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11 Ways to Create a Welcoming Front Entrance for Under \$100

Wouldn't it be nice to approach your home's entrance with a grin instead of a grimace? Take our tips for beating a clear, safe, and stylish path to your front door.



First impressions count — not just for your friends, relatives, and the UPS guy, but for yourself. Whether it's on an urban stoop or a Victorian front porch, your front door and the area leading up to it should extend a warm welcome to all comers — and needn't cost a bundle.

Here's what you can do to make welcoming happen on the cheap.

1. Clear the way for curb appeal. The path to your front door should be at least 3 feet wide so people can walk shoulder-to-shoulder, with an unobstructed view and no stumbling hazards. So get out those loppers and cut back any overhanging branches or encroaching shrubs.

2. Light the route. Landscape lighting makes it easy to get around at night. Solar-powered LED lights you can just stick in the ground, requiring no wiring, are surprisingly inexpensive. \$45 for a pack of 8



3. Go glossy. Borrow inspiration from London's lovely row houses, whose owners assert their individuality by painting their doors in high-gloss colours. The reflective sheen of a royal blue, deep green, crimson, or whatever colour you like will ensure your house stands out from the pack.

4. Pretty up the view. A door with lots of glass is a plus for letting light into the front hall — but if you also want privacy and a bit of decor, check out decorative window film. It's removable and re-positionable, and comes in innumerable styles and motifs.



A less expensive way to get the look of stained glass without doing custom work or buying a whole new door: Mount a decorative panel on the inside of the door behind an existing glass insert.

5. Replace door hardware. While you're at it, polish up the handle on the big front door, or better yet, replace it with a shiny new brass lockset with a secure deadbolt.

6. Please knock. Doorbells may be the norm, but a hefty knocker is a classic that will never run out of battery life, and another opportunity to express yourself (whatever your favourite animal or insect is, there's a door-knocker in its image).

7. Ever-greenery. Boxwoods are always tidy-looking, the definition of easy upkeep. A pair on either side of the door is traditional, but a singleton is good, too. About \$25 at garden centres. In cold climates, make sure pots are frost-proof (polyethylene urns and boxes mimic terracotta and wood to perfection

8. Numbers game. Is your house number clearly visible? That's of prime importance if you want your guests to arrive and your pizza to be hot. Stick-on vinyl numbers in a variety of fonts make it easy, starting at about \$8 per digit.



9. Foot traffic. A hardworking mat for wiping muddy feet is a must. A thick coir mat can be had at the hardware store for less than \$20, or spring for something fancier, like this decorative half-round that promises weather and mildew resistance, \$45, frontgate.com.

10. Go for the glow. Fumbling for keys in the dark isn't fun. Consider doubling up on porch lights

with a pair of lanterns, one on each side of the door, for symmetry and twice the illumination.

11. Snail mail. Mailboxes run the gamut from kitschy roadside novelties masquerading as dogs, fish, or what-have-you to sober black lockboxes mounted alongside the front door. Whichever way you go, make sure yours is standing or hanging straight, with a secure closure, and no dings or dents. The mail carrier will thank you.

To find out more and get your home inspected call your local independent property inspector on **1800 17 88 22** or email info@ipi.net.au

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