contractor for your project and use high-quality materials like segmental retaining walls and interlocking concrete pavers.

Homeowners should consider the following factors when choosing a landscaping contractor.

- \* **The scope of the project.** Make sure that the contractor understands your vision and will be able to implement it. You may want to ask the contractor to design your landscaping project. Many landscape contractors have in-house design services.

- \* **Proper licensing.** Your contractor should be properly licensed, bonded and insured for the work proposed. Many regions require special licenses to conduct earthwork, grading and plumbing operations. The contractor also should have liability and worker's compensation insurance.

- \* **Solid references.** Check the contractor's references and make sure he or she has experience on projects of similar size and scope.

- \* **Certification and training.** Inquire about the contractor's experience with the products being installed. Ask if the contractor has been certified or trained by the product supplier or achieved recognition from a local or national trade association. Such credentials are provided by the Interlocking Concrete Pavement Institute for paver installation and by the National Concrete Masonry Association for segmental retaining wall installation.

- \* **Guarantees.** Many landscape contractors or nurseries will guarantee plant materials for up to one year and hardscape installations for one year or more. Find out what is covered under the guarantee.

For more information about segmental retaining walls, visit [www.ncma.org](http://www.ncma.org). For information about pavers, visit [www.icpi.org](http://www.icpi.org).

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