

5 Ways to Add Privacy to Your Yard

Are you selling a home, or are you currently living in a home that is lacking yard privacy? A more private yard—achieved by either obscuring the view of the neighbors or by reducing noise from nearby road traffic—can be a huge selling point for a house on the market and a great source of peace for homeowners.

Making improvements to your home to increase privacy is a no-brainer for making your place more enjoyable and peaceful—but especially if you are trying to sell or add value to your home, the ideas below are well worth the investment.

When it comes to ideas, we found some great ones at ThisOldHouse.com. From fences to fountains, here are a few of our favorites ideas for bringing privacy to your property.

1 Fencing. This is a pretty obvious one, but still a great idea. Not only will a fence reduce the view of neighbors or traffic, but tall and more solid "walls" of fencing will also reduce noise. To soften the look, *This Old House* suggests planting shrubs or flowers in front of the fence or choosing a fence like the one on the right, which has decorative lattice at the top for more visual interest.

2 Privacy Planting. For those who want to go with something a bit more "green," why not create a "fence of plants?" Privet hedges may be a bit old school, but in a good way. A hedge will add some timeless charm to the yard, and once again, obscure any undesirable views.

3 Fountains. Drown out undesirable noises (like traffic) around your home with the sounds of running water. There are so many different fountains. So explore the options and make a plan for some instant tranquility.

4 Ornamental Structures. Semi-transparent structures like pergolas, trellises, or screens may not provide complete privacy, but they can enclose a dining or lounging space without blocking light or breezes—and they don't even have to be permanent. According to Boston landscape architect, Stephanie Hubbard, "They create a comforting sense of containment and a psychological buffer."

5 Out of Site Really Is Out Of Mind. When putting up certain structures, like fences, there is an actual *measurable* reduction in noise, but because of the way sound waves travel, plants, trees, and hedges don't actually provide the same benefit. However, it doesn't seem to matter because they provide a "*perceived* reduction in noise!" How about that! It's all due to something called, "psycho acoustics." The visual stimulus of the hedge or tree actually tricks the brain. So, when all else fails, try *improving* the view rather than blocking it, and you might be surprised at the result!

For more on this topic, visit ThisOldHouse.com, keyword: privacy.

